SECTION 3.1
Aesthetics

3.1.1 Introduction

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed program to result in adverse impacts related to aesthetics. This section includes a description of existing visual resources and aesthetic conditions in the program areas, specifically the physical environment in the vicinity of proposed program's components and facilities. This section also evaluates potential effects to scenic vistas, scenic resources, the visual character of the program area, and potential effects associated with light and glare.

The analysis is based on review of available photos and visual simulations of the program area, the relevant regulatory ordinances, and a discussion of the methodology and thresholds used to determine whether the proposed program would result in significant impacts. This section analyzes the potential for both program-level and cumulative environmental impacts.

Data used in this section includes photographs of existing and future with program conditions from key viewpoints. The selected viewpoints represent a range of publicly accessible locations from which the visual changes that would result from the proposed program during construction and over time would be visible. All information sources used are included as citations within the text; sources are listed in Section 3.1.7, *References*.

3.1.1.1 Visual Concepts and Terminology

Visual or aesthetic resources are generally defined as both the natural and built features of the landscape that contribute to the public's experience and appreciation of the environment. Depending on the extent to which a project's presence would alter the perceived visual character and quality of the environment, a visual or aesthetic impact may occur.

Residents and recreational users are expected to be highly concerned with scenery and landscape character. Local motorists who commute daily through the same landscape may have a moderate concern for scenery, while people who work within highly urbanized areas may generally have a lower concern for scenic quality or changes to existing landscape character. The visual sensitivity of a landscape is affected by the viewing distances at which it is seen and by the travel speed at which a person is viewing the landscape (i.e., stationary at a viewpoint, low speeds on a hiking or biking trail, or high speeds in a vehicle on a highway).

The same feature of a project can be perceived differently by people depending on the distance between the observer and the viewed object. When a viewer is closer to a viewed object in the

landscape, more detail can be seen, and there is greater potential influence of the object on visual quality because of its form or scale (relative size of the object in relation to the viewer). When the same viewed object is viewed at background distances, details may be imperceptible but overall forms of terrain and vegetation are evident, and the horizon and skyline are dominant. In the middle ground, some detail is evident in the foreground and landscape elements are seen in context with landforms and vegetation patterns in the background. The same levels of sensitivity apply in this case as with close-up and further away views—views from cars at high speeds would be less sensitive to changes than views at low speeds because more details can be drawn from the landscape at lower speeds.

The following terms and concepts are used in the discussion below to describe and assess the aesthetic setting and impacts from the project:

- **Viewshed**—The viewshed for a project is defined as the surrounding geographic area from which the project is likely to be seen, based on topography, atmospheric conditions, land use patterns, and roadway orientations. "Project viewshed" is used to describe the area surrounding a project site where a person standing on the ground or driving a vehicle can view the project site. In an urban setting, viewsheds also include gateways, visual features, and destinations that reinforce the character of the project area.
- **Scenic views**—Are views that provide visual access to valued resources, such as striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features.
- **Scenic vista**—A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape feature (e.g., a mountain range, lake, or coastline) or a significant historic or architectural feature (e.g., views of a historic structure). Scenic vistas may be designated by a federal, state, or local agency. Scenic vistas can also include an area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the express purposes of viewing and sightseeing.
- **Scenic highway**—Any stretch of public roadway that is designated as a scenic corridor by a federal, state, or local agency. Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from the highway right of way, and is comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries.
- **Viewing distance zones**—Views might be discussed in terms of foreground, middleground, and background views. Foreground views are those immediately presented to the viewer and include objects at close range that tend to dominate the view. Middleground views occupy the center of the viewshed and tend to include objects that are the center of attention if they are sufficiently large or visually different from adjacent visual features. Background views include distant objects and other objects that constitute the horizon. Objects in the background fade to obscurity with increasing distance as they approach the skyline. In a photograph, the foreground generally may be seen as the bottom third of the frame, the middleground as the middle third of the frame, and the background as the top third of the frame.
- **Visual character**—Broadly describes the unique combination of aesthetic elements that characterize a particular landscape, neighborhood, or city. In urban settings, the visual character is influenced primarily by the land use type and density, urban landscaping and design, topography, and background setting.

3.1.2 Environmental Setting

3.1.2.1 Regional and Local Visual Character

Scenic Vistas

City of Seal Beach

The City of Seal Beach encompasses 11.5 square miles along the Pacific Ocean coastline in northern Orange County between the cities of Huntington Beach and Long Beach. The City of Seal Beach's boundaries extend from the Pacific Ocean to approximately 5 miles inland, where the Coastal Zone comprises a large portion of the City of Seal Beach's jurisdiction (City of Seal Beach 2003). The Coastal Zone in the City of Seal Beach include a variety of land uses, which vary from residential, commercial, industrial, military, and open space uses (City of Seal Beach 2003). The City of Seal Beach's Coastal Zone has a relatively flat topography, where long-range views are obscured by existing development and vegetation.

As previously defined, scenic vistas are viewpoints that provide expansive views of a highly valued landscape feature (e.g., a mountain range, lake, or coastline) or a significant historic or architectural feature (e.g., views of a historic structure). While the City of Seal Beach General Plan does not formally designate scenic vistas or visual resources in the city, the City of Seal Beach General Plan does state that ocean and bay views are considered significant views within the city (City of Seal Beach 2003). In the portion of the program area located in the City of Seal Beach, views of the Pacific Ocean and coastline are not visible; however, there are views of the San Gabriel River and Haynes Cooling Channel, which runs adjacent to the portion of the South Area of the program area.

City of Long Beach

The City of Long Beach encompasses approximately 52 square miles along the Pacific Ocean coastline in southern Los Angeles County roughly between the cities of Seal Beach and Carson. The Coastal Zone of the city extends over 3,100 acres and is the most intensely developed part of the city (City of Long Beach, 1980). The Coastal Zone in Long Beach includes a range of land uses from industrial to residential to commercial/retail uses among other uses (Los Angeles County, 2017). The City of Long Beach's Coastal Zone has a relatively flat topography, where long-range views are obscured by existing development and vegetation.

Scenic vistas within the northern portion of the program area and vicinity include the Los Cerritos Channel, Steamshovel Slough, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, San Gabriel River, and distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains. Scenic vistas, which encompass portions of the northern portion of the program area, are available to: motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians traveling along 2nd Street, Studebaker Road, and Pacific Coast Highway (PCH); bicyclists and pedestrians traveling along the San Gabriel River Bike Trail; and kayakers in the Los Cerritos Channel.

On-site Visual Setting

The proposed program is located within the cities of Seal Beach and Long Beach. The City of Seal Beach is within the northwestern portion of Orange County, California. The City of Long Beach is within the southeastern portion of Los Angeles County, California. The proposed program is located within the California Coastal Zone and the portions of the program area located in the City of Long Beach subject to the adopted Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan (SEADIP) are zoned as Planned Development District 1 (PD-1). The portions of the program area located within the City of Long Beach subject to the Southeast Area Specific Plan (SEASP) 2060, once adopted, would be zoned as Coastal Habitat/Wetlands/Recreation (CHWR), Public, and Dedicated Right of Way (not built).

As shown in Figure 2-2, *Project Site and Local Vicinity*, in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, the program area is approximately 503 acres and extends from the Los Cerritos Channel in the City of Long Beach in the north to the southern boundaries of the Los Cerritos Wetlands in the City of Seal Beach in the south. The program area is relatively flat with the San Gabriel River and Haynes Cooling Channel traversing the program area and surrounding urban and industrial land uses and the Alamitos Bay Marina to the west.

The program area is comprised of four areas, South, Isthmus, Central, and North, and 17 individual sites within those areas. Generally, the program area is primarily undeveloped open space and waterways with various existing oil wells scattered throughout. In general, undeveloped areas of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex offer a natural visual character; however, the program area's appearance is marked by the presence of past and present industrial land uses, including the presence of power lines and oil extraction facilities (including oil extraction pumps, oil tank farms, and small buildings). The location and existing use of the four areas that comprise the program area are described below.

South Area

The South Area is comprised of six individual sites, which include the Haynes Cooling Channel, State Lands Parcel, South Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA), Hellman Retained, Los Alamitos Pump Station, and Los Alamitos Retarding Basin. The South Area is within the City of Seal Beach with the exception of the Haynes Cooling Channel and Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site which are within both the cities of Seal Beach and Long Beach, and Los Alamitos Pump Station site which is located entirely within the City of Long Beach. The South Area is bounded by the Isthmus Area and Island Village to the north, industrial and residential development to the east, residential development to the south, and the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) to the west (refer to Figure 2-4, *South Area*, in Chapter 2, *Project Description*).

Under existing conditions, the South Area is primarily open space with dirt roads and/or trails that transect the overall area. The South Area also includes buildings and structures associated with past and ongoing oil operations and basin operations. The Haynes Cooling Channel is a waterway used by the Haynes Generating Station located north of the program area to bring in water from the Pacific Ocean via 7 culverts in the Alamitos Bay Marina to cool the power plant through a method called once-through cooling. The State Lands Parcel site contains the remnant building

foundation of what was once a music venue called the Airport Club and Marina Palace. The South LCWA site contains multiple former sumps, landfills, and contaminated areas from prior oil operations, and is currently owned and maintained by the LCWA. The Hellman Channel runs through the South LCWA site. The Hellman Retained site is an active oil field with substantial oil operation infrastructure (pipelines, pumps, tanks, and roadways). There are 43 active oil wells and 11 idle oil wells on-site. The Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site is a 30-acre depressed basin surrounded by an earthen berm and access road that receives stormwater runoff and other drainage from a 3,600-acre area in Seal Beach. The Los Alamitos Pump Station site includes a pump station, which moves the stormwater runoff from the Los Alamitos Retarding Basin, under the San Gabriel River Levee, and into the San Gabriel River.

Generally, long-range views across the South Area show an expansive open space area with sparse low-lying vegetation and scattered industrial and ancillary structures. Thicker vegetation exists along the south border of the South Area adjacent to Gum Grove Park and residential uses.

Isthmus Area

The Isthmus Area is comprised of five individual sites, which include the Callaway Marsh, DWP, Zedler Marsh, Isthmus LCWA, and Isthmus Bryant. The Isthmus Area is located in the City of Long Beach and is bound by the San Gabriel River and 2nd Street to the north, Haynes Cooling Channel to the east and south, and Pacific Coast Highway to the west.

In current conditions, the Isthmus Area contains buildings/structures and infrastructure associated with current oil operations. The Callaway Marsh site is a vacant site with a heavily degraded perched salt marsh, tidally connected to the San Gabriel River by a three-foot-wide culvert, which mutes the water levels reaching the site. The Zedler Marsh site is a 12-acre restoration site operated and managed by the LCWA, and is currently being enhanced and restored as part of the LCWA Stewardship Program. The Callaway Marsh site and Zedler Marsh site have been restored/maintained as natural marsh sites, where these parcels are heavily vegetated with a relatively low profile. The DWP site is a vacant site. The Isthmus Bryant site is a vacant site and the surface is not currently in use by oil operators. The DWP site and Isthmus Bryant site are primarily dirt lots with scattered vegetation, with a few pockets of heavier vegetation cover. The Isthmus LCWA site is an active oil field with oil operation infrastructure, including 4 active oil wells and 1 idle oil well. The San Gabriel River Trail runs through the entire Isthmus Area along the western boundary along the San Gabriel River.

Generally, long-range views across the Isthmus Area show low-lying vegetation with clusters of buildings in the middle ground and surrounding industrial and residential uses in the background.

Central Area

The Central Area includes the following individual sites: Pumpkin Patch, Long Beach City Property, Central LCWA, Central Bryant, and the San Gabriel River. The Central Area is located in the City of Long Beach and is bound by the San Gabriel River to the east and south, PCH and Shopkeeper Road to the west, East 2nd Street to the north.

In existing conditions, the Central Area is vegetated, ranging from sparsely towards the middle of the Central Area to heavily along the East 2nd Street boundary, with an informal network of dirt roads transecting throughout the area. The Pumpkin Patch site is an active oil field with one active oil well and one plugged oil well on site. The Long Beach City Property site is an active oil field with oil storage tanks and associated oil production infrastructure, such as pipelines and tanks. There are 11 active oil wells and 2 idle oil wells on-site. Aboveground pipelines and dirt access roads traverse the site. The Central LCWA site is an active oil field with oil operation infrastructure (roadways, wells, power lines, pipelines, and pumps). There are 7 active oil wells on-site. The Central Bryant site is a vacant site not currently in use by oil operators on the surface. A raised levee runs along the San Gabriel River, which constitutes the southeastern boundary of the Central Area. Telephone poles with overhead lines are also visible along the southeastern boundary.

Generally, long-range views across the Central Area show low-lying vegetation combined with areas of dirt and taller trees along the boundaries of the Central Area. Some signage is visible throughout the site, where the signs also have a low profile.

North Area

The North Area includes the following individual sites: Northern Synergy Oil Field, Southern Synergy Oil Field, and Alamitos Bay Partners. The North Area is located in the City of Long Beach and is bound by the Los Cerritos Channel to the north, North Studebaker Road to the east, East 2nd Street to the south, and the PCH to the west.

Currently, the North Area is primarily vegetated, with thicker areas occurring in the north/northeast portion of the North Area as well as pockets in the northwest and southeast corners of the overall area. The Northern Synergy Oil Field site is an undeveloped, vacant site with no active oil operations. The Southern Synergy Oil Field site is an active oil field with oil production and wells, tank farms, and a network of roads, pipelines, and other oil field-related amenities including the Bixby Ranch Field Office. There are 22 active oil wells and 17 idle oil wells on-site. The Alamitos Bay Partners site is an active oil field with oil wells and associated oil production infrastructure, such as pipelines and tanks. There are 3 active oil wells and 1 idle oil well on-site. Dirt access roads traverse the site.

Generally, long-range views across the North Area show taller trees and thicker vegetation around the perimeter of the area with oil infrastructure, telephone poles and overhead lines, and low-lying vegetation across the area. In the distance, surrounding industrial uses are also visible.

Lighting Environment

Existing sources of light are present throughout the program vicinity including, at the Marketplace Long Beach, Marina Pacific Mall, Alamitos Bay Marina Center to the west, residential uses, including Belmont Shores Mobile Estates and Island Village, and industrial uses including the AES Alamitos Energy Center and Haynes Generating Station, to the north, and industrial and residential uses to the east and south. Existing sources of light include both fixed and mobile sources of light, such as exterior building-mounted and freestanding light fixtures, illuminated signage along storefronts, and streetlights along PCH, Studebaker Road, and 2nd

Street. Other sources of light include cars passing through the program area on PCH, Studebaker Road, and 2nd Street. While the program area does not include lighting along access roads, some areas where oil well facilities are located also include lighting.

3.1.2.2 Existing Views

Because the program area is visible from public viewpoints in surrounding off-site land uses, the following viewpoints were photographed to provide a visual baseline of the program area that would be visible to nearby observers in existing conditions. As discussed in greater detail below, to demonstrate the changes in visual character that would result with implementation of the proposed program, visual simulations of the program area from eight selected viewpoints were used to evaluate changes in both long-range views towards and across the program area and visual character based on height, bulk, massing, and type of development when compared to existing conditions. Certain visual simulations may also support the evaluation of the proposed program's potential effects to visual quality, as well as scenic vistas and scenic resources, in this section.

Figure 3.1-1, *Key Viewpoint Map*, identifies the viewpoints chosen by the LCWA as the most representative locations where the program area is visible from public locations. **Figure 3.1-2 through Figure 3.1-6** (presenting Viewpoints 1 through 6) provide existing views of the program area from each viewpoint, as well as one or more visual simulations to depict the anticipated change in aesthetic conditions from these viewpoints that would occur with construction and implementation of various proposed program components between the time periods of years 1 through 10 (near term), 10 through 20 (mid term), and 20 years onwards (long term).

Viewpoint 1: View from Pacific Coast Highway Looking Southeast Across the South Area (Figure 3.1-2). Viewpoint 1 represents views looking south/southeast from PCH toward the State Lands Parcel site and beyond to the South LCWA site. In the foreground of Viewpoint 1 is a barbed wire fence with a large expanse of non-native vegetation behind the fence, including small shrubs. Palm trees of varying sizes as well as an existing concrete foundation dominate the views in the middle ground. The middle ground also includes sporadically planted shrubs throughout the site, which obstructs views. Utility poles and transmission lines are visible overhead throughout the site. Residential structures and structures associated with the oil production uses are visible in the background.

Viewpoint 2: View from Gum Grove Park Looking North Across the South Area (Figure 3.1-2). Viewpoint 2 provides a view from Gum Grove Park looking north toward the South LCWA site and beyond into the Hellman Retained site. A large strip of thick non-native vegetation dominates the foreground and continues into the middle ground where the non-native vegetation appears to be dried. Oil well pumps and large industrial structures associated with the power plant on the Hellman Retained site, coupled with some trees and a palm tree, are visible in the background.

Viewpoint 3a: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking Southwest across the Isthmus Area (Figure 3.1-3). Viewpoint 3a represents views looking southwest from the San Gabriel River Trail looking toward the Zedler Marsh site and beyond into the Haynes Cooling Channel

and Hellman Retained site. A dirt slope, chain linked fence and dirt road is visible in the foreground, closest to the San Gabriel River Trail, and travels into the distance. A portion of the San Gabriel River is visible from Viewpoint 3a. Viewpoint 3a also includes views of fencing and structures visible just beyond the wetlands area in the middle ground. The background shows power poles and transmission lines, shrubbery, and trees, with oil production facilities interspersed within the background. The Pacific Coast Highway bridge is also visible in the background of Viewpoint 3a.

Viewpoint 3b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking Northeast across the Isthmus Area (Figure 3.1-3). Viewpoint 3b represents views looking northeast from where the Isthmus Bryant site and Zedler Marsh site meet at the third levee along the San Gabriel River towards the DWP site and Haynes Cooling Channel. A view of the San Gabriel River with trees and riprap lining the San Gabriel River as well as the San Gabriel River Trail, a dirt slope, chain linked fence and dirt road are visible from the foreground. The middle ground includes views of the East 2nd Street bridge, power poles and transmission lines, and a partial view of the residential uses located in the Island Village. The background shows the large industrial structures within the Haynes Generating Station that are located north of the East 2nd Street and views of transmission lines are seen throughout the background.

Viewpoint 4a: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking west into the Central Area (Figure 3.1-4). Viewpoint 4a represents views looking west/northwest to the Central LCWA site, and the Long Beach City Property site and Pumpkin Patch site beyond. Viewpoint 4a also includes a partial view of the Isthmus LCWA site. The foreground includes the San Gabriel River Trail as well as a view of the San Gabriel River with trees and riprap lining the San Gabriel River. In the middle ground, views of oil operation infrastructure on the Isthmus LCWA site are partially visible. In addition, just north west of the San Gabriel River, oil wells, buildings, and trees are visible in the middle ground. Power poles and transmission lines are visible throughout the middle ground. The background includes a view of the Pacific Coast Highway Bridge and views of the commercial buildings located west of the Pacific Coast Highway through the Pumpkin Patch site, which is generally vacant with some trailers and fencing located on and in the perimeter of the site.

Viewpoint 4b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking north into the Central Area (Figure 3.1-4). Viewpoint 4b provides a view from the San Gabriel River Trail looking north into the Central LCWA site and beyond into the Central Bryant site across the San Gabriel River. The foreground includes the San Gabriel River with riprap lining the San Gabriel River. Beyond the river, in the middle ground, oil wells, and power poles and transmission lines are visible. The middle ground is also interspersed with shrubs, trees, and palm trees of various heights and sizes. In the background, large industrial structures from the AES Alamitos Energy Center are visible from Viewpoint 4b.

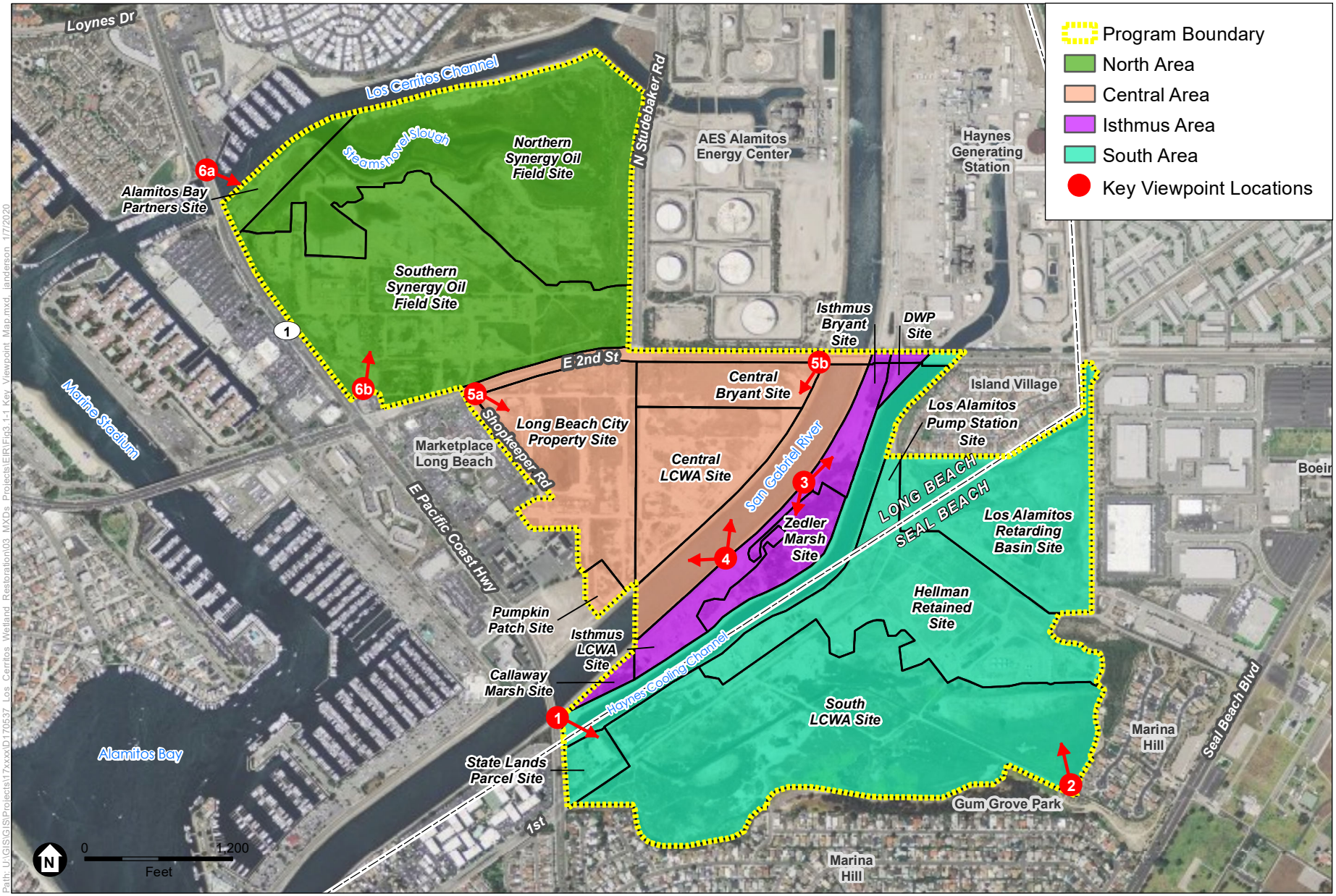
Viewpoint 5a: View from Corner of East 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road looking southeast across the Central Area (Figure 3.1-5). Viewpoint 5a provides a view from the southeast corner of East 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road looking southeast towards the Long Beach City Property site and beyond into the Central LCWA site. In the foreground, views

include small non-native vegetation including weeds and palm trees. Views in the middle ground include oil production structures as well as a chain linked fence and more non-native vegetation. The background includes more oil wells interspersed with trees and palm trees. Power pole and transmission lines are also visible in the background.

Viewpoint 5b: View from East 2nd Street Bridge looking southwest into the Central Area (Figure 3.1-5). Viewpoint 5b provides a view from the East 2nd Street bridge looking into the Central Bryant site and beyond into the Central LCWA site. The foreground includes dirt and sparse vegetation. A chain link fence and levee separate the Central LCWA site from the San Gabriel River. The middle ground includes views of power poles and transmission lines as well as small shrubs. The background includes views of oil production structures, palm trees, and trees interspersed throughout the Central Area.

Viewpoint 6a: View from the Pacific Coast Highway Bridge looking southeast across the North Area (Figure 3.1-6). Viewpoint 6a is from the Pacific Coast Highway Bridge looking southeast across the Los Cerritos Channel towards the Alamitos Bay Partners site and beyond into the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field site. In the foreground are views of the Los Cerritos Channel and boats moored to the pier in the small marina for the Cerritos Bahia Yacht Club. The middle ground includes oil wells and non-native vegetation including palm trees. Some wetland areas are also visible in the middle ground, including a partial view of the Steamshovel Slough. Views in the background include trees and palm trees, power pole and utility lines, as well as large industrial structures associated with the AES Alamitos Energy Center.

Viewpoint 6b: View from corner of East 2nd Street and Pacific Coast Highway looking northeast across the North Area (Figure 3.1-6). Viewpoint 6b is from the parking lot of the In-n-Out located on the northeast corner of East 2nd Street and the Pacific Coast Highway. The viewpoint looks northeast towards the Southern Synergy Oil Field site and beyond to the Northern Synergy Oil Field site. The foreground includes a dirt lot and sparse vegetation. The middle ground includes assorted non-native vegetation and invasive palm trees. Power poles and transmission lines dominate the middle ground. Views in the background include oil wells and other industrial structures.



SOURCE: Mapbox, LCWA

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-1
Key Viewpoint Map

ESA

VIEWPOINT 1: View from Pacific Coast Highway Looking Southeast Across the South Area.

VIEWPOINT 2: View from Gum Grove Park Looking North Across the South Area.

D170537.00

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-2
Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2

ESA

VIEWPOINT 3a: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking Southwest across Isthmus Area.

VIEWPOINT 3b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking Northeast across Isthmus Area.

D170537.00

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-3
Viewpoint 3a and 3b

ESA

VIEWPOINT 4a: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking west into the Central area.

VIEWPOINT 4b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking north into the Central area.

D170537.00

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-4
Viewpoint 4a and 4b

ESA

VIEWPOINT 5a: View from Corner of East 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road looking southeast across the Central area.

VIEWPOINT 5b: View from East 2nd Street Bridge looking southwest into the Central area.

D170537.00

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-5
Viewpoint 5a and 5b

ESA

VIEWPOINT 6a: View from Pacific Coast Highway Bridge looking southeast across North area.

VIEWPOINT 6b: View from corner of East 2nd Street and Pacific Coast Highway looking northeast across the North area.

D170537.00

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-6
Viewpoint 6a and 6b

ESA

3.1.3 Regulatory Framework

3.1.3.1 State

State Scenic Highways

The California Scenic Highway Program is maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and identifies scenic highway corridors for preservation and protection of aesthetic value. Caltrans maintains a list of routes that are "adopted" and "eligible." 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. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been officially designated (Caltrans 2016). In Los Angeles County, there are two adopted scenic highways, both of which are more than 20 miles northeast of the program area. In Orange County, there is one adopted scenic highway, which is located more than 15 miles from the program area. Eligible routes are those that are proposed for further study and may be officially designated when a local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program and applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval. State Route (SR) 1, commonly known as PCH, is an "Eligible State Scenic Highway" but has not been designated as an Official State or County Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2016). The eligible segment of the highway within Long Beach spans from the intersection of PCH and Lakewood Boulevard to the northern border of Orange County. The remaining portions of this eligible scenic highway extend south through the City of Seal Beach to the City of Dana Point. In order for the highway to become officially designated as a scenic highway, the local governing body would need to apply to Caltrans for scenic highway approval and adopt a Corridor Protection Program.

California Coastal Act

The primary authority for implementing the federal Coastal Zone Management Act in the State of California is the California Coastal Commission pursuant to the California Coastal Act of 1976. Sections of the California Coastal Act that pertain to aesthetics and scenic resources are described below. While the City of Seal Beach does not have a certified Local Coastal Program (LCP), it is currently in the process of preparing its LCP. The City of Long Beach has an LCP certified by the California Coastal Commission. For more information about these LCPs, see Section 3.9, *Land Use and Planning*.

Section 30116 Sensitive Coastal Resource Areas

The program area falls within the California Coastal Zone and would be considered a "Sensitive coastal resource area," which are identifiable and geographically bounded land and water areas within the coastal zone of vital interest and sensitivity. "Sensitive coastal resource areas" include the following:

a) Special marine and land habitat areas, wetlands, lagoons, and estuaries as mapped and designated in Part 4 of the coastal plan.

b) Areas possessing significant recreational value.

c) Highly scenic areas.

d) Archaeological sites referenced in the California Coastline and Recreation Plan or as designated by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

The program area falls within criteria "a" due to the presence of existing wetland habitat and criteria "c" as the open space is a unique scenic feature of the site relative to the urban and developed areas that surround it. The program area does not possess a significant recreational value under criteria "b" and none of the archaeological sites in the program area are references in the California Coastline and Recreation Plan or as designated by the State Historic Preservation Officer under criteria "d."

Section 30251 Scenic and Visual Qualities of Coastal Areas

Under Coastal Act Section 30251, the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas must be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Under this section, permitted development is required to be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas (such as the Los Cerritos Wetlands), to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

3.1.3.2 Local

City of Seal Beach

City of Seal Beach General Plan

The City of Seal Beach's General Plan was first adopted in 1973, with the latest General Plan adopted in 2003. It contains the goals, policies, and directions that guide the City of Seal Beach in managing its future. The General Plans consists of eight elements: Land Use, Circulation, Open Space/Recreation/Conservation, Safety, Housing, Noise, Cultural Resources, and Growth Management. Many of the elements have been updated over the years. The following goals, objectives, and policies are related to scenic quality and lighting:

> **Circulation Element Goal.** Provide and maintain a comprehensive circulation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the City and near open space habitats for wildlife, while minimizing environmental impacts (including air, light, and noise pollution).
>
> **Circulation Element Policy.** Develop a circulation system that enhances the environmental amenities and scenic areas.

Seal Beach Municipal Code

The City of Seal Beach Municipal Code regulates development in the City of Seal Beach through zoning designations and development standards. As discussed above and as illustrated in Figure 2-10, *Zoning Districts*, within Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, the individual sites within Seal Beach are zoned as Specific Plan Regulation (SPR), Open Space Natural (OS-N), and Oil Extraction (OE).

The following provisions the City of Seal Beach Municipal Code help minimize light and glare impacts associated with new development projects, including the proposed program:

> **Section 11.4.20.025 N, General Parking Design Standards, Lighting.** Adequate lighting shall be provided for the illumination and protection of the premises. See subsection 11.4.10.020.A: Lighting. Lighting shall be directed away from adjacent streets and properties. All light standards and luminaries shall be clearly identified on all site plans. Lights shall not blink, flash, change intensity, or cause glare. String lights are prohibited. The type of lighting (e.g., mercury vapor, sodium vapor, fluorescent, etc.) shall be approved by the director.

Hellman Ranch Specific Plan

The Hellman Ranch Specific Plan is one of the five specific plans that govern various portions of the City of Seal Beach. The Hellman Ranch Specific Plan was first adopted by the City of Seal Beach City Council on June 19, 1981, with the latest updated specific plan adopted in 1996. The Hellman Ranch Specific Plan covers a 231-acre area located in the City of Seal Beach and divides the specific plan area by five Conservation Planning Areas and 5 Development Planning Areas. The following goals are related to scenic quality and lighting:

> **Project Goals.** Preserve and enhance the open space and create public access opportunities.
>
> **Development Standard 7.8.** All lighting shall be installed and maintained in such a manner to confine direct rays to the premises and prevent direct rays or glare onto neighboring properties.

City of Long Beach

City of Long Beach General Plan

Adopted in 1973, the City of Long Beach General Plan contains the goals, policies, and directions that guide the City in managing its future. The General Plans consists of 12 elements: Air Quality, Conservation, Historic Preservation, Housing, Land Use, Mobility, Noise, Open Space and Recreation, Public Safety, Seismic Safety, Scenic Routes, Seismic Safety, and LCP (described in more detail below). Many of the elements have been updated over the years.

The Scenic Routes Element includes policies regarding scenic resources. Adopted by the City of Long Beach in 1975, the Scenic Routes Element emphasizes criteria, standards, and proposed alignment of urban routes for local designation in a further refinement of the State's Guidelines on Scenic Highways. Four suggested scenic automobile routes and one scenic bicycle route are presented in the Scenic Routes Element. In the program vicinity, this includes PCH, which is also eligible as a State and County Scenic Highway.

The City of Long Beach recently adopted the General Plan Land Use Element on December 2019. The land use designations for the program area are Open Space (OS) PlaceType with a Specific Plan Overlay, with the exception of the Pumpkin Patch site and a portion of the Long Beach City Property site, which have a Regional-Serving Facility (RSF) PlaceType with a Specific Plan Overlay.

Long Beach Municipal Code

The City of Long Beach Municipal Code regulates development in the City of Long Beach through zoning designations and development standards. As discussed above and as illustrated in Figure 2-10, *Zoning Districts*, within Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, the properties within the City of Long Beach subject to the adopted SEADIP are zoned as Planned Development District 1 (PD-1). Under the proposed SEASP 2060, properties would be zoned Coastal Habitat/Wetlands/Recreation (CHWR), Public, and Dedicated Right-of-Way (not built). Further discussion of both the adopted SEADIP and proposed SEASP 2060 is provided below.

The following standard from the City of Long Beach Municipal Code help minimize light and glare impacts associated with new development projects, including the proposed program:

> **Section 21.44.600 (E) (3) Prohibited Signs, Unlawful Illumination.** Floodlights that are not hooded or shielded so that the light source is visible from public right-of-way, adjacent property, or residential dwelling unit are prohibited.

Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan and Proposed Southeast Area Specific Plan

Adopted Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan

Development Districts in the City of Long Beach are special districts that have more comprehensive land use regulations than conventional zoning and are intended to achieve a specific outcome in a geographic area, similar to a Specific Plan. Approved in 1977, the SEADIP was the first PD-1 district in the City of Long Beach and also provides zoning for the covered properties. The SEADIP document is intended to guide land use and development in area that was experiencing a period of rapid growth at the time of adoption. The adopted SEADIP provided development and use standards (e.g., density, setbacks, and height limitations), established a mechanism for infrastructure improvements, and protected views, open space, and wetlands.

The following provisions from the adopted SEADIP are applicable to the proposed program:

> **Provision 11.** Public access shall be provided to and along the boundaries of all public waterways as provided for in the wetlands restoration plan.
>
> **Provision 12.** Public views to water areas and public open spaces shall be maintained and enhanced to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the wetlands restoration plan.
>
> **Provision 13.** Adequate landscaping and required irrigation shall be provided to create a park-like setting for the entire area. A landscaped parkway area shall be provided along all developments fronting on PCH, Westminster Avenue, Studebaker Road, Seventh Street, and Loynes Drive.

Proposed South East Area Specific Plan 2060

The City is in the process of replacing the adopted SEADIP with the proposed SEASP 2060, a new specific plan. The proposed SEASP 2060 area consists of 1,472 acres and includes 1,381 acres currently zoned PD-1 (SEADIP), 94 acres of the San Gabriel River and Los Cerritos Channel, and 6 acres along the southeast edge of the current PD-1 (SEADIP) boundary.

Under the proposed SEASP 2060, a majority of the individual sites would have a land use designation of Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, and Recreation (CHWR). In addition, the Los Alamitos Pump Station site and the portion of the Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site within the City of Long Beach have a land use designation of Public. Furthermore, a portion of the Long Beach Property site is proposed to be designated as Dedicated Right of Way (not built). The CHWR land use designation provides for coastal restoration, access, visitor-serving recreation (boating, public launching, kayaking, paddle boarding, etc.), and biological reserves. Public access to coastal water is encouraged and uses such as interpretive centers and public parking associated with coastal resources are permitted. The Public land use designation provides more public and institutional uses such as elementary schools, museums, and interpretive centers, parking, water tanks and retention basis. Uses in this designation shall comply with provisions of Long Beach Municipal Code Chapter 21.34, Institutional Districts. The Dedicated Right of Way (not built) designation is intended for the extension of Shopkeeper Road which currently dead-ends into the Pumpkin Patch site in the Central Area. The proposed SEASP 2060 indicates that the ultimate alignment of Shopkeeper Road shall be designed to avoid impacting a delineated wetland. The Public designation is applicable to the Los Alamitos Pump Station and Los Alamitos Retarding Basin sites.

The following priorities from the proposed SEASP 2060 are applicable to the proposed program:

> **Priority 3.** View preservation. Preserve views of the hills and mountains and maintain the scenic environment through control of building placement and/or height.

Given that the SEASP 2060 has not been adopted, the consistency analysis below focuses on the proposed program's consistency with the policies in the adopted SEADIP. Note that at the time of writing this PEIR, the California Coastal Commission has yet to certify the proposed SEASP 2060; however, it is anticipated that the SEASP 2060 will be completed and issued in its final form within the lifetime of the proposed program. As such, a consistency analysis is also provided for the proposed SEASP 2060, for informational purposes.

City of Long Beach Local Coastal Program

In order to mitigate and upgrade adverse conditions of existing oil sites located in the coastal zone and impacting residential cities, the City of Long Beach LCP proposes the following policies and measures that protect visual quality in the surrounding area.

A. Upon application for a permit, a detailed landscaping, irrigation and fencing plan shall be submitted and must meet with the approval of the Department of Planning and Building and the Bureau of Parks.

B. Specific requirements for landscaping, etc., shall be:

   1. Fencing shall be of masonry and gates shall be of solid wood.
   2. Landscaping shall include trees, not less than 15 gallons in size; shrubs not less than 5 gallons in size; suitable ground cover; all maintained in a neat and healthy condition so as to screen and conceal equipment.
   3. Landscaped areas shall be watered with a fully automatic irrigation system.

4. Applicant shall be required to implement the approved plan at the time of site preparation prior to drilling in areas where they are required, curbs, sidewalks, and landscaped parkways shall be installed.
5. All gathering and injection lines outside any walled areas must be buried.
6. All production shall be transported from any new site by buried pipeline. On existing sites measures must be instituted wherever possible to convert to pipeline transportation.
7. The number of tanks shall be kept to a minimum and new tanks shall be installed so that height of the tank does not exceed 10 feet above grade level.
8. The use of above ground storage tanks in residential areas in service on August 1, 1979, may be continued provided sites are enclosed by a 6-foot-high masonry all and trees of adequate size to screen them from public view and do not adversely affect the aesthetic value of surrounding property, implement as soon as possible.
9. Tanks must be maintained and painted on a regular basis.
10. Existing production sites within residential areas shall comply with landscaping, wall, sidewalk, and setback requirements within the minimum legally possible amortization period.
11. Permittees who are also owners of a fee simple interest in the land on which abandoned wells are located shall not be exempt from land restoration and clean-up when wells are abandoned in residential areas.

3.1.4 Significance Thresholds and Methodology

3.1.4.1 Significance Thresholds

For the purposes of this Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and consistency with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the program would have a significant impact on aesthetic resources if it would:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

3.1.4.2 Methodology

The analysis identifies potential temporary impacts from the proposed construction and restoration activities and permanent post-restoration effects of the proposed program on aesthetic resources, as seen from publicly accessible roads, bike trails, and other sensitive observer points, as identified in Figure 3.1-2 through Figure 3.1-6, shown above. Program elements are evaluated

on the basis of visual simulations,[1] technical expertise, and familiarity with the program area to determine the potential of the program to result in impacts to aesthetic resources using the significance criteria provided above. Projects can result not only in direct impacts on readily identifiable scenic resources, amenities, or features, but also in indirect effects on the visual quality or character of an area. The approach to evaluating the effect of this program under each criterion is described below:

1. ***Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista:*** This criterion applies only to projects that would be located on or disrupt access to a scenic vista or result in visual changes within its viewshed. Scenic vistas may be officially recognized or designated (e.g., within local planning documents) or they may be informal in nature (e.g., mountain peaks or coastal bluffs). A project's effect would be considered substantial if it would appreciably damage or remove the visual qualities that make the view unique, unobstructed, and/or exemplary.
2. ***Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway:*** Damage to a scenic resource is substantial when it is reasonably perceptible to affected viewers and when it appreciably degrades one or more of the aesthetic qualities that contributes to a scenic setting. The presence of and potential damage to scenic resources in this analysis is considered along with program-related effects on the existing visual character and quality of a site or surroundings within the Caltrans scenic highway program.
3. ***In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality:*** The first half of this criterion is applicable to those projects in a non-urbanized setting where a project would result in either temporary or permanent visual change. A project is considered to "substantially degrade" the visual character or quality of a site if it would have a strongly negative influence on the public's experience and appreciation of the visual environment. The second half of this criterion is applicable to those projects in an urbanized setting and the analysis would instead focus on whether the project would conflict with applicable zoning as defined within a municipal code or other regulations governing scenic quality, such as those within a general plan or specific plan.
4. ***Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area:*** This criterion applies to projects that require nighttime lighting, or that involve structures or finishes that could create substantial glare.

As stated in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, on March 8, 2019, the LCWA sent the Notice of Preparation to responsible, trustee, and federal agencies, as well as to organizations and individuals potentially interested in the program to identify the relevant environmental issues that should be addressed in the PEIR. One comment was received by the California Coastal Commission requesting that visual simulations of the program's effects on coastal scenic vista from public viewing areas are included in the PEIR. This comment regarding viewpoints and visual simulations is addressed below. No other issues related to aesthetics were identified in the received comments.

[1] The grading and planting plans in the visual simulations are conceptual and modifications may be made as they are finalized, such as changes to the specific type of native plants to be installed.

3.1.5 Program Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AES-1: The proposed program would result in a significant impact if the proposed program would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Scenic vistas in the area include views of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, Los Cerritos Channel, Steamshovel Slough, and San Gabriel River with the San Gabriel Mountains rising in the background northeast of the program area.

Construction

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, construction of the proposed program would generally involve remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater, grading, revegetation, construction of new public access opportunities (including trails, visitor centers, parking lots, and viewpoints), construction of flood management facilities (including earthen levees and berms, and walls), and modification of existing infrastructure and utilities. However, this would vary between each individual site. In order to perform some of these construction activities, the proposed program would include the use of barges to transport soil/construction materials out to sea for a marine disposal or to another port/marina site to be picked up by construction trucks. An analysis of each area of the proposed program is provided below.

South Area

Construction activities on the South Area include grading on the South LCWA site in the near term, construction of an earthen berm or flood wall to protect the Hellman Retained site, raising 1st Street, and constructing the Seal Beach Visitor Center on the State Lands Parcel site. In the mid term, a channel will be excavated to connect the Haynes Cooling Channel to the South LCWA site. Oil operations in the long term on the Hellman Retained site would need to be phased out or consolidated to allow for restoration. Construction activities in the long term include grading on the Hellman Retained site, removing 1st street in its entirety, and excavating a channel to connect the Haynes Cooling Channel to the Hellman Retained site.

These restoration activities would temporarily alter scenic vistas as seen from areas surrounding the program area, which include scenic vistas of the Los Cerritos Wetlands as well as the San Gabriel Mountains that can be seen in the far distance to the northeast of the South Area on a clear day. While the Haynes Cooling Channel is located within the South Area, it is not considered a scenic vista as it is a waterway used by the Haynes Generating Station to bring in water from the Pacific Ocean via 7 culverts in the Alamitos Bay Marina to cool the power plant. The Haynes Cooling Channel is planned for decommissioning as part of Cumulative Project No. 22 (see Table 3-1 in Chapter 3, *Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures*, of this PEIR). Potential visible restoration and construction activities could include earth moving and construction equipment and materials, stockpiled soil fill, visible dust plumes, and debris piles, which could partially obscure scenic vistas when viewed in close proximity to the site.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, the construction activities proposed under the proposed program would serve to restore and enhance the wetlands and would be temporary in nature. The State Lands Parcel site is not located within the wetlands, but construction of the

visitor's center would include movement of construction equipment. However, as shown in Figure 3.1-2, development would occur on an existing developed site and any construction activities would be temporary. Views of scenic vistas from public roads surrounding the site, including PCH, could be affected by the restoration and construction activities; however, views from these roadways are from the same elevation as the program area and, thus, any restoration and construction work viewed from these roads would be seen in the foreground and would not block or obscure broader views of background scenic vistas, such as those of the San Gabriel Mountains and, thus, would not temporarily or permanently alter a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

Isthmus Area

Construction activities on the Isthmus Area include grading on the Isthmus Bryant site in the near term. In the mid term, construction activities include grading on the Callaway Marsh site. Oil operations in the long term on the Isthmus LCWA site would need to be phased out or consolidated to allow for restoration. Soils on the Isthmus LCWA site would also need to be remediated. Construction activities in the long term also include grading on the Isthmus LCWA site and removal of access roads on the Isthmus Bryant site and DWP site. These restoration activities would temporarily alter scenic vistas as seen from areas surrounding the program area, which include scenic vistas of the Los Cerritos Wetlands and San Gabriel River, which runs directly adjacent to the Isthmus Area. Potential visible restoration and construction activities could include earth moving and construction equipment and materials, stockpiled soil fill, visible dust plumes, and debris piles, which could partially obscure scenic vistas when viewed in close proximity to the site.

While construction within the Isthmus Area includes visible restoration and construction activities, these activities serve to restore and enhance the wetlands and would be temporary in nature. Views of scenic vistas from public roads surrounding the Isthmus Area, including 2nd Street, could be affected by the restoration and construction activities; however, proposed construction does not include the use of large construction equipment or permanent structures that could potentially obstruct views of the San Gabriel River from 2nd Street. In addition, while there are views of the San Gabriel Mountains from the San Gabriel River Trail, views are currently obstructed by the AES Alamitos Energy Center and Haynes Generating Stations, and construction activities would not block or obscure broader views of background scenic vistas. Thus, construction activities on the Isthmus Area would not temporarily or permanently alter a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

Central Area

Construction activities on the Central Area include remediation of soils and relocation or modification of oil infrastructure, grading of the individual sites, construction of earthen levees, and construction of public trails and viewpoints within the Central LWCA site and Central Bryant site in the near term. The Central LCWA site and Central Bryant site also include raising the existing wells and breaching the San Gabriel River Levee to reconnect the river with the restored marsh in the near term. In the long term, construction activities include removal of the Interim Levee on the Central LCWA site and Central Bryant site. Construction activities on the Long

Beach City Property site include grading, construction of an earthen levee, excavation of a tidal channel, construction of public trails, and construction of viewpoints in the long term. On the Pumpkin Patch site, construction activities would include construction of an earthen levee. Other activities occurring within the Central Area, but that were analyzed in the Los Cerritos Wetlands Oil Consolidation and Restoration Project EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2016041083), include construction of an aboveground pipeline systems along 2nd Street and removal of oil operations within the Long Beach City Property and Pumpkin Patch sites.

These restoration activities would temporarily alter scenic vistas as seen from areas surrounding the program area, which include scenic vistas of the Los Cerritos Wetlands as well as the San Gabriel River that runs adjacent to and south of the Central Area and the San Gabriel Mountains in the background to the northeast of the Central Area. Potential visible restoration and construction activities could include earth moving and construction equipment and materials, stockpiled soil fill, visible dust plumes, and debris piles, which could partially obscure scenic vistas when viewed in close proximity to the site.

Both the Long Beach City Property site and Central LCWA site are both located on active oil fields and are developed with oil infrastructure and contain non-native species which degrade the quality of the scenic vista in this portion of the wetlands. The construction activities proposed under the proposed program would serve to restore and enhance the wetlands and would be temporary in nature. As shown in Figure 3.1-5, views of the San Gabriel River are limited and only available from PCH adjacent to the Pumpkin Patch site. While views of construction within the Central Area could potentially be seen in the foreground from the San Gabriel River and 2nd Street, construction and remediation activities would not block or obscure broader views of background scenic vistas, such as those of the San Gabriel Mountains. Furthermore, all construction and remediation activities occurring within the Central Area would be temporary in nature and, thus, would not temporarily or permanently alter a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

North Area

Construction activities on the Southern Synergy Oil Field site in the long term include grading of the site to support habitat restoration, construction of earthen levees, and excavation of a tidal channel. Oil infrastructure on the Alamitos Bay Partners site also need to be relocated to allow for restoration. Additional long-term construction activities include remediation of soils and grading of the Alamitos Bay Partners site. No construction activities are proposed on the Northern Synergy Oil Field site. Other construction activities that would occur within the North Area, but that were analyzed in the Los Cerritos Wetlands Oil Consolidation and Restoration Project EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2016041083), include the remediation of soils, construction of a barrier, grading tidal channels, and removal of segments of existing berm within the Northern Synergy Oil Field site and development of the Long Beach Visitor Center and parking lot and construction of trails, overlook, sidewalk enhancements, and bikeway improvements within the Southern Synergy Oil Field site.

The proposed restoration activities on the northern portion of the North Area, which would occur within the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex and adjacent to Steamshovel Slough and Los Cerritos

Channel, would temporarily alter scenic vistas as seen from areas surrounding the program area. Similarly, views of the southern portion of the North Area would temporarily be altered during construction activities, including phasing out of oil infrastructure and restoration of areas around oil infrastructure. Potential visible restoration and construction activities could include earth moving and construction equipment and materials, stockpiled soil fill, visible dust plumes, and debris piles, which could partially obscure scenic vistas when viewed in close proximity to the site.

The construction activities proposed under the proposed program would serve to restore and enhance the wetlands and would be temporary in nature. In addition, views of scenic vistas from public roads surrounding the site, including PCH, 2nd Street, and Studebaker Road, could be affected by the restoration and construction activities; however, views from these roadways are from the same elevation as the program area and, thus, any restoration and construction work viewed from these roads would be seen in the foreground views. Restoration and construction activities would not block or obscure broader views of background scenic vistas, such as those of the San Gabriel Mountains. Furthermore, all restoration and construction activities would be temporary in nature and, thus, would not temporarily or permanently alter a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The following analysis discusses the potential for the proposed program to have an adverse effect on a scenic vista based on visual simulations that depict existing and future views of the proposed program. Existing and future views of conditions under the proposed program were provided for Viewpoint 1 (South Area), Viewpoint 2 (South Area), Viewpoint 3b (Isthmus Area), Viewpoint 4b (Central Area), Viewpoint 5a (Central Area), and Viewpoint 6a (North Area), as illustrated in Figures 3.1-7 through 3.1-12, below.

South Area

Viewpoint 1: View from PCH Looking Southeast Across the South Area. As shown in Figure 3.1-7, the existing long-range view from PCH looking southeast towards the State Lands Parcel site and beyond to the South LCWA site includes a large expanse of non-native vegetation in the foreground, palm trees of varying sizes as well as an existing pad dominate the middle ground, and residential structures and structures associated with oil production in the background. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, within the near term, activities within Viewpoint 1 would include development of the Seal Beach Visitor Center and associated parking facilities on the State Lands Parcel site as well as habitat restoration, removing the gate on the Hellman Channel culvert to the San Gabriel River, and raising 1st Street. As shown in **Figure 3.1-7**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 1*, the gate and fencing preventing access to the South LCWA site is removed and vegetation in the foreground has been restored to wetland species with tidal salt marsh restored in the middle ground to the south east and native grass land has been restored to the south west. The existing concrete foundation in the middle ground includes the Seal Beach Visitor Center and parking area with native vegetation fronting the visitor center.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, under operation, the existing wetlands would be retained and further enhanced with the restoration of the surrounding area with tidal salt marsh and native grasslands, within the raptor foraging habitat. The Seal Beach Visitor Center would also visually improve the view of the State Lands Parcel site from PCH. No other scenic vistas, including the Steamshovel Slough, San Gabriel River, or the San Gabriel Mountains, are visible from Viewpoint 1. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

Viewpoint 2: View from Gum Grove Park Looking North Across the South Area. As shown in **Figure 3.1-8**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 2*, the existing long-range view from Gum Grove Park looking north towards the South LWCA site and beyond to the Hellman Retained site includes a thick strip of non-native vegetation in the foreground and middle ground and industrial structures in the background with obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance on a clear day. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, near-term activities within Viewpoint 2 would include tidal salt marsh restoration and the construction of an earthen berm or flood wall to maintain the existing flood control for the Hellman Retained site. As shown in Figure 3.1-8, the vast majority of the South LWCA site has been restored from the overgrown non-native vegetation to tidal salt marsh. In addition, the berm can be seen in the middle ground that separates the South LWCA site from the industrial Hellman Retained site. While the visual simulation illustrated in Figure 3.1-8 only provides a near-term visual simulation of Viewpoint 2, it should be noted that in the long term within the Hellman Retained site, which can be seen in the distance of Viewpoint 2, the oil operations would be phased out or consolidated and would allow for habitat restoration.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex under operation, the non-native vegetation would be replaced with tidal salt marsh and would restore the habitat. In addition, obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains would be partially visible on a clear day behind the industrial structures on the Hellman Retained site. There are no proposed changes within the near term or mid term that would further obstruct these views. In the long term, the oil operations would be phased out or consolidated, and the berm previously built during the near term would be lowered, breached, or removed which would allow for improved views of the restored wetlands and transitional zone habitat that would be on the Hellman Retained site after removal/consolidation of the oil operations. Phasing out or consolidation of the oil operations would provide for an unobstructed view of the San Gabriel Mountains and would enhance the scenic vista. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

Isthmus Area

Viewpoint 3b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking Northeast across the Isthmus Area. As shown in **Figure 3.1-9**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 3b,* the existing long-range view from the San Gabriel River Trail looking northeast towards the Isthmus Bryant site includes a dirt slope, chain linked fence and dirt road in the foreground, the East 2nd Street bridge, power poles and transmission lines, and a partial view of the residential uses are visible in the middle ground, and large industrial structures within the and Haynes Generating Stations are visible in the background with obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, near-term activities within Viewpoint 3b would

include habitat restoration such as focused grading and removal of invasive species and planting of native vegetation. Long-term activities within the Isthmus Bryant site would include removal of access roads and culverts. Figure 3.1-9 illustrates a long-term visual simulation of the Isthmus Bryant site. As shown therein, the chain link fence and dirt road in the foreground and the non-native species in the middle ground have been completely removed and the site has been restored with tidal salt marsh and transition zone habitat.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, under operation, the non-native vegetation would be removed and tidal salt marsh and transition zone habitat would be restored. In addition, while the San Gabriel River is visible within Viewpoint 3b, permanent structures that could potentially obstruct views of the San Gabriel River from 2nd Street are not proposed and the surrounding restored habitat would serve to enhance views of the San Gabriel River. Furthermore, obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains would be partially visible on a clear day behind the AES Alamitos Energy Center and Haynes Generating Station. As stated previously, no permanent structures are proposed that would obstruct the views of the San Gabriel Mountains further. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

Central Area

Viewpoint 4b: View from San Gabriel River Trail looking north into the Central Area. As shown in **Figure 3.1-10**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 4b*, the existing long-range view from the San Gabriel River Trail looking north towards the Central LCWA site and beyond to the Central Bryant site includes the San Gabriel River and rock levee in the foreground, oil wells, power poles and transmission lines, and shrubs, trees, and palm trees of various heights and sizes in the middle ground, and large industrial structures from the AES Alamitos Energy Center are visible from Viewpoint 4b with obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description,* of this PEIR, the proposed program would construct a perimeter and interim levee and raise the oil wells in place. Additional activities in the near term would include breaching the existing levee and excavating channels throughout the sites. The perimeter levee would run parallel to 2nd Street and would be offset 30 feet from the property line. Long-term activities within the Central LCWA site and Central Bryant site include removal of the interim levee and excavation of a tidal channel from the Central LCWA/Central Bryant site to the Long Beach City Property site. Figure 3.1-10 illustrates a near-term visual simulation of Viewpoint 4b. As shown therein, the existing rock levee has been removed and breached such that the San Gabriel River flows into the Central Area. The tidal salt marsh habitat has also been restored and a partial view of the vegetated levee at the back of the site is visible from Viewpoint 4b.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, under operation, the non-native vegetation would be removed and tidal salt marsh habitat would be restored. In addition, while the San Gabriel River is visible within Viewpoint 4b, permanent structures that could potentially obstruct views of the San Gabriel River from 2nd Street are not proposed and the surrounding restored habitat would serve to enhance views of the San Gabriel River. Furthermore, obstructed views of the San Gabriel Mountains would be partially visible on a clear day behind the AES Alamitos Energy Center. In the near term, raising the oil wells would not obstruct views as the changes

would blend in with the industrial uses within the AES Alamitos Energy Center in the background, which already obstructs views of the San Gabriel Mountains in the existing setting. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

Viewpoint 5a: View from Corner of East 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road looking southeast across the Central Area. As shown in **Figure 3.1-11**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 5a*, the existing long-range view from the corner of 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road looking southeast towards the Long Beach City Property site and beyond into the Central LWCA site includes small non-native vegetation in the foreground, oil production structures, a chain linked fence and more non-native vegetation in the middle ground, and oil wells, trees and palm trees, and power pole and transmission lines in the background. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the PEIR, within the near term, activities within the view would include a those described above under the discussion of Viewpoint 4b, which includes two options to address ongoing oil well production on the Central LWCA site and habitat restoration activities. These near-term activities would be visible in the middle ground. Activities that would occur closer to the foreground within the Long Beach City Property site would occur within the long term and would be similar to those of the near term that would occur within the Central LWCA and Central Bryant sites. Such activities include excavation of tidal channels, habitat restoration, and construction of an earthen levee to protect 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road. Figure 3.1-11 illustrates a long-term visual simulation of Viewpoint 5a. At this corner of 2nd Street and Shopkeeper Road, a vegetated earthen levee can be seen. However, on this vegetated levee, public trails would be provided that would be accessible via ramps and stairs.

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, under operation, the non-native vegetation would be removed and tidal salt marsh habitat would be restored. Oil wells and chain-linked fences that are visible in the middle ground would be replaced with a vegetated levee that would be more aesthetically pleasing. In addition, the San Gabriel River is not visible from this point, however, with public access to public trails on top of the perimeter levees, views of the San Gabriel River would be enhanced. No other scenic vistas, including the Steamshovel Slough, San Gabriel River, or the San Gabriel Mountains, are visible from Viewpoint 5a. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

North Area

Viewpoint 6a: View from the Pacific Coast Highway Bridge looking southeast across the North Area. As shown in **Figure 3.1-12**, *Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 6a*, the existing long-range view from the PCH looking southeast across the Alamitos Bay Partners site and beyond into the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field site includes the Los Cerritos Channel and boats moored to the pier in the small marina for the Cerritos Bahia Yacht Club in the foreground, oil wells, non-native vegetation and some wetlands in the middle ground, including a partial view of the Steamshovel Slough, and trees and palm trees, power pole and utility lines, as well as large industrial structures associated with the AES Alamitos Energy Center, are visible in the background. No near-term activities are proposed under the proposed program within Viewpoint 6a. All near-term activities are associated with the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites and were analyzed as part of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Oil Consolidation and Restoration Project EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2016041083). As described in Chapter 2,

Project Description, of this PEIR, within the long-term activities within Viewpoint 6a would include habitat restoration within the Alamitos Bay Partners site and Southern Synergy Oil Field site as well as construction of earthen levee or flood wall to protect 2nd Street and PCH, excavation of a tidal channel from the Northern Synergy Oil Field site to the Southern Synergy Oil Field site, and removal of the new barrier constructed in the near-term (as proposed and analyzed within the Los Cerritos Wetlands Oil Consolidation and Restoration Project EIR, State Clearinghouse Number 2016041083).

With regard to the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, under operation, the non-native vegetation would be removed and tidal salt marsh habitat would be restored. In addition, while the Los Cerritos Channel is visible within Viewpoint 6a, permanent structures that could potentially obstruct views of the Los Cerritos Channel from PCH are not proposed and the surrounding restored habitat would serve to enhance views of the Los Cerritos Channel. Furthermore, Steamshovel Slough is located more central within the North Area and is partially visible from Viewpoint 6a. However, activities proposed under the proposed program, including habitat restoration throughout the North Area as well as excavation of a tidal channel from the Northern Synergy Oil Field site to the Southern Synergy Oil Field site would serve to further enhance views of the Steamshovel Slough. Impacts to scenic vistas under operation of the proposed program would be less than significant.

Summary

As discussed above, impacts during construction of the proposed program would serve to restore and enhance the wetlands and would be temporary in nature. In addition, as shown in Figure 3.1-7 through Figure 3.1-12, and as supported by the accompanying discussions above, development of the proposed program would change views of the scenic vistas; however, a majority of the viewpoints would be enhanced by the proposed program due to the restoration of native vegetation and wetland habitat and consolidation of oil production facilities. Therefore, the proposed program would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-7
Visual Simulation - Viewpoint 1

ESA

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-8
Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 2

ESA

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-9
Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 3b

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-10
Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 4b

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-11
Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 5a

ESA

SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Draft Program EIR

Figure 3.1-12
Visual Simulation – Viewpoint 6a

ESA

Impact AES-2: The proposed program would result in a significant impact if the proposed program would substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

As previously discussed, PCH has been identified by Caltrans as an "Eligible State Scenic Highway," but has not been designated as an Official State or County Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2016). The Alamitos Bay Partners site, portions of the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites, the Pumpkin Patch site, State Lands Parcel site, and portions of the South LCWA site are all directly adjacent to and visible from PCH.

As described above, damage to a scenic resource is substantial when it is reasonably perceptible to affected viewers and when it appreciably degrades one or more of the aesthetic qualities that contributes to a scenic setting. Scenic resources on the program area would include wetland areas. View 1, as provided in Figure 3.1-2, Viewpoint 5b, as provided in Figure 3.1-5, and Viewpoints 6a and 6b, as provided in Figure 3.1-6, illustrate the existing conditions on the program area and views from PCH.

With regard to Viewpoint 1, which includes a view of a large expanse of non-native vegetation, including small shrubs and palm trees of varying sizes, no wetlands are visible. Viewpoint 6a provides a view of the Alamitos Bay Partners site from PCH which includes oil wells and non-native vegetation including palm trees. Some wetland areas are also visible from Viewpoint 6a. Viewpoint 6b provides a view of assorted non-native vegetation and invasive palm trees and no wetlands are visible from this view. As such, views of scenic resources on the program area are for the most part not visible from PCH. While views of wetlands located on the North Area are somewhat visible from PCH, the construction and operation of the proposed program would remove non-native vegetation and phase out oil production facilities, which would enhance the scenic value of the proposed program. As such, no scenic resources would be damaged within a state scenic highway. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

Impact AES-3: The proposed program would result in a significant impact if the proposed program would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings in non-urbanized areas or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality in an urbanized area.

The program area is located both the City of Long Beach and the City of Seal Beach, which are urbanized cities. Surrounding uses include residential uses to the south and north of the South Area and north of the North Area; commercial uses to the west of the program area, and industrial uses to the east of the South Area and North Area. As such, this impact analysis will focus on

whether the proposed program conflicts with the applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, including the City of Seal Beach General Plan, Hellman Ranch Specific Plan, City of Long Beach General Plan, adopted SEADIP, the proposed SEASP 2060 (for informational purposes), and City of Long Beach's LCP.

City of Seal Beach

The South Area includes the following individual sites: Haynes Cooling Channel, State Lands Parcel, South LCWA, Hellman Retained, Los Alamitos Pump Station, and Los Alamitos Retarding Basin. A majority of the South Area is the only area within the program area that is under the jurisdiction of the City of Seal Beach. The individual sites within the South Area not under the City of Seal Beach jurisdiction include the Los Alamitos Pump Station site and the northwestern portion of the Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site.

According to the Seal Beach zoning map, the properties within Seal Beach are zoned as Specific Plan Regulation (SPR), Open Space Natural [OS-N (SPR)], and Oil Extraction [OE (SPR)]. All property in the Specific Plan Regulation Zone shall only be used for the purposes permitted by the general plan and specific plan adopted for such property. The Hellman Ranch Specific Plan designates this parcel as Development Planning Area No. 6 (land use designation Recreation Serving Commercial). In addition, the intent of the OS-N zoning designation is to preserve publicly owned parklands, environmentally sensitive lands and habitats in their natural state. Finally, the OE zone allows for the oil extraction and related production storage and processing, maintenance facilities, and related operational and maintenance facilities. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the PEIR, the proposed program does not seek any general plan or zoning amendments.

As discussed further in Section 3.9, *Land Use and Planning*, of this PEIR, the activities proposed in the South Area would serve to provide for ecosystem restoration of the coastal salt marsh habitat, which would be allowed under the OS-N and OE zones. In addition, under the proposed program, the State Lands Parcel site would include development of a visitor center, which is allowed under the Specific Plan Regulation Zone, as determined in the Hellman Ranch Specific Plan, which designated this individual site as Development Planning Areas No. 6 (land use designation Recreation Serving Commercial) and is intended for public benefit and visitor serving commercial uses

The Specific Plan Regulation Zone is also applicable to the individual sites zoned as OS-N and OE. These individual sites are included in Conservation Planning Area Nos. 1 (land use designation Saltwater Wetlands), 2 (land use designation Freshwater Wetlands), 4 (land use designation Hellman Ranch Reserve Gold Course), and 5 (land use designation Los Alamitos Retarding Basin), and within Development Planning Area No. 9 (land use designation Mineral/Production Future Development).[2] As analyzed in greater detail in Section 3.9, *Land Use and Planning*, of this PEIR, the activities proposed on the South Area that are within the City of

[2] As described above under Subsection 3.2, Local, the Hellman Ranch Specific Plan divides the specific plan area by five Conservation Planning Areas and 5 Development Planning Areas.

Seal Beach and zoned OS-N (SPR) and OE (SPR) are generally consistent with the purpose identified in the Hellman Ranch Specific Plan.

Both the City of Seal Beach General Plan and Hellman Ranch Specific Plan include regulations governing scenic quality. As provided in the City of Seal Beach General Plan, the Circulation Element includes a goal to provide and maintain a comprehensive circulation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the City and near open space habitats for wildlife, while minimizing environmental impacts (including air, light, and noise pollution) and a related policy to develop a circulation system that enhances the environmental amenities and scenic areas. The Hellman Ranch Specific Plan includes a project goal to preserve and enhance open space and create public access opportunities.

The activities proposed in the South Area would serve to provide for ecosystem restoration of the coastal salt marsh habitat and includes the creation of suitable raptor foraging habitat to support various bird species which nest and/or forage in the South Area and within Gum Grove Park. Along with this enhancement of open space, the South Area includes development of a new restricted trail that would be constructed through the raptor habitat on the South LCWA site. The trail would connect Gum Grove Park to the existing San Gabriel River Trail, fishing area, and trails on the Isthmus area. Development of these trails would serve to support this goal and policy of the City of Seal Beach General Plan Circulation Element. As such, the activities proposed under the proposed program as part of the South Area would be consistent with these regulations governing scenic quality from the City of Seal Beach General Plan and Hellman Ranch Specific Plan.

Overall, as discussed above, the proposed program would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality in an urbanized area.

City of Long Beach

Portion of the South Area, including the Los Alamitos Pump Station site and the northwestern portion of the Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site, as well as the Isthmus Area, Central Area, and North Area, are under the jurisdiction of the City of Long Beach. The individual sites within the City of Long Beach subject to the adopted SEADIP are zoned as PD-1. Under the proposed SEASP 2060, individual sites would be zoned as Coastal Habitat/Wetlands/Recreation (CHWR), Public, and Dedicated Right of Way (not built).

Consistency with the adopted SEADIP

As previously discussed, the properties within the City of Long Beach are zoned as PD-1 (SEADIP). In particular, portions of the proposed program fall in several subareas, including, Subarea 11A (Southern Synergy Oil Field site); Subarea 11B (Alamitos Bay Partners site); Subarea 25 (Long Beach City Property site and Pumpkin Patch site); Subarea 26A and 26B (Central LCWA site and Central Bryant site); Subarea 27 (Callaway Marsh site, Zelder Marsh site, Isthmus Bryant site, DPW site, Haynes Cooling Channel, and Los Alamitos Pump Station site); Subarea 28 (Los Alamitos Retarding Basin site); and Subarea 33 (portions of the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites).

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the PEIR, the proposed program does not seek any general plan or zoning amendments. As discussed further in Section 3.9, *Land Use and Planning*, of this PEIR, the proposed program includes various activities, including grading, excavation of tidal channels and construction of earthen levees or flood walls, which would support habitat restoration. Some of the individual sites also include construction of trails and viewpoints.

As described under Section 3.1.3.2, above, the adopted SEADIP includes several provisions governing scenic quality that would be applicable to the proposed program. With regard to Provision 11, which requires that public access be provided to and along the boundaries of all public waterways as provided for in the wetlands restoration plan, the existing San Gabriel River Bike Trail and existing restricted access trails which are adjacent to San Gabriel River would be maintained under the proposed program. In addition, a new restricted access trail (guided) would be provided along the San Gabriel River as well. While are no current public views or open space on the program area, the proposed program would be consistent with Provision 12 of the adopted SEADIP, which requires public views to water areas and public open spaces be maintained and enhanced to the maximum extent possible, as activities under the proposed program would create public views to both open space and water areas by constructing a new pedestrian trails, elevated perimeter pedestrian walkways, educational or interpretive features, and viewing areas with overlooks within and along restored wetlands habitats and the San Gabriel River. The proposed program would also be consistent with Provision 13 of the adopted SEADIP, which requires adequate landscaping and required irrigation be provided to create a park-like setting for the entire area. Consistent with this provision, the proposed program would include new landscaping along all setbacks of new development within the Alamitos Bay Partners site, Southern Synergy Oil Field site, Long Beach City Property site, Central Bryant site, Pumpkin Patch site, Isthmus Bryant site, and DWP site, fronting Studebaker Road, Westminster Avenue, and PCH, as necessary. Therefore, the proposed program would be consistent with these provisions of the SEADIP governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

Consistency with proposed SEASP 2060

Individual sites that would be zoned CHWR include the Zedler Marsh site, Isthmus Bryant site, DWP site, Callaway Marsh site, and Isthmus LCWA, within the Isthmus Area; the Central LCWA site, Central Bryant site, Pumpkin Patch site, and a portion of the Long Beach City Property site, within the Central Area; and the Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites and the Alamitos Bay Partners site, within the North Area.

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the PEIR, the proposed program does not seek any general plan or zoning amendments. As discussed further in Section 3.9, *Land Use and Planning*, of this PEIR, the proposed program includes various activities, including grading, excavation of a tidal channels and construction of earthen levees or flood walls, which would support habitat restoration. Some of the individual sites also include construction of trails and viewpoints.

As provided in the SEASP 2060, Priority 3 emphasizes preserving views of hills and mountains and maintaining the scenic environment through control of building placement and/or height.

Generally, in order for restoration activities to occur, oil operations on a majority of the individual sites within the SEASP 2060 (including the Isthmus LCWA site, Central LCWA site, Central Bryant site, Long Beach City Property site, Pumpkin Patch site, and Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites, and the Alamitos Bay Partners site) would be phased out or consolidated. Phasing out or consolidation of oil operations would support habitat restoration and would remove views of oil operations that would otherwise block views of the hills and mountains. Also see analysis for Impact AES-1, which concludes that the proposed program would not temporarily or permanently alter a scenic vista, such as views of the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance. Therefore, the activities proposed under the proposed program within the City of Long Beach would be consistent with these regulations governing scenic quality from the SEASP 2060. Impacts would be less than significant.

Consistency with California Coastal Act and Long Beach Local Coastal Program

The unincorporated areas within the adopted SEADIP—Subareas 11A, 11B, 25, 26a, 26b, 27, 28, 30, and 33—were deleted from the City of Long Beach's LCP. These areas represent wetland areas, existing oil operations, and the Los Alamitos Retaining Basin southeast of the San Gabriel River. As such, all individual sites within the City of Long Beach, with the exception of the Pumpkin Patch site, Long Beach City Property site, and Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites, have been deleted from the City of Long Beach's LCP and are not subject to its goals and policies. As most individual sites within the program area are not covered by the City of Long Beach LCP, proposed development would be reviewed for consistency with the Chapter 3 policies of the CCA, Section 30251. As described under Section 3.1.3.2, above, under Coastal Act Section 30251, the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas must be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Under this section, permitted development is required to be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas (such as the Los Cerritos Wetlands), to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. As analyzed under Impact AES-1, development of the proposed program would change views from public viewpoints; however, a majority of the viewpoints would be enhanced by the proposed program, and scenic quality would increase with the phasing out of oil production facilities and non-native, invasive species, and the restoration of native vegetation and wetland habitat. The proposed program would not substantially obstruct, alter, or degrade the quality of any scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed program would be consistent with this policy of the CCA governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

While a majority of the program area would not be subject to the goals and policies of the City of Long Beach's LCP, the activities on the Pumpkin Patch site, Long Beach City Property site, and Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites would comply with the policies and measures that protect visual quality in the surrounding area described under Section 3.1.3.2. Therefore, the proposed program would be consistent with these regulations of the City of Long Beach's LCP governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

Impact AES-4: The proposed program would result in a significant impact if the proposed program would create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

Construction

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of this PEIR, construction on the proposed program would generally involve remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater, grading, revegetation, construction of new public access opportunities (including trails, visitor centers, parking lots, and viewpoints), construction of flood management facilities (including earthen levees and berms, and walls), and modification of existing infrastructure and utilities. However, this would vary from each individual site. In order to perform some of these construction activities, the proposed program would include the use of barges to transport soil/construction materials out to sea for a marine disposal or to anther port/marina site to be picked up by construction trucks. Construction activities on the program area would occur during daylight hours, generally between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m., in compliance with both requirements of the cities of Seal Beach and Long Beach. In particular, the Long Beach Municipal Code Section 8.8.202, Construction Noise Regulations, limits the hours of construction to primarily daytime hours and the Seal Beach Municipal Code Section 7.15.005, adopts the noise code for Orange County and allows construction between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on any day except for Sunday or a Federal holiday, or between the hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Sunday or a federal holiday. Any construction lighting needed would be aimed toward the activity and would be mostly contained within the area where work would be occurring. A minimal amount of glare could result from reflection of sunlight off windows of trucks used during construction, but this would be negligible and would not affect daytime views in the area given that there are no light-sensitive uses directly adjacent to the program area.

Security lighting would be provided after hours on all construction sites, but this lighting would be minimal, restricted to the program area, and would not exceed the level of existing night lighting levels in urban areas. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would also ensure that security lighting does not pose undue light and/or glare. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, the construction activities proposed under the proposed program would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or night views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the proposed program would include ongoing inspection and maintenance of the perimeter levees and berms, flood walls and water-control structures; removal of non-native

vegetation in restored habitat and stormwater management features; trash removal within the restored wetlands; and operation of the visitor centers and associated parking lots. From these operational uses, the proposed program would introduce new light sources associated with security, safety, and wayfinding, particularly on the State Lands Parcel site, which would include the visitor center and associated parking. While the proposed program would introduce new sources of light, it should be noted that the proposed program is located in an urban environment. Thus, lighting is not unusual in the program area. Nevertheless, the proposed program would comply with the requirements set forth by the cities of Seal Beach and Long Beach.

For the individual sites within the City of Seal Beach, the proposed program would comply with Seal Beach Municipal Code Section 11.4.20.025, which requires that lighting in parking areas be directed away from adjacent streets and properties and shall not blink, flash, change intensity, or cause glare. String lights are prohibited. Development Standard 7.8 of the Hellman Ranch Specific Plan also requires that all lighting be installed and maintained in such a manner to confine direct rays to the premises and prevent direct rays or glare onto neighboring properties. For the individual sites within the City of Long Beach, in compliance with the standards set forth in the SEADIP (PD-1), all lighting would be directed downward and exterior lighting would be designed and located in such a way that it does not project off site or onto adjacent uses. In addition, the proposed program would comply with SEASP 2060, once adopted, which requires that prior to approval of any development within the Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, and Recreation (CHWR) land use, the project applicant shall submit a photometric plan demonstrating that the proposed program will be designed and shielded so that nighttime lighting shall be no greater than 0.10 foot-candles at the edge of the habitat. Furthermore, the individual sites within the City of Long Beach would also comply with Long Beach Municipal Code Section 21.41.259, which requires that all parking area lighting be directed and shielded to prevent light spillover to adjacent properties. Compliance with these standards would ensure that impacts from light and glare are reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

> **Mitigation Measure AES-1: Lighting Plan.** Prior to issuance of a grading permit for each individual site that requires construction, a Lighting Plan for the individual site shall be developed and implemented that requires all exterior lighting to be directed downward and focused away from adjacent sensitive uses and habitats to encourage wayfinding and provide security and safety for individuals walking to and from parking areas.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant with Mitigation

3.1.6 Cumulative Impacts

Given the flat topography of the program area, the geographic scope for the cumulative aesthetic impacts for the proposed program includes areas that would be located within a publicly accessible viewshed of the proposed program, those that are directly adjacent to one of the four areas that comprise the program area that could be seen together with the proposed program,

assuming construction activities were to be concurrent. These cumulative projects would include a habitat restoration project, infrastructure projects (highway, sewer, and harbor), and energy facility projects.

3.1.6.1 Scenic Vistas

As described above, scenic vistas considered in this analysis include the Los Cerritos Channel, Steamshovel Slough, the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex, San Gabriel River, and distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains. While construction of the proposed program would include the use of barges to transport soil/construction materials out to sea for a marine disposal or to another port/marina site to be picked up by construction trucks, these activities would be temporary and, thus, construction of the proposed program would not have an adverse effect on any of the scenic vistas. Cumulative Project Nos. 22, 23, and 24 are located within proximity of the program area. These cumulative projects would require hauling of soil and construction debris on- and off-site; however, similar to the proposed program, construction activities would be temporary. As such, the proposed program and cumulative projects would not cumulatively combine to have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista during construction activities. During operation of the proposed program, existing oil production facilities and invasive species would be removed and native vegetation and wetland areas would be restored on various portions of the program area through grading, construction of earthen berms or flood walls, and construction of new tidal channels. Overall, these activities would not obstruct any of the scenic vistas and would likely enhance the scenic vista of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex. While Cumulative Project Nos. 22, 23, and 24 are located within proximity of the program area, as the proposed program would enhance the scenic vistas of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Complex and impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Based on the above, cumulative impacts on the identified scenic vistas would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

3.1.6.2 Scenic Resources

As described above, PCH has been identified by Caltrans as an “Eligible State Scenic Highway,” but has not been designated as an Official State or County Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2016). The Alamitos Bay Partners site, Northern and Southern Synergy Oil Field sites, State Lands Parcel site and South LCWA site are all directly adjacent to and visible from PCH; however, wetlands are not visible from most views on PCH. While views of wetlands located on the North Area are somewhat visible from PCH, the construction and operation of the proposed program would remove non-native vegetation and phase out oil production facilities, which would enhance the

scenic value of the proposed program. While Cumulative Project Nos. 22 and 23 are located within proximity of the program area, they are not located in proximity to PCH. In addition, while portions of Cumulative Project No. 24 are located in proximity to PCH, these areas are already disturbed and undeveloped in nature and do not include any scenic resources. Therefore, the proposed program and cumulative projects would not cumulatively combine to have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic resource within a scenic highway during either construction or operation of the proposed program. Cumulative impacts on scenic resources within a designated scenic highway during construction would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

3.1.6.3 Conflict with Regulations Governing Scenic Quality

As with the proposed program, cumulative projects would be required to comply with relevant regulations governing scenic quality through review by regulatory agencies and would be subject to CEQA review. Thus, cumulative impacts related to regulations governing scenic quality would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant

3.1.6.4 Light and Glare

While the proposed program would create new sources of light and glare during construction activities, the individual sites within the City of Long Beach would be required to comply with Long Beach Municipal Code Section 8.8.202, Construction Noise Regulations, which would limit the hours of construction to primarily daytime hours. Individual sites within the City of Seal Beach would be required to comply with Seal Beach Municipal Code Section 7.15.005, which adopts the noise code for Orange County and allows construction between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on any day except for Sunday or a Federal holiday, or between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Sunday or a Federal holiday. Cumulative Project Nos. 22 and 23 are located in the City of Long Beach within proximity of the program area. As such, similar to the proposed program, the cumulative projects would adhere to Long Beach Municipal Code Section 8.8.202, Construction Noise Regulations. Therefore, the proposed program and

cumulative projects would not cumulatively combine to result in lighting impacts during construction activities.

While the proposed program would introduce new sources of light associated with security, safety, and wayfinding during operation, it should be noted that the program area is located in an urban environment surrounded by residential, commercial, and industrial uses. As such, lighting is not unusual in the program vicinity. Generally, all individual sites within both the City of Seal Beach and City of Long Beach would install lighting that would be shielded to prevent any spillover to adjacent properties and light sensitive receptors. For the individual sites within the City of Seal Beach, the proposed program would comply with Seal Beach Municipal Code Section 11.4.20.025, which requires that lighting in parking areas be directed away from adjacent streets and properties and shall not blink, flash, change intensity, or cause glare. String lights are prohibited. For the individual sites within the City of Long Beach, in compliance with the standards set forth in the SEADIP (PD-1), all lighting would be directed downward and exterior lighting would be designed and located in such a way that it does not project off site or onto adjacent uses. In addition, the proposed program would comply with SEASP 2060, once adopted, which requires that prior to approval of any development within the Coastal Habitat, Wetlands, and Recreation (CHWR) land use, the project applicant shall submit a photometric plan demonstrating that the proposed program will be designed and shielded so that nighttime lighting shall be no greater than 0.10 foot-candles at the edge of the habitat. Furthermore, the proposed program within the City of Long Beach would also comply with Long Beach Municipal Code Section 21.41.259, which requires that all parking area lighting be directed and shielded to prevent light spillover to adjacent properties. Compliance with these standards described above would ensure that impacts from light and glare are reduced to a less-than-significant level. Cumulative Project Nos. 22, 23, and 24 are located in the City of Long Beach within and in proximity to the proposed program. Cumulative Project No. 22 includes filling in the Haynes Cooling Channel and would not result in additional lighting during operation. Cumulative Project No. 23 includes the development of two concrete tilt-up industrial buildings. Cumulative Project No. 24 includes would consolidating existing oil operations and implementing a wetlands habitat restoration project that would provide new public access opportunities to this portion of the Los Cerritos Wetlands, including the construction of a visitor center as well as development of an office and warehouse building. Lighting for the proposed buildings within these cumulative projects would adhere to all City of Long Beach requirements governing lighting, similar to the proposed program. Therefore, the proposed program and cumulative projects would not cumulatively combine to result in lighting impacts during operation.

Based on the above, cumulative impacts related to light and glare would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure AES-1.

Significance after Mitigation

Less than Significant with Mitigation

3.1.7 References

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