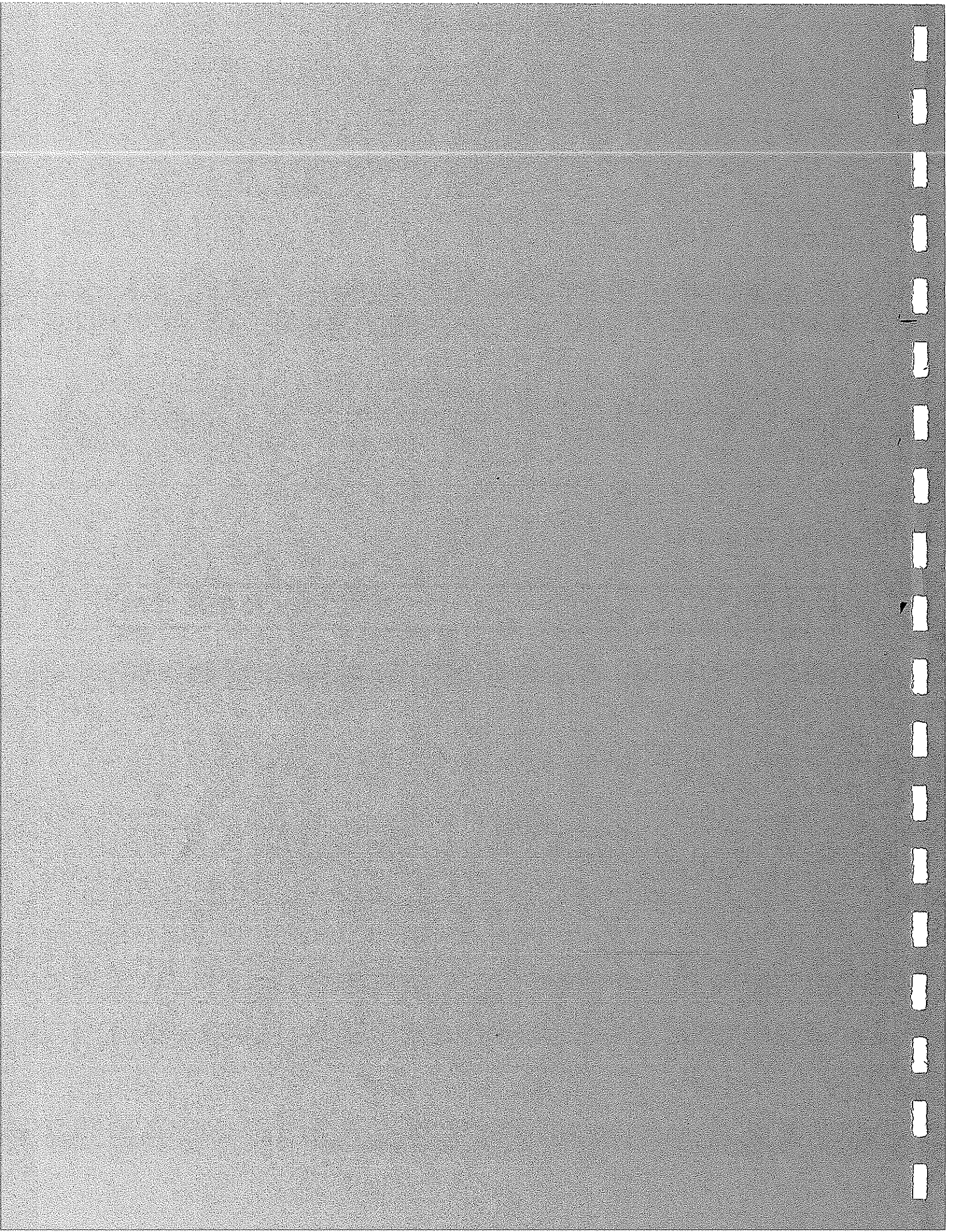


4.13 PUBLIC SERVICES



4.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the effects of the project and alternatives on recreation facilities and the provision of governmental services including law enforcement and fire protection.

The potential impact to County roads resulting from implementation of the proposed project, and provisions for their long-term maintenance, are examined in Section 4.8, Transportation and Circulation, of this EIR.

The potential hazards associated with wet pit mining and reclamation to open water, including those which could require emergency medical response, are discussed in Section 4.12.

SETTING

Recreation

Currently, there are no public recreational facilities located within the planning area along Cache Creek. Although there is a County park near Rumsey, and several campgrounds and whitewater rafting areas near Bear Creek, the lower portions of the creek are predominantly characterized by agricultural and mining uses. Due to the high proportion of land in private ownership, access to the creek is severely limited. In-stream mining has compounded the problem, often creating an unattractive landscape where the use of heavy equipment generates noise and hazards for visitors to the creekbed. It should be noted, however, that the creek is held in private property and is not generally accessible to the public.

Existing recreational areas within the planning area and away from the creek include: the Esparto Community Park; the Madison Community Park; and the Flier's Club (a private golf course and clubhouse). None of these facilities provides direct access to the creek or the adjoining environs.

Law Enforcement

The planning area is within the service area of the Yolo County Sheriff's Department, located in the City of Woodland. The Department has a total of 207 employees, 75 of whom are sworn officers (total of all ranks). In its last reporting year (calendar year 1994), the Department responded to approximately 9,820 total incidents. These included 2,487 incidents categorized as miscellaneous, 1,120 disturbing the peace calls, 691 suspicious

circumstance calls, 580 traffic-related incidence calls, 551 assistance to outside agency calls, and 290 burglary calls.

Demand on the Sheriff's Department from the project vicinity is relatively low given the remote and unpopulated character of the area. Typical calls for services in rural areas involve domestic violence and thefts. While the Department does not tabulate calls relating to the existing mining operations in the area, experienced officers report that such calls represent a very small proportion of total calls the Department responds to (i.e., less than 10 calls per year on average) (Peoples, 1996).

Fire

Due to the size and location of the planning area, portions of the area are served by different fire departments. From west to east: these include Esparto Fire Protection District; Madison Fire District; Willow Oak Fire Protection District; and Yolo Fire Protection District. The Capay Fire Protection District is located to the immediate east of the planning area. The portion of the Esparto Fire Protection District area east of County Road 85 (including the town of Capay), is designated as an area of very high fire hazard severity.

Each of the districts serving the planning area has between 20 and 30 volunteer fire fighters, and one to two paid staff (an office secretary and/or vehicle mechanic). The range of equipment varies from district to district, but generally includes one squad car, one tanker truck, and two engine trucks. Willow Oak, Yolo and Madison have maintained mutual aid agreements since the 1950s. Esparto and Madison are currently preparing an automatic aid agreement, whereby simultaneous responses would occur under certain circumstances. The districts also work with AMR Ambulance, the only ambulance service contractor in Yolo County.

Each of the fire protection districts responds to an average of 150 calls per year, including medical emergencies and fires resulting from electrical power surges. Once a call is received it takes between one and five minutes to assemble a response team, and between one and ten minutes for the team to arrive at the scene. Total response times vary primarily due to the size of the service area and the rural characteristics of this part of Yolo County. For medical emergencies, the primary and secondary medical facilities for ground transportation are Woodland Memorial Hospital (Woodland, CA) and Sutter-Davis Hospital (Davis, CA), respectively. The primary medical facility for air transport is UCD Medical Center (Sacramento, CA).

Fire district representatives report that, on average, less than five response calls (three percent of all calls) occur annually to mining operations in the lower Cache Creek area. These calls have typically included medical emergencies and vehicle/equipment fires (Rominger, 1996).

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Standard of Significance

The project would have a significant effect on public services and utilities if it would:

- Create a hazardous situation beyond the capacity of the available emergency services.
- Require additional fire and police protection staff or equipment to maintain an acceptable level of service.
- Affect existing or potential public recreation opportunities.

Impact 4.13-1

Potential for Long-Term Impacts to Open Space and Recreational Opportunities in the Lower Cache Creek Area

Draft OCMP and Implementing Ordinances

The OCMP recommends that an analysis be prepared of the passive recreational needs of Yolo County and the resulting environmental effects that recreation would have on surrounding properties along the creek. It is recommended that the County investigate the opportunity for an integrated system of trails and recreational areas along Cache Creek, similar to efforts occurring along the San Joaquin and American Rivers, as part of the subsequent interactions in planning for Cache Creek. Future development of a Cache Creek Open Space and Recreation Plan would allow for community involvement and provide specific proposals as well as projected costs for developing and maintaining a park system. It would also be valuable for addressing creek ownership and access issues more directly, as these issues become more relevant over time.

The Off-Channel Mining Plan has designated six general areas for future recreational use (Figure 12 in the OCMP). These areas are conceptual in nature and would serve to set aside land for future consideration as recreational areas. Sites were located at regular intervals of approximately two miles along Cache Creek, in order to function as trailheads or staging areas for a possible future system of bicycle, pedestrian, and/or horse paths. Recreational areas were also sited on lands included for mining, where proposed reclamation is to permanent ponds. This would ensure that no additional farmland would be lost, while taking advantage of the amenities associated with the bodies of water to be reclaimed through mining. Frontage to County roads and State highways was an important consideration, to ensure that the public would have adequate access. Also, a variety of sites were included in order to provide a range of potential recreational uses. The three easternmost areas would be located near reaches proposed for habitat restoration, and may be suitable for limited activities such as hiking, birdwatching, horseback riding, and educational exhibits. The three westernmost sites would be located in areas of the creek

that contain more open space and may be appropriate for activities including boating, fishing, bicycle riding, and picnic grounds. Recreational uses in the western sites would directly benefit the nearby communities of Madison, Esparto, and Capay, and could serve as a future basis for expanded tourism opportunities and economic benefits.

Chapter 7.0 of the OCMP, Open Space and Recreation, contains a number of goals, objectives, actions and performance standards which would have bearing on future recreational planning in the lower Cache Creek area. The following goals would also affect the land use and visual character of the area, and are therefore discussed in Section 4.2 and 4.10 of this EIR.

- Goal 7.2-1: Preserve scenic resources within the off-channel planning area.
- Goal 7.2-2: Establish a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along Cache Creek for use by the public.
- Goal 7.2-3: Ensure the compatibility of recreational facilities with surrounding land uses, in order to minimize adverse impacts.

The following objectives from the OCMP relate to open space and recreation, as well as the compatibility of future land uses in the lower Cache Creek area.

- Obj. 7.3-1: Include use of the "Open Space" zoning designation for the area located within the creek's existing banks and other areas where resource management and habitat protection is warranted.
- Obj. 7.3-2: Consider reclamation plans that include recreational elements as meeting all or a portion of the "net gain" requirement.
- Obj. 7.3-3: Create a continuous corridor of natural open space along the Creek and provide for limited access, at specific locations, to recreational and educational uses.
- Obj. 7.3-4: Discourage the encroachment of incompatible uses into areas surrounding designated recreation sites.
- Obj. 7.3-5: Design recreational facilities to maintain the privacy and security of surrounding property owners.

As with the objectives listed above, the following actions recommended by the OCMP relate both to open space/recreation as well as land use compatibility.

- Action 7.4-1: Dedicate restored habitat areas and/or recreational areas to the County or to an appropriate land trust, such as the Cache Creek Conservancy, in order to provide continuous open space along the creek.
- Action 7.4-2: Develop a future recreation plan for Cache Creek, in consultation with the County Parks Administrator, to provide a range of public activities and uses. Suggested recreational uses may include, but are not limited to: hiking, horseback riding, fishing, picnic grounds, boating, educational exhibits, and birdwatching.

- Action 7.4-3: Identify specific locations for future recreational and educational uses along Cache Creek. Sites shall be located at regular intervals throughout the planning area, with access to a County Road or State Highway. Intensive recreational uses shall be located away from designated habitat areas.
- Action 7.4-4: Designate identified recreational areas as "Open Space" in the Off-Channel Mining Plan.
- Action 7.4-5: Require that all surface mining applications within the planning area include a proposal for providing a "net gain" to the County, consisting of the restoration of a previously disturbed portion of Cache Creek; promotion of educational and interpretive values relating to Cache Creek; provision of public recreational opportunities along Cache Creek; other projects that result in social and/or economic benefits to the County; or participation in an established program whose goals are consistent with the activities described above.
- Action 7.4-6: Coordinate with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to investigate the eventual linkage of recreational uses located along the upper watershed of Cache Creek to the designated recreational sites located within the planning area.
- Action 7.4-7: Ensure that active surface mining operations are located away from public areas, such as County roads, residences, and sites reclaimed to recreational uses.
- Action 7.4-8: Design and manage recreational sites so that trespassing, vandalism, and other undesirable activities are discouraged. Suggested options include controlled and gated access, day-use fees, and volunteer docents to patrol the site.

Performance standards contained in Chapter 7.0 of the OCMP would be relevant to the provision of future open space/recreation opportunities; they would also have bearing on reducing potential nuisances and land use incompatibilities through the minimum setback requirements.

- PS 7.5-1: New processing plants and material stockpiles shall be located a minimum of one-thousand (1,000) feet from public rights-of-way, public recreation areas, and/or off-site residences, unless alternate measures to reduce potential noise, dust, and visual/aesthetic impacts are developed and implemented.
- PS 7.5-2: Soil stockpiles shall be located a minimum of five-hundred (500) from public rights-of-way, public recreation areas, and/or off-site residences, unless alternate measures to reduce potential noise, dust, and aesthetic impacts are developed and implemented.
- PS 7.5-3: Off-channel excavations shall maintain a minimum one-thousand (1,000) foot setback from public rights-of-way and adjacent property lines, unless a landscaped buffer is provided or site-specific characteristics reduce potential aesthetic impacts. Where landscaped buffers are proposed, the setback for off-channel excavations may be reduced to a minimum of fifty (50) feet.
- PS 7.5-4: Recreational facilities shall be located a minimum of one-hundred and fifty (150) feet from private dwellings, with a landscaped buffer provided to reduce noise and maintain privacy.

The above goals, objectives, actions and performance standards would establish a framework for the provision of open space and recreational opportunities in the lower Cache Creek area. This framework would develop over time as creek restoration proceeds under the CCRMP. The Open Space and Recreation Element of the OCMP would be

consistent with the other plan elements, and compatible with the existing regulatory framework. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Alternative 1a: No Project (Existing Conditions)

Under Alternative 1a, no OCMP would be adopted and surface mining would continue based on 1995 actual production levels of each producer. Since no OCMP would be adopted under this alternative, its companion document the CCRMP would likely not be adopted. Under this alternative, long-term opportunities for open space and recreation in the lower Cache Creek area would be limited and the public would need to take advantage of other recreational sites and opportunities in the immediate area. This would not be a significant impact.

Alternative 1b: No Project (Existing Permits and Regulatory Condition)

Under Alternative 1b, no OCMP would be adopted and surface mining would be allowed based on currently approved maximum annual allocations. This alternative would have a similar impact on recreational opportunities and open space as described above for Alternative 1a. This would not be a significant impact.

Alternative 2: No Mining (Alternative Site)

Under Alternative 2, no OCMP would be adopted and all existing permits to mine and/or operate plants would be voided. Long-term opportunities for open space and recreational development would be limited under this alternative, however, as described above for Alternative 1a this would not be a significant impact.

Alternative 3: Plant Operation Only (Importation)

Under Alternative 3, no OCMP would be adopted, existing mining permits would be voided, but existing plants would continue to operate at approved levels. As described above for Alternative 1a, in the absence of an OCMP, the CCRMP would likely not be adopted. Without adoption of one or both of these plans, open space and recreational opportunities within the lower Cache Creek area would be limited and the public would need to take advantage of other recreational sites and opportunities in the immediate area. This would not be a significant impact.

Alternative 4: Shallow Mining (Alternative Method/Reclamation)

Under Alternative 4, the draft OCMP would be modified to allow only shallow mining, but the Open Space and Recreation Element would remain intact. This alternative would consequently set forth a framework for the provision of open space and recreational opportunities in the lower Cache Creek area. Under this alternative, however, these opportunities would be limited since no open lakes would be created as part of mining reclamation plans. This alternative would be consistent with the other OCMP plan

elements, and compatible with the existing regulatory framework. This impact would be less-than-significant.

Alternative 5a: Decreased Mining (Restricted Allocation)

Under Alternative 5a, the OCMP and its implementing ordinances would be adopted, but mining proposals would be restricted to one-half of the current annual allocation. The Open Space and Recreation Element would remain intact. Consequently, this alternative would set forth a framework for the provision of open space and recreational opportunities in the lower Cache Creek area. This alternative would be consistent with the other OCMP plan elements, and compatible with the existing regulatory framework. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Alternative 5b: Decreased Mining (Shorter Mining Period)

Under Alternative 5b, the OCMP and its implementing ordinances would be adopted, but individual permit and renewal periods would be shortened. The effects of this alternative on long-term opportunities for open space and recreation would be similar to Alternative 5a, although implementation would occur sooner. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Alternative 6: Agricultural Reclamation (with Mining Operations as Proposed)

Under Alternative 6, all new mining would occur off channel, and a minimum performance standard for individual producers of 80 percent agricultural reclamation would be established. Earth-borrow areas under this alternative would themselves require reclamation to predominantly agricultural uses. The effects of this alternative on long-term open space and recreational opportunities would be the same as the proposed project. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measure 4.13-1a (OCMP, A-1a, A-1b, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5a, A-5b, A-6)

None required.

Impact 4.13-2

Potential Increase in Demand for Public Services

Draft OCMP and Implementing Ordinances

Law Enforcement

The proposed project would not result in a need for new or altered law enforcement services. Neither additional Sheriff's Department staff or equipment would be required to maintain an acceptable level of service. Performance Standard 2.5-8 proposes that, prior to the commencement of mining, the location of the open pit shall be fenced and signage installed indicating danger. As discussed in Section 4.12, Hazards, this standard may not

be sufficient to ensure public safety, and a mitigation measure is recommended which strengthens its requirements. The creation of open water bodies as part of mining reclamation could pose an attractive nuisance, increasing the risk of trespassing. Policy 7.4-8 of the OCMP requires that recreational sites be designed and managed so that trespassing, vandalism, and other undesirable activities are discouraged. Suggested options include controlled and gated access, day-use fees, and volunteer docents to patrol the site. Under the proposed project, therefore, there would be only a negligible increase in demand for law enforcement services in the area.

The proposed mining and reclamation operations are not anticipated to generate a substantial number of incidents requiring Sheriff Department response; nor would they create hazardous situations beyond the capacity of the available emergency service providers. No significant impacts are expected.

Fire Protection

Off-channel mining and reclamation activities under the OCMP would involve the use of a variety of mechanically driven equipment, and continued operation of aggregate plants. Similar activities have been occurring for years within and adjacent to lower Cache Creek, and have a history of infrequent calls for fire protection services. The potential for one of these pieces of equipment to start a fire through failure or accident, including human error, is the most probable fire hazard associated with implementation of the OCMP. Other potential fire hazards include electrical power surges (which have occurred regularly in the past) which could cause electrical fires to ignite, and off-site accidents or fires associated with increased haul truck activity on rural County roads.

Based on the frequency of past incidents at aggregate operations that required fire district responses, the implementation of the OCMP is not expected to generate a substantial increase in demand for services. The proposed project would not result in a need for new or altered fire protection services, either in the form of additional staff or equipment, to maintain an acceptable level of service. No significant impacts are expected.

Other Government Services

The OCMP contains a number of policies regarding the long-term monitoring of plan implementation and coordination with other responsible agencies which would require additional demands for government services. Examples of these monitoring and implementation activities are listed below.

Action 3.4-4: Designate staff to begin compiling and coordinating the monitoring information generated by the off-channel mining operations, in order to form the foundation for preparing an ongoing groundwater data base covering the entire County. The data base should be expanded to include other relevant sources of information, so that it can be used as reference material for the Water Resources Agency and other regional water planning efforts.

- Action 2.4-2: Improve the County's monitoring of surface mining by requiring that all operations within the planning area submit detailed annual reports, as well as copies of permits approved by other agencies of jurisdiction. This will enable the County to better assess the impacts of off-channel mining and the success of reclamation efforts.
- Action 2.4-7: Update the Off-Channel Mining Plan every 10 years. This will allow the plan to be amended so that the results of monitoring programs and reclamation efforts can be taken into account.
- PS 2.5-14: Surface mining permits shall be approved for a maximum of thirty (30) years. Extensions of the permits, for up to twenty years, may be granted, subject to further environmental review and discretionary approval by the County. All surface mining permits shall be subject to review by the County every ten (10) years, to account for changing regulatory and environmental conditions.
- Obj. 3.3-1: Encourage the development of a Countywide water management program, including the participation of YFCWCD and other relevant agencies, to coordinate the monitoring and analysis of both surface and groundwater supplies.

At present, the majority of operational costs internalized by the mining operators pertain to conformance with State laws, and instances where operational efficiencies are enhanced or where they must meet the County's existing monitoring requirements for in-channel mining. Examples include volume estimates, recordation of sales by destination and type of use, the composition of topographic maps, and general site activity monitoring by the County and independent consultants. Other resource management and mitigation requirements contained in the OCMP that are currently complied with include spill prevention and containment facilities, business emergency response plans, settling ponds, dust control, and other air pollution reduction programs and activities. In nearly all cases, these costs would continue and expand as mining shifts from in-channel to off-channel deposits. Thus, some portion of the costs estimated for the proposed OCMP are already being absorbed by the industry, or will be as off-channel mining expands.

As described above, the OCMP would impose a range of regulatory activities upon mining operations, including data gathering and analysis, monitoring, land use regulation, special mitigation programs, and new operational requirements. The aggregate industry currently pays for the administrative costs incurred by the County in monitoring and regulating surface mining activities in the County. Payments to the County by the aggregate industry totalled approximately \$156,000 for the 1995-1996 fiscal year. The County will need to identify the costs of implementing the policies contained in the OCMP, and determine a fair-share cost program for reimbursement by gravel operators and any other affected parties. Without a fair-share cost program in place, the impact to the County government services would be substantial. This impact, however, would not result in a physical adverse change and is therefore not considered within the purview of CEQA.

Alternative 1a: No Project (Existing Conditions)

Under Alternative 1a, no OCMP would be adopted and surface mining would continue based on 1995 actual production levels of each producer. All regulations in place as of

December 1, 1995 are assumed to be in effect, including existing "interim" County surface mining regulations, the Williamson Act and SMARA.

Law Enforcement

Alternative 1a would not result in a need for new or altered law enforcement services. Neither additional Sheriff's Department staff or equipment would be required to maintain an acceptable level of service. No significant impacts are expected.

Fire Protection

Based on the frequency of past incidents at aggregate operations that required fire district responses, the implementation of Alternative 1a is not expected to generate a substantial increase in demand for services. No significant impacts are expected.

Other Government Services

At present, the majority of operational costs internalized by the mining operators pertain to conformance with State laws, and instances where operational efficiencies are enhanced or where they must meet the County's existing monitoring requirements for in-channel mining. Under this alternative, no additional regulations would be imposed upon mining operations, consequently, no additional staff time would be required. No physical adverse changes to the environment are anticipated.

Alternative 1b: No Project (Existing Permits and Regulatory Condition)

Under Alternative 1b, no OCMP would be adopted and surface mining would be allowed based on currently approved maximum annual allocations. All regulations in place as of December 1, 1995 are assumed to be in effect, including existing "interim" County surface mining regulations, the Williamson Act and SMARA.

All impacts discussed above for Alternative 1a would occur under this alternative.

Alternative 2: No Mining (Alternative Site)

Under Alternative 2, no OCMP would be adopted and all existing permits to mine and/or operate plants would be voided. Regional demand for PCC-grade aggregate material would be satisfied from reserves occurring outside of Yolo County.

All impacts discussed above for Alternative 1a would occur under this alternative.

Alternative 3: Plant Operation Only (Importation)

Under Alternative 3, no OCMP would be adopted, existing mining permits would be voided, but existing plants would continue to operate at approved levels.

All impacts discussed above for Alternative 1a would occur under this alternative.

Alternative 4: Shallow Mining (Alternative Method/Reclamation)

Under Alternative 4, the draft OCMP would be modified to allow only shallow mining, and reclamation is assumed to be primarily agricultural.

Law Enforcement

Alternative 4 would not result in a need for or altered law enforcement services. Neither additional Sheriff's Department staff or equipment would be required to maintain an acceptable level of service.

Fire Protection

Based on the frequency of past incidents at aggregate operations that required fire district responses, the implementation of Alternative 4 is not expected to generate a substantial increase in demand for services.

Other Government Services

The draft OCMP as modified under this alternative would retain a number of policies regarding the long-term monitoring of plan implementation and coordination with other responsible agencies. While some portion of the costs estimated for the proposed OCMP are already being absorbed by the industry, or will be as off-channel mining expands, the OCMP (as modified) would impose a range of regulatory activities, including data gathering and analysis, monitoring, land use regulation, and special mitigation programs, which would require additional staff time to implement. The County will need to identify the costs of implementing the policies contained in the OCMP, and determine a fair-share cost program for reimbursement by gravel operators and any other affected parties. Without a fair-share cost program in place, the impact to the County government services would be substantial. This impact, however, would not result in a physical adverse change and is therefore not considered within the purview of CEQA.

Alternative 5a: Decreased Mining (Restricted Allocation) and Alternative 5b: Decreased Mining (Shorter Mining Period)

Under Alternative 5a, the OCMP and its implementing ordinances would be adopted, but mining proposals would be restricted to one-half of the current annual allocation. Under Alternative 5b, the OCMP and its implementing ordinances would be adopted, but individual permit and renewal periods would be shortened.

All impacts discussed above for Alternative 4 would occur under this alternative.

Alternative 6: Agricultural Reclamation (with Mining Operations as Proposed)

Under Alternative 6, the OCMP would not allow for alternative forms of reclamation, and a minimum performance standard of 80 percent agricultural reclamation would be established.

Law Enforcement

Alternative 6 would not result in a need for new or altered law enforcement services. Neither additional Sheriff's Department staff or equipment would be required to maintain an acceptable level of service. No significant impacts are expected.

Fire Protection

Based on the frequency of past incidents at aggregate operations that required fire district responses, the implementation of Alternative 6 is not expected to generate a substantial increase in demand for services.

Other Government Services

The draft OCMP as modified under this alternative would retain a number of policies regarding the long-term monitoring of plan implementation and coordination with other responsible agencies. While some portion of the costs estimated for the proposed OCMP are already being absorbed by the industry, or will be as off-channel mining expands, the OCMP (as modified) would impose a range of regulatory activities upon mining operations, including data gathering and analysis, monitoring, land use regulation, and special mitigation programs, which would require additional staff time to implement.

Mitigation Measure 4.13-2a (OCMP, A-4, A-5a, A-5b, A-6)

None required, however, the following is recommended:

The County should identify the costs of implementing the policies contained in the OCMP, and determine a fair-share cost program for reimbursement by gravel operators and any other affected parties.

Mitigation Measure 4.13-2b (A-1a, A-1b, A-2, A-3)

None required.