

1 **3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND**
2 **MITIGATION MEASURES**

3 This chapter describes the environmental setting, analyzes the potential impacts to environmental
4 resources that would occur from the implementation of the alternatives described in Chapter 2,
5 *Program Alternatives*, and identifies feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts.

6 This is a program-level EIS/EIR intended to provide a general level of detail of the potential
7 effects of regional approaches to invasive cordgrass control. It does not address site-specific
8 control impacts. This document provides general mitigation measures that can be applied to
9 specific treatment sites, as well as an overview of regional impacts and general site-impacts of each
10 alternative. Additional CEQA and NEPA assessments may be required as site-specific invasive
11 cordgrass treatment projects are proposed.

12 This chapter uses the term “Project” to indicate the “Spartina Control Program.” Under CEQA,
13 an EIR analyzes a project and alternatives to the project. Alternatives are intended to reduce one or
14 more of the project’s impacts. Under NEPA, “Alternatives” include the project. This EIS/R
15 follows NEPA guidance and regulation, and addresses each alternative in equal depth. However,
16 Alternative 1 constitutes the CEQA “Project”, and the other alternatives are intended to reduce
17 some significant impacts compared with Alternative 1.

18 CEQA and NEPA have different terminologies for setting and impacts. CEQA uses “Setting” to
19 describe existing conditions, while NEPA uses “Affected Environment”. CEQA uses “Impacts”
20 to describe the project’s adverse or beneficial effects on the environment, while the NEPA
21 terminology is “Environmental Consequences” or “Environmental Effects”. This document
22 considers the CEQA and NEPA terms to be broadly synonymous. Therefore, this document
23 considers “Setting” to have the same meaning as “Affected Environment” and “Impacts” to have
24 the same meaning as “Effects” or “Consequences”. The terms are used interchangeably in this
25 document. Both CEQA and NEPA use the term “Mitigation” identically.

26 Analysis of impacts requires comparison of post-project conditions with a baseline condition.
27 CEQA case law is clear that, in most cases, the Setting is the existing, on-the-ground conditions at
28 the time that the draft EIR is prepared. NEPA allows the setting to be either existing on-the-
29 ground conditions or some future baseline without the project. Because of CEQA’s strict
30 definition of the “Setting” conditions, this EIS/EIR uses the existing conditions as the baseline.
31 Adverse effects compared to these existing conditions are considered project impacts. Beneficial
32 effects of each alternative also are described to provide the public and decision-makers with
33 information upon which to evaluate the alternatives; these effects are identified in this chapter as
34 “Beneficial Effects.”

35 Future no-project conditions are compared with existing conditions under the No-Action
36 alternative (continuation of existing control efforts and no control efforts). Environmental changes
37 that would result under the No-Action alternative are considered adverse or beneficial impacts.

38 Baseline and post-project conditions used in this chapter are summarized in **Table 3-1**, below:
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1 Table 3-1: Baseline and Post-project Conditions

	<i>Action Alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2)</i>	<i>No-Project Alternative (Alternative 3)</i>
Baseline	Now (2002 existing conditions)	Now (existing conditions)
Impacts	Change in the Future	Change in the Future
General Types of Impacts		
	Adverse Impacts of Treatment Methods	Adverse Impacts from Treatment Methods (for Alternative 3 only)
	No adverse impacts of Future Spread	Adverse Impacts of Future Spread
	Benefits of Removal of Existing Infestations	No Benefits or Adverse Impacts from Removal of Existing Infestations

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