This section was prepared by RMC Water and Environment.

3B.1 AESTHETICS – WATER

This section provides a description of the existing visual and aesthetic resources within the "Water" Study Area. In the context of the actions proposed as part of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives, emphasis is placed on portions of the "Water" Study Area where physical environmental changes would occur. As provided in Chapter 2, "Alternatives," physical improvements associated with the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives are limited to areas within Zone 4; whereas no physical improvements are proposed within Zones 1, 2, or 3. For this reason, the "Aesthetics" analysis for the "Water" project is focused primarily on Zone 4. Secondary emphasis is also placed on Zone 2 in the context of the potential changes in flow that could occur within the Sacramento River as a result of long-term operation of the Off-site Water Facilities.

3B.1.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

VISUAL ASSESSMENT AND VISUAL QUALITY CRITERIA

The analysis of visual resources for the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives uses a qualitative approach for characterizing and evaluating the visual resources as described in Section 3A.1. This approach applies specific criteria developed by the Federal Highway Administration in 1981 that include the concepts of vividness, intactness, and unity. According to these criteria, none of these is itself equivalent to visual quality; all three must be considered high to indicate high quality. These terms are defined as follows:

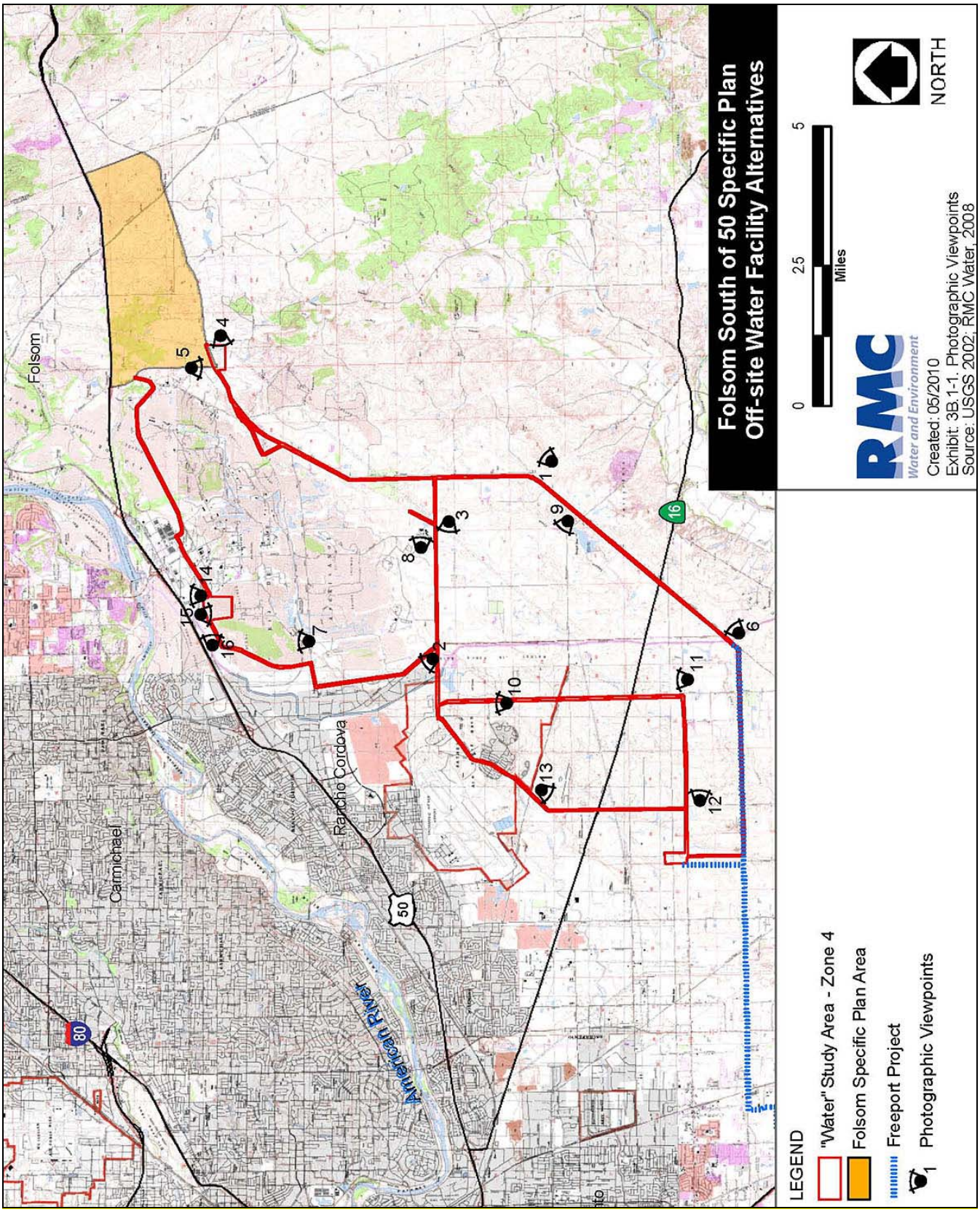
- "Vividness" is the visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in striking and distinctive visual patterns.
- "Intactness" is the visual integrity of the natural and human-built landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements.
- "Unity" is the visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape considered as a whole.

REGIONAL SETTING

The regional setting description provided in Section 3A.1 would also generally apply to the "Water" Study Area. Improvements proposed as part of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives span portions of eastern Sacramento Valley near the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills. The terrain within this portion of the valley gradually transitions from relatively level areas, west of Grant Line Road, to undulating and rolling hills further east (see Viewpoint 1, Exhibit 3B.1-1). In general, the landscape within Zone 4 is undergoing a transition from rural and agricultural uses to more urban uses including residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

VISUAL CHARACTER WITHIN ZONE 4 OF THE "WATER" STUDY AREA

Urban forms of development within Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area are generally west of Sunrise Boulevard and north of Douglas Road (see Viewpoint 2, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Views from any given location may include commercial and industrial facilities, office parks, residential subdivisions, roadway and utility corridors, agricultural fields, creek and river corridors, mine tailings, and views of the Sierra Nevada foothills (see Viewpoint 3, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Low-level hill features, large trees, and existing buildings limit long-range views in many locations.



Viewpoints from within Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Prominent features within the eastern portions of Zone 4 include a joint Sacramento Municipal Utilities District SMUD) and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) power transmission line corridor, which is situated to the east of Grant Line Road and diagonally bisects the White Rock WTP site (see Viewpoint 4, Exhibit 3B.1-1). The visual character along White Rock, Grant Line, and Prairie City Roads within the "Water" Study Area is rural with intermixed industrial uses, such as security fencing around the Aerojet property, graded dirt roads, and large aggregate processing facilities (see Viewpoint 5, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Undeveloped, rural grassland comprises the largest part of the foreground views in the eastern portion of the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area, with scattered trees and rural residences in the background (see Viewpoint 6, Exhibit 3B.1-1).

Areas to the north of Douglas Road, west of Grant Line Road, and south of Folsom Boulevard have been substantially altered by historic gold mining activities that occurred approximately 50 to 100 years ago. These areas are comprised of mine tailings, which consist of piles of cobblestones laid down in rows, thereby forming a long series of shallow ridges (see Viewpoints 7, Exhibit 3B.1-1). In certain areas, these dredge tailings form broad mounds that are up to 30 feet tall with vegetation, primarily consisting of cottonwood trees, shrubs, and annual grasses growing in depressional areas between the dredge tailings. The 15-story concrete Security Park building is also a prominent feature in this area, just north of Douglas Road (see Viewpoint 8, Exhibit 3B.1-1).

Approximately 2 miles west of Grant Line Road along Douglas Road, the most prominent features to the south include new residential development and associated construction equipment in the Anatolia housing development (see Viewpoint 9, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Sunrise Boulevard and a commercial and industrial corridor are located in the central portion of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area (see Viewpoint 2, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Prominent visual features along Sunrise include corrugated metal and concrete buildings, heavy equipment, transport trucks, metal storage bins painted various colors, chain-link fencing, and high-mast lighting. Some of the buildings are partially screened by trees and shrubs. Further west are Mather Regional Park and Mather Airport (see Viewpoint 10, Exhibit 3B.1-1).

Further south and along Gerber, Excelsior, Florin, and Eagles Nest Roads, the visual resources of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area consist of grazing lands, dotted with vernal pools, irrigated farmlands, nurseries, rural residences, and natural vegetation along the creeks (see Viewpoints 11, 12, and 13, Exhibit 3B.1-1). However, this area is rapidly changing from a rural, pastoral landscape of rangeland and open space to an urbanized landscape. Currently, there is limited built landscape, consisting mainly of ranchettes, electrical towers, overhead utility lines supported generally by single wood poles, and two-lane roads (e.g., Florin Road, Gerber Road). However, these areas are planned for urban forms of development based on current land use maps being developed in conjunction with the County's General Plan Update.

In the northern section of Zone 4, Folsom Boulevard near U.S. 50 is characterized by the visually intensive Folsom Auto Mall to the northwest; woodlands and the light rail track to the southeast; and U.S. 50 (including on-ramps and off-ramps) to the north (see Viewpoint 14, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Numerous other existing light sources are located along the Folsom Boulevard corridor and include overhead street lights, overhead fixtures at the light rail station and parking lot, outdoor security lighting in the apartment complex and the mobile home park, and lighted signs, parking lot lights, and exterior lights at the Nimbus Winery shopping center. To the south of Folsom Boulevard and in the vicinity of the Folsom Boulevard WTP, the landscape retains an opened space and rural character (see Viewpoints 15 and 16, Exhibit 3B.1-1).

The visual assessment criteria for the Zone 4 landscape area are provided below.

- **Vividness:** The vividness of the Zone 4 landscape is marked by large expanses of annual grasslands with distinct stands of oak and eucalyptus trees, scattered rural residences, vernal pools and wetlands, and/or roadways/above-ground utilities present in the foreground. Along the eastern edge of Zone 4, two sets of electrical transmission lines dominate the foreground: one in a north-south (high-voltage lines) direction and the other in an east-west direction. The north-south line is the larger of the two and consists of two sets of towers standing well above the undulating hillslopes (Viewpoint 4, Exhibit 3B.1-1). Although these electrical

transmission lines are substantial encroachments on the Zone 4 landscape and are readily visible from multiple vantages, in general they do not impede the view. However, since views from multiple vantages within the Zone 4 landscape provide an expansive view of agricultural and open space lands to the south and east along with similar views within the southern portions of Zone 4, the Zone 4 landscape is considered to have high levels of vividness.

- **Intactness:** As described above, two sets of electrical transmission lines exist within the eastern portion of the Zone 4 landscape. These, in addition to agricultural accessories, including fences and dirt roadways, disrupt the integrity of the landscape. These types of structures often exist within agricultural land and do not act as a substantial distraction to the landscape as a whole. However, when combined within new and existing development in central portions of the Zone 4 landscape (e.g., Security Park structure), these encroachments contribute to a moderate level of intactness.

- **Unity:** The Zone 4 landscape is exemplary of California's Central Valley rangeland, including gently rolling hills, which contrasts with development in the western portions of Zone 4. Although there are several encroachments within the Zone 4 landscape, they do not detract from the overall sense of unity; especially in eastern portions of the Zone 4 landscape. The Zone 4 landscape is essentially surrounded by open space to the east and urban development to the west allowing for moderate levels of visual unity.

Sensitive Viewers

As described in Section 3A.1, viewer sensitivity is related to the values and opinions of a particular group and can be generally characterized by the viewer activity, awareness, and local significance of a site. The "Water" Study Area can be seen by two types of sensitive viewer groups: travelers on roadways and people within the City of Folsom. Travelers include both the drivers and passengers on the following routes:

- White Rock Road (Viewpoints 4, 5, and 7, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Scott Road (Viewpoints 4 and 5, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Douglas Road (Viewpoints 2, 3, and 8, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Prairie City Road (Viewpoint 5, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Folsom Boulevard (Viewpoints 14, 15, and 16, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Grant Line Road (Viewpoints 1, 6, and 9, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Sunrise Boulevard (Viewpoints 2 and 7, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Jackson Highway (SR 16) (Viewpoint 6, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Florin Road (Viewpoint 12, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- Eagles Nest Road (Viewpoints 10 and 11, Exhibit 3B.1-1);
- U.S. 50 (Viewpoints 13 and 15, Exhibit 3B.1-1); and
- Excelsior Road (Viewpoints 13, Exhibit 3B.1-1).

Sensitive viewer groups within the cities of Folsom and Rancho Cordova, the community of El Dorado Hills, and unincorporated portions of Sacramento County include:

- Residents (Viewpoints 3, 6, 9, 12, 13, and 14, Exhibit 3B.1-1); and

- Employees and patrons at businesses (Viewpoints 2, 8, and 10, Exhibit 3B.1-1).Visual Character within Zone 2 of the "Water" Study Area.

Zone 2 of the "Water" Study Area includes portions of the Sacramento River between NCMWC's service area and Freeport. The visual character of Zone 2 is dominated by riverine elements, including the river surface, which varies between 10 and 20 feet mean sea level, steep levee banks and riparian vegetation, docks and marines, and bridge overcrossings. Portions of the Zone 2 contain dense vegetation, which may include an assortment of shrubs and trees along the riverside of the levee, such as at Discovery Park in the City of Sacramento and along the Garden Highway north of Bryte Bend Park in the City of West Sacramento. Other locations are completely

Viewpoint 1: Viewpoint from Grant Line Road looking east-northeast towards the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Grant Line Road, property fencing, and local utilities are visible in the foreground. Small clusters of oak and eucalyptus trees are visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 2: Viewpoint from Douglas Road, looking north towards existing development along the Sunrise Boulevard corridor. Existing structures are visible in the background. Undeveloped lands within the Rio del Oro Specific Plan Area to the east. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 1 and 2 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 3: Viewpoint from Douglas Road looking west towards the Sunrise Boulevard corridor. Douglas Road, recently constructed low-density residential housing, traffic signlas, and local utilities are visible in the foreground. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 4: Viewpoint from Scott Road, looking west across the northern portions of the White Rock WTP site. Existing electrical transmission lines and oak trees are visible in the middleground. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 3 and 4 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 5: Viewpoint from Priare City Road looking south towards White Rock Road. Security fencing along the Aerojet property along with rural dirt roads used for fuel breaks are visible in the foreground. The eletrical transmission lines and lattice structures are visable in the middleground. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 6: Viewpoint from Grant Line Road, looking northeast. Annual grasslands dominate the foreground with local distributiion lines and clusters of oak trees visible in the middleground. Hilslopes of the Sierra fothills are visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 5 and 6 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 7: Viewpoint from White Rock Road looking north at the Aerojet Property. Remnant dredge tailings are present in the foreground and middleground. Rocket testing facilities are slightly visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 8: Viewpoint from Douglas Road, looking east. Industrial areas north of Dougals Road and local above-ground utilities are visible in the middleground. The Sierra foothills are visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 7 and 8 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 9: Viewpoint from Grant Line Road looking north at new residential development in the background within the Sunrise-Douglas Community Plan Area to the northwest. Annual grasslands and associated vernal pool complexes are present in the foreground and middleground. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 10: Viewpoint from Eagles Nest Road, looking north. The south end of Mather Regional Park and Golf Course are visible in the middleground. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 9 and 10 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 11: Viewpoint from Eagles Nest Road looking north. Annual grasslands and agricultural grazing lands are present in the foreground and middleground. Oak tree canopies are visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 12: Viewpoint from Florin Road looking east. Agricultural grazing, local electrical distribution lines, and roadside ditches are visible in the middleground. Rural residences are visable in the background. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 11 and 12 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 13: Viewpoint from Excelsior Road looking south. Agricultural lands, local electrical distribution lines, and rural residences and associated landscaping are present in the foreground. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 14: Viewpoint from Folsom Boulevard looking north. U. S. Highway 50 and existing sound walls, Folsom Boulevard and landscaped median, and low-density residential housing are visible in the foreground. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 13 and 14 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

Viewpoint 15: Viewpoint from the Beck's Furniture parking lot looking south at the Folsom Boulevard WTP Site. Annual grassland, dredge tailings, and oak trees are present in the foreground and middleground. (RMC, 2008)

Viewpoint 16: Viewpoint from Folsom Boulevard at Buffalo Creek, looking east. U. S. Highway 50, Folsom Boulevard, the Light Rail tracks, and Buffalo Creek are visible in the foreground. (RMC, 2008)

Representative Photographs 15 and 16 **Exhibit 3B.1-1**

devoid of vegetation or limited to ruderal or annual grassland vegetation. North of Freeport, urban areas generally dominate the riverfront and extend up through to the Cities of West Sacramento and Sacramento and are comprised of a wide range of land uses, including heavy and light industrial, waterfront marinas, and high- and low-density residential housing. A uniform and undeveloped, riverine corridor emerges north of Sacramento and continues north to I-5. This riparian landscape transitions north of I-5 to residential housing along the levee north through the NCMWC service area.

The visual assessment criteria for the Zone 2 landscape area are provided below.

- **Vividness:** The vividness of the Zone 2 landscape is marked by large expanses of open water bordered by riparian trees and clusters of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Since views from multiple vantages within the Zone 2 landscape provide an expansive views of riverine habitats, the Zone 2 landscape is considered to have high levels of vividness.

- **Intactness:** As described above, the Zone 2 landscape consists of riverine habitats that are partially disrupted by existing structures, roadways, and bridges. However, these types of structures can often complement natural riverine habitats and do not act as a substantial distraction to the landscape as a whole. The Zone 2 landscape is considered to have a high level of intactness.

- **Unity:** The Zone 2 landscape is exemplary of the Sacramento River corridor and, although there are several encroachments within the Zone 2 landscape, they do not detract from the overall sense of unity; especially in northern portions of the Zone 2 landscape. The Zone 2 landscape is essentially surrounded by open space to the west and urban development to the east allowing for high levels of visual unity.

NIGHTTIME VIEWS OF ZONE 4 OF THE "WATER" STUDY AREA

Nighttime views in Zone 4 of the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area include lights from commercial corridors along Folsom and Sunrise Boulevards, commercial and office uses in the Cities of Rancho Cordova and Folsom, vehicle lights from local roadways; and lighting fixtures on industrial and commercial buildings and structures within and outside the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area. Few to no light sources are located on the undeveloped lands east of Prairie City Road or south White Rock Road, east of Grant Line Road. The exception to this is several large aggregate processing facilities along Scott and Grant Line Roads.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND CORRIDORS

Sacramento County contains one eligible route for the State Scenic Highway Program. This route is referred to as River Road (State Routes 160 and 84), which runs along the Sacramento River levees in the Delta from the Sacramento city limits at the northern edge of Freeport to the southern tip of the Delta at the Antioch Bridge. Although the Sacramento River borders SR 160, including portions of Zone 2 of the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area, no physical improvements are proposed in the Sacramento River and therefore, no further consideration of this roadway is necessary.

Scott Road, from White Rock Road south to Latrobe Road, is a designated scenic corridor in the Sacramento County General Plan.

3B.1.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS

No Federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws are applicable to the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives under consideration.

STATE PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS

The following State plans, policies, regulations, and laws related to visual resources are relevant to the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives, and are described in detail in Section 3A.1, "Aesthetics – Land:"

- California Scenic Highway Program

No other State plans, policies, regulations, or laws are applicable to the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives under consideration.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS

Sacramento County General Plan

The Sacramento County General Plan Land Use Element includes policies to diminish the aesthetic and safety impacts of glare by minimizing reflecting surfaces, shading and directing overhead light fixtures away from residences, and requiring exterior lighting to be low-intensity and only used where necessary for safety and security purposes (Sacramento County 1993). The Open Space Element also contains policies to protect open space with the intent of preserving natural and scenic areas and encourage preservation of open space in developed areas for its scenic qualities. The Land Use, Open Space, and Conservation Elements of the County's General Plan are described in Sections 3A.1, "Aesthetics – Land," and 3A.10, "Land Use and Agricultural Resources – Land." Additional applicable polices specific to the placement of the White Rock WTP are identified below.

Objective: Low glare external building surfaces and light fixtures that minimize reflected light and focalize illumination.

- **LU-22.** Exterior building materials on nonresidential structures shall be composed of a minimum of 50 percent low-reflectance, non-polished finishes.

- **LU-23.** Bare metallic surfaces such as pipes, flashing, vents, and light standards on new construction shall be painted so as to minimize reflectance.

- **LU-24.** Require overhead light fixtures to be shaded and directed away from adjacent residential areas.

- **LU-25.** Require exterior lighting to be low-intensity and only used where necessary for safety and security purposes.

Objective: Appropriate urban and rural development clustered to provide open space resource protection.

- **OS-11.** Permit development clustering in rural areas where grouping units at a higher density would create an open space buffer protecting intensive farming activities, provided that:

    a. Clustered residential lots are adjacent to and comparable in lot size to existing agricultural areas.

    b. Septic disposal systems are not concentrated in a manner which increases the potential for groundwater contamination.

    c. General Plan policies pertaining to floodplain or natural preserves would not preclude development of the proposed use in the area to be protected as open space.

    d. The project complies with any applicable development credits transfer ordinance relating to density bonuses.

e. Development rights for the open space area are permanently dedicated and appropriate long-term management is provided for by either a public agency, private homeowners association, or other appropriate entity.

f. The overall average density of the project is comparable to the average lot sizes in the area.

CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA GENERAL PLAN

The City of Rancho Cordova General Plan provides policies for the preservation and enhancement of the City. The following policies and plans are applicable to portions of the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area that cross the City limits of Rancho Cordova:

Folsom South Canal Roadmap

The Folsom South Canal Partners was formed to explore ways to enhance the Folsom South Canal and the relationship to its surroundings. The Folsom South Canal Roadmap compiles information about the canal, outlines the goals and vision of the Partners, identifies a framework for future partnerships and agreements, and informs and guides a more detailed future planning effort. The Folsom South Canal Partners includes Caltrans, the City of Rancho Cordova, GenCorp, Sacramento County, Sacramento County Regional Parks, and Sacramento Regional Transit.

Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines

The Citywide Design Guidelines identify objectives, standards, and guidelines that are intended to encourage, promote, and require high-quality, pedestrian-oriented development while allowing flexibility in the design solutions. Design concepts of project and community identity and public gathering places should be applied to the City's parks and open space areas.

- **Policy UD.1.4** – Develop vibrant urban cores (village centers and local town centers) as the primary activity centers of each district within the City.

- **Policy UD.1.5** – Encourage project compatibility, interdependence, and support with neighboring uses, especially between commercial and mixed-use centers and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Uses should relate to one another with pedestrian connections, shared parking, landscaping, public spaces, and the orientation and design of buildings.

- **Policy UD.3.1** – Ensure quality design of new development and redevelopment with an integrated architectural style.

- **Policy UD.3.4** – Require the provision of public art in all public and private development and redevelopment projects.

- **Policy UD.4.2** – Design new development to be compatible with surrounding development in ways that contribute to the desired character of the City and District.

3B.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The thresholds for determining the significance of impacts for this analysis are based on the environmental checklist in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. These thresholds also encompass the factors taken into account under NEPA to determine the significance of an action in terms of its context and the intensity of its

impact. For the purposes of this analysis, the City's proposed Off-site Water Facilities would result significant environmental effects to visual resources and aesthetics if they would:

- have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state scenic highway;
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or
- create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

This visual impact analysis is based on field observations conducted by RMC Water and Environment (RMC) in October 2008 and a review of local maps (e.g., general plans) and aerial photographs. Similar to the assessment of visual resources in Impact 3A.1-1, this analysis uses a common methodology that entails three key steps: (1) identifying the visual character and quality of visual resources within the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area; (2) identifying the type, exposure, and sensitivity of viewers; and (3) identifying the potential change in visual resources. All three of these elements are considered when determining the level of visual impact resulting from the Off-site Water Facilities. The actual impacts of the Off-site Water Facilities were determined based on potential changes to existing environmental conditions in the context of the applied significance criteria, as provided below. Where appropriate, the City has also considered approved, future projects that are not constructed to account for potential adverse affects to approved, adjacent land uses that are not reflected in existing environmental conditions.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Impacts that would occur under each of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives are identified as follows:

NCP (No USACE Permit Alternative)

PA (Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative)

1 (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 1 – Raw Water Conveyance – Gerber/Grant Line Road Alignment and White Rock WTP)

1A (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 1A Raw Water Conveyance – Gerber/Grant Line Road Alignment Variation and White Rock WTP)

2 (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 2 Treated Water Conveyance – Douglas Road Alignment and Vineyard SWTP)

2A (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 2A Treated Water Conveyance – Excelsior Road Alignment Variation and Vineyard SWTP)

2B (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 2B Treated Water Conveyance – North Douglas Tanks Variation and Vineyard SWTP)

3 (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 3 Raw Water Conveyance – Excelsior Road Alignment and White Rock WTP)

3A (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 3A Raw Water Conveyance – Excelsior Road Alignment Variation and White Rock WTP)

4 (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 4 Raw Water Conveyance – Easton Valley Parkway Alignment and Folsom Boulevard WTP)

4A (Off-site Water Facility Alternative 4A Raw Water Conveyance – Easton Valley Parkway Alignment Variation and Folsom Boulevard WTP).

The impacts for each alternative are compared relative to the PA at the end of each impact conclusion (i.e., similar, greater, lesser).

ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED FURTHER IN THIS EIR/EIS

Scenic Highways—As provided in the description of the affected environment, no scenic highways are identified within Zone 4 of the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area. Therefore, physical improvements associated with all the Off-site Water Facility alternatives would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state or locally-designated scenic highway. Based on this context, no impact would occur and this EIR/EIS provides no additional discussion of this issue area.

IMPACT 3B.1-1 Substantial Adverse Effect on a Scenic Vista. *Implementation of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives would not result in the degradation of the visual quality of a scenic vista.*

NCP, PA, 2, 2A, and 2B

No formally designated scenic vistas exist within the "Water" Study Area, according to the Sacramento County General Plan (1993) and, therefore, the Off-site Water Facilities would not result in an adverse impact to a scenic vista. However, eastern portions of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area are readily visible from hillsides to the northeast and open space areas along Scott Road south of White Rock Road are identified as a scenic corridor in the Sacramento County General Plan. Additionally, views to the south of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) include the eastern portions of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area. Construction activities and, to a lesser extent, permanent facilities proposed as part of the No USACE Permit Alternative, Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative, and Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B would be visible from these ridgelines and the SRA.

Under the No USACE Permit Alternative and Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative, most of the above ground facilities would be contained within the SPA and, therefore, the impact discussion related to new development within the SPA is provided in Section 3A.1, "Aesthetics – Land." Facilities outside the SPA under the No USACE Permit Alternative and Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative would be mainly limited to buried pipelines and the booster pumping station. Similarly, new, permanent above-ground facilities would be limited under Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B by further integrating the City's water supply infrastructure with SCWA. Based on these considerations, **direct** and **indirect** impacts to existing scenic vistas under these alternatives would be **less than significant**. ***[Similar]***

Mitigation Measure: No mitigation measures are required.

1, 1A, 3, 3A, 4, and 4A

Construction activities and permanent facilities proposed as part of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 1, 1A, 3, and 3A (e.g., WTP) would be visible from these ridgelines and the SRA. Views of and through the Off-site Water Facilities Study Area would be altered by new above-ground facilities, landscaping, and other site improvements where proposed. However, it is expected that new Off-site Water Facilities structures would be partially masked by intervening topography, existing vegetation, and development within the Folsom SPA. Given

that the conveyance pipeline under any alternative would be installed underground and its trench backfilled, this Off-site Water Facility feature would not be visible at the close of construction.

Based on these considerations, the scenic impact of new structural facilities proposed as part of the Off-site Water Facilities would be minor and more sparsely spaced than existing structures within the viewshed. As described in the affected environment discussion, these existing structures include power transmission lines, aggregate processing facilities, and commercial and industrial buildings that already impair the quality of the viewshed. Given the degree of this existing impairment, the change to the landscape as a result of the Off-site Water Facilities would be considered minor and, therefore, would not constitute a substantial adverse effect. In addition, once constructed, the Off-site Water Facilities would appear visually similar and consistent with the existing and planned development within the "Water" Study Area. Based on these factors, the **direct** and **indirect** impacts related to alteration of a scenic vista under Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 1, 1A, 3, 3A, 4, and 4A are considered **less than significant**. ***[Greater]***

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT 3B.1-2 Substantial Degradation of Existing Visual Character or Quality of the "Water" Study Area. *Implementation of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the "Water" Study Area and its surroundings.*

NCP, PA, 1, 1A, 3, and 3A

The Off-site Water Facilities would include several new facilities that would result in minor changes to the existing landscape and visual character of portions of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area. By virtue that the proposed conveyance pipeline would be installed underground and not visible at the surface following construction, this Off-site Water Facilities feature would have no long-term visual impacts. Although construction activities associated with the conveyance pipeline would result in disruptions to the visual character of areas in close proximity to the alignment, these disruptions would be temporary and dispersed along the conveyance alignment. Construction of the conveyance pipeline would involve temporary negative aesthetic effects, including clearing and grading as well as the presence of construction equipment and materials. Off-site Water Facilities construction activities would result in temporary exposure of graded surfaces, construction debris, and the presence of construction equipment and heavy truck traffic. Following construction, the surface would be restored to preproject conditions and no substantial changes to the existing visual character of areas within close proximity to the conveyance alignments are anticipated.

In relation to the WTP, these Off-site Water Facility Alternatives would involve the construction of several new facilities that would change the existing visual character of the of the On-site WTP or White Rock WTP site(s). From White Rock and Prairie City Roads, the WTP structures that would be most noticeable include: new water storage tank(s), the proposed gravity thickener tanks, the proposed dewatering building, and new office/ maintenance building(s). Once constructed, the On-site and White Rock WTP site(s) would have an industrial appearance that would blend with the SPA and overhead transmission line corridor.

Although the Off-site Water Facilities would change the visual character of the WTP site, the extent and magnitude of this change is not considered substantial in relation to other adjacent uses, which include OHV use and aggregate mining. However, the design of the WTP could be inconsistent with the development proposed within the Folsom SPA. In addition, the WTP would be located outside and to the south of the delineated Urban Services Boundary as proposed in the current Sacramento County General Plan Update and the WTP could degrade the existing visual character of the study area in the vicinity of the urban-rural interface that will ultimately transition through the WTP site. Therefore, the **direct** and **indirect** impacts from implementation of the No USACE Permit Alternative, Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative, and Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 1, 1A, 3, and 3A are considered **potentially significant**. ***[Similar]***

Mitigation Measure 3B.1-2a: Enhance Exterior Appearance of Structural Facilities.

The external appearance of above-ground facilities, including the choice of color and materials, shall seek to reduce the visual impact of the proposed WTP, pump station, and above-ground storage tank facilities. Bright reflective materials and colors shall be avoided. As appropriate, the exterior design of these facilities should follow design guidelines provided in applicable land use plans. Minimum exterior design requirements shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- painting (with earth-colored tones) of structural façades to blend with surrounding land uses,
- use of fencing or structural materials similar to those used by nearby land uses,
- installation of berms and/or landscaping around the facility (see Mitigation Measure 3B.2-2b for additional detail), and
- clustering of structural facilities to maximize open space buffering.

Implementation: City of Folsom Utilities Department

Timing: Prior to approval of grading plans and building permits for WTP, pump stations, and storage tank facilities.

Enforcement:

1. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Folsom: City of Folsom Community Development Department.
2. For structural improvements that would be located within unincorporated Sacramento County: Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department.
3. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Rancho Cordova: City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department.

Mitigation Measure 3B.1-2b: Prepare Landscaping Plan.

The City shall develop a landscaping plan for each structural facility site that uses a combination of locally derived native vegetation, earthen features (e.g., boulders), and, if appropriate, topographical separations (e.g., berms) to maximize site appearance and shield the new facilities from nearby sensitive receptors to the extent feasible. In addition to complying with local standards, the landscaping plan shall require the following at each site:

- Vegetation shall be arranged in a hierarchy of plant groupings to enhance the visual and scenic qualities of the site(s). To the extent practical, the design will minimize the need for supplemental irrigation.
- New or replacement vegetation shall be compatible with surrounding vegetation and shall be adaptable to the site with regard to rainfall, soil type, exposure, growth rate, erosion control, and energy conservation purposes.
- Plant materials chosen shall be species which do not present any safety hazards, which allow native flora to reestablish in the area, and which require minimal maintenance, including watering, pest control, and clean-up of litter from fruit and droppings.

Implementation: City of Folsom Utilities Department

Timing: Prior to approval of grading plans and building permits for WTP, pump stations, and storage tank facilities.

Enforcement:

1. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Folsom: City of Folsom Community Development Department.
2. For structural improvements that would be located within unincorporated Sacramento County: Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department.
3. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Rancho Cordova: City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department.

2, 2A, and 2B

The discussion provided for Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative and Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 1 and 1A as it relates to the construction and operation of the proposed conveyance pipeline would also apply to Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B. However, these alternatives would not involve the construction of a new WTP and, therefore, the impacts identified for the WTP under the Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative and Alternatives 1 and 1A would not apply to Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B. However, storage tank and pump station facilities under Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B could substantially alter the visual character of Zone 4 of the "Water" Study Area. Both **direct** and **indirect** impacts would be **potentially significant**. ***[Lesser]***

Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measures 3B.1-2a and 3B.2-2b.

4 and 4A

The discussion provided for the Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative and Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 1 and 1A as it relates to the construction and operation of the proposed conveyance pipeline would also apply to Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 4 and 4A. Under Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 4 and 4A, the Folsom Boulevard WTP would be constructed south of Folsom Boulevard and within an undeveloped portion of the Aerojet Property, just south of Becks Furniture. This area is planned for various forms of urban development in conjunction with the Westborough Specific Plan. As a result, the design of the Folsom WTP could be inconsistent with other existing development proposed in the surrounding vicinity of the Folsom Boulevard WTP site. Therefore, **direct** and **indirect** impacts associated with the implementation of Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 4 and 4A would be **potentially significant**. ***[Greater]***

Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measures 3B.1-2a and 3B.2-2b.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3B.1-2a and 3B.1-2b would reduce potentially significant direct and indirect impacts associated with visual quality degradation to a **less-than-significant** level by ensuring structural elements of the WTP, pump stations, and storage tanks blend with the development patterns proposed for the Folsom SPA and within adjacent jurisdictions through the provision of visual screening.

IMPACT 3B.1-3 Creation of a New Source of Substantial Light or Glare that would Adversely Affect Day or Nighttime Views in the "Water" Study Area. *Implementation of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives would create new sources of substantial light or glare, which could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the "Water" Study Area.*

Construction can involve numerous potential sources of nighttime lighting, including earthmoving and other construction equipment, temporary construction trailers, employee vehicles, and flood and security lighting. Nighttime construction along the conveyance alignments could adversely affect single-family residences along Gerber, Florin, Excelsior, Grant Line, Eagles Nest, and Grant Line Roads and could interfere with the nighttime vision of drivers using these roadways. Because nighttime construction lighting could adversely affect nearby residents and drivers on adjacent roads, this **direct** impact would be **potentially significant**. **No indirect** impacts would result. ***[Similar]***

The WTP under the No USACE Permit Alternative, Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative, and Alternatives 1, 1A, 3, and 3A would be constructed in an undeveloped area that has minimal to no existing sources of light and glare. As a result, the WTP would generate new sources of night lighting and glare within an area that currently lacks these sources, thereby, incrementally increasing the amount of light generated within the immediate vicinity of the WTP. Although light generated by the WTP would be typical of similar industrial development to the south, such as existing aggregate processing, by virtue that the new source of illumination would originate from a different location, potentially affecting previously unaffected residences. This **direct** impact would be **potentially significant**. **No indirect** impacts would result. ***[Similar]***

Mitigation Measure 3B.1-3a: Conform to Construction Lighting Standards.

The City shall limit construction to daylight hours to the extent possible. If nighttime lighting or construction is necessary, the City shall ensure that unshielded lights, reflectors, or spotlights are not located and directed to shine toward or be directly visible from adjacent properties or streets. To the extent possible, the City shall minimize the use of nighttime construction lighting within 500 feet of existing residences. This measure shall be identified on grading plans and in construction contracts.

Implementation: City of Folsom Utilities Department

Timing: Prior to approval of grading plans and building permits for WTP, pump stations, and storage tank facilities.

Enforcement:

1. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Folsom: City of Folsom Community Development Department.
2. For structural improvements that would be located within unincorporated Sacramento County: Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department.
3. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Rancho Cordova: City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department.

Mitigation Measure 3B.1-3b: Prepare and Submit a Lighting Master Plan.

The City shall prepare a Lighting Master Plan that covers all Off-site Water Facilities-related outdoor light sources. The Lighting Master Plan shall include the following minimum requirements:

- outdoor lighting shall be properly shielded and installed to prevent light trespass on adjacent properties;
- flood or spot lamps installed as part of the Off-site Water Facilities shall be aimed no higher than 45 degrees above straight down (half-way between straight down and straight to the side) when the source is visible from any off-site residential property or public roadway;

- prohibit the use of harsh mercury vapor, low-pressure sodium, or fluorescent bulbs for public lighting in residential neighborhoods; and
- comply with requirements of local jurisdiction, if applicable.

Implementation: City of Folsom Utilities Department

Timing: Prior to approval of grading plans and building permits for WTP, pump stations, and storage tank facilities.

Enforcement:
1. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Folsom: City of Folsom Community Development Department.
2. For structural improvements that would be located within unincorporated Sacramento County: Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department.
3. For structural improvements that would be located within the City of Rancho Cordova: City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department.

2, 2A, and 2B

The discussion provided for Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative and Alternatives 1 and 1A in relation to pipeline construction and potential for sources of nighttime lighting to disrupt adjacent residences and vehicle traffic would apply to Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 2, 2A, and 2B. The implementation of the recommended mitigation would be required to minimize these direct impacts to a less-than-significant level. In contrast, these alternatives do not include the construction of a new WTP, but could involve the use of nighttime lighting at the pump station and storage facilities. For this reason, this **direct** impact is considered **potentially significant**. **No indirect** impact would result. ***[Lesser]***

Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measures 3B.1-3a and 3B.1-3b.

4 and 4A

The discussion provided for the Proposed Off-site Water Facility Alternative in relation to pipeline construction and potential for sources of nighttime lighting to disrupt adjacent residences and vehicle traffic would apply to Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 4 and 4A.

In relation to the Folsom Boulevard WTP site under these alternatives, the WTP would be constructed on an undeveloped site that is bordered by several existing sources of light and glare, including commercial billboards, street lamps along Folsom Boulevard and within the Aerojet Property, and lighting sources associated with adjacent commercial and industrial facilities. These uses would generally not be sensitive to new sources of light and glare. However, as indicated in Section 3B.10, "Land Use and Agricultural Resources – Water," planned uses adjacent to the WTP include medium- and high-density residential uses. As a result, the development of the WTP under Off-site Water Facility Alternatives 4 and 4A would generate sources of nighttime light and glare that may be disruptive to the residential areas planned adjacent to site and, therefore this **direct** impact would be **potentially significant**. **No indirect** impacts would result. ***[Similar]***

Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measures 3B.1-3a and 3B.1-3b.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 3B.1-3a and 3B.1-3b would reduce potentially significant impacts associated with the temporary use of construction lighting to a **less-than-significant** level through adherence to

construction lighting standards and preparation and implementation of a lighting master plan for operational, above-ground facilities.

3B.1.4 RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Implementation of the mitigation measures contained in this section would reduce impacts associated with the appearance of the new structural facilities and associated new light and glare to a less-than-significant level. Impacts related to substantial alteration of a scenic vista and damage to designated scenic corridor would be less than significant and no additional mitigation measures are required. Based on these conclusions, implementation of the Off-site Water Facility Alternatives would not result in residual significant unavoidable impacts to the visual character of the "Water" Study Area or add substantial amounts of light and glare.

This page intentionally left blank.