

## **3.11 Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice**

### **3.11.1 Physical Setting**

#### **Methodology**

##### ***Socioeconomics***

This section addresses salt production and fisheries, the two natural resources in the South Bay (including the SBSP Restoration Project Area) that have prominent interaction with local economies. This section also covers commercial businesses and non-commercial recreation as it relates to socioeconomics.

Incorporated by summary is the discussion of salt production and bay shrimp harvest in the ISP EIR/EIS (Life Science! 2004). In addition, interviews were conducted with Tom Laine, owner of Laine's Bait Shop in Alviso and a member of the SBSP Stakeholder Forum, and with Clyde Morris, manager of the Refuge.

##### ***Environmental Justice***

This section provides an overview of minority and low-income populations in the SBSP Restoration Project Area. Specifically, data from the 2000 Census are presented to demonstrate the difference, if any, between percentage of minority and low-income populations in all Census tracts that include parts of the SBSP Restoration Project Area and the percentage of those same populations in the surrounding cities.

#### **Regional Setting**

##### ***Socioeconomics***

The SBSP Restoration Project Area is located within the cities of Hayward, Fremont, San Jose, Sunnyvale, Mountain View and Menlo Park. Table 3.11-1 describes the total year 2000 population of the above cities, as well as the total number of people 16 years of age and older in the labor force. Other cities in the region that were considered in this analysis include Redwood City, East Palo Alto, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, Milpitas and Union City.

##### ***Environmental Justice***

Table 3.11-1 addresses population within the SBSP Restoration Project Area relative to the cities within which the Project Area is contained. Table 3.11-2 presents the number of people who live in Census tracts that are totally or partially contained within the SBSP Restoration Project Area as a percentage of the total population of the cities where the tracts are located. All data are for the year 2000. It should be noted that no residential uses exist within the SBSP Restoration Project Area.

## Project Setting

### Socioeconomics

Two shrimp harvesting companies have historically operated in the South Bay, one of which collected brine shrimp directly from salt ponds within the Alviso pond complex (Morris 2005). Currently, brine

**Table 3.11-1 City Population and Labor Force (Year 2000 data)**

CITY	POPULATION	JOBS
Hayward	140,030	67,579
Fremont	203,413	106,437
San Jose	894,943	456,641
Sunnyvale	131,760	75,272
Mountain View	70,708	42,382
Menlo Park	35,785	15,853

*Source:* US Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF1) and Summary File 3 (SF3) (United States Census Bureau 2005)

**Table 3.11-2 City and SBSP Restoration Project Tracts Population**

CITY	CITYWIDE POPULATION	SBSP TRACTS POPULATION	PERCENT CITY POPULATION IN SBSP TRACTS (%)
Hayward	140,030	8,721	6.2
Fremont	203,413	27,699	13.6
San Jose	894,943	2,234	< 0.1
Sunnyvale	131,760	599	0.1
Mountain View	70,708	1,418	0.2
Menlo Park	35,785	6,095	17.0

*Source:* US Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF1) and Summary File 3 (SF3)

shrimp harvesting occurs only within the Refuge's Mowry pond system outside the SBSP Restoration Project. Brine shrimp harvesting occurred within the Alviso pond complex prior to and during early ISP implementation, but it no longer occurs within the Project Area. It is estimated that pond restoration as part of the ISP has reduced brine shrimp harvests by one of the fishing companies, SF Bay Brands, though its business has not been substantially altered by any decline in brine shrimp population (Morris 2005). If the salinity in Ponds A12, 13, and 15 increases as proposed in the ISP, harvesting in these ponds could occur, although these ponds are not currently contracted for shrimp harvesting (Morris 2006, 2007). The shrimp harvesting companies' contracts are up for renewal in the next few years. It is not known whether USFWS will renew the contracts. In general, the commercial shrimp harvest business in the Alviso pond complex has declined since the ISP was implemented.

As described in Section 3.6, Biological Resources, the California bay shrimp and blacktail bay shrimp are common in tidal sloughs and in the Bay itself. The California bay shrimp supports the only commercial fishery remaining in the South Bay aside from the limited harvest of brine shrimp that occurs in salt

ponds. Two to four boats harvest shrimp in the South Bay each year and catch approximately 75,000 pounds of shrimp valued between \$154,000 and \$312,000 annually (Hansen 2003). Most shrimp harvesting occurs between the Dumbarton Bridge and Calaveras Point, with limited activity above Calaveras Point in Coyote Creek (Hansen 2003).

California bay shrimp are present in the South Bay year-round, but they are most abundant from September through October and least abundant from March through April (Hansen 2003). Bay shrimp are sensitive to changes in salinity and water quality, and may abandon sloughs in the far South Bay for deeper, more saline waters during periods of high freshwater runoff. Recent changes in salinity (*e.g.*, effluent from wastewater treatment plants) may have altered the distribution of bay shrimp, as this species has declined in abundance in the far South Bay in recent decades (Tom Laine, pers. comm.). CDFG has conducted a fisheries survey for shrimp and crabs within San Francisco Bay since 1980 (CDFG data Life Science! 2004). California bay shrimp comprised 80 percent, 59 percent, and 79 percent of shrimp captures at three open water stations.

At present, it is estimated that the lack of tidal action in the SBSP Restoration Project Area is causing the Bay to fill in much faster than it otherwise would and that thousands of acres of the South Bay have been lost to sport fishers and other recreational users (Laine 2005). Recreational fishing occurs near the Dumbarton Bridge (in the Ravenswood pond complex), Coyote Creek Lagoon (in the Alviso pond complex) and in East Palo Alto (Morris 2005). For further discussion of recreation activities including fishing, please refer to Section 3.7, Recreation Resources.

Other non-commercial, passive recreation exists within the SBSP Restoration Project Area, including walking and birdwatching. No recreational, commercial businesses operate within the Project Area. Recreational businesses (*e.g.*, bait shops, outdoor equipment stores) are located outside of the Project Area in nearby cities. Other businesses that indirectly support recreational uses (*e.g.*, restaurants, shops) are also located outside of the Project Area. Other businesses and industries are located adjacent to the pond complexes; these businesses are protected from flood hazards by the levees located bayward of these businesses.

### ***Environmental Justice***

Table 3.11-3 presents the percentage of non-white residents living in Census tracts that are totally or partially contained within the SBSP Restoration Project Area alongside the percentage of non-white residents citywide in the tracts' respective cities. Table 3.11-4 presents the percentage of individuals living below the poverty level (according to the Census 2000) in Census tracts that are totally or partially contained within the SBSP Restoration Project Area alongside the percentage of individuals living below the poverty level citywide in the tracts' respective cities.

Census data is presented by tract, and some of these tracts extend beyond the immediate SBSP Restoration Project Area vicinity. The racial composition and income levels of specific neighborhoods adjacent to the Project Area cannot be extracted from the Census data. In general, non-white communities dominate the Census tracts contained in the Project Area. For the purposes of this

**Table 3.11-3 Non-white Populations**

CITY	CITYWIDE POPULATION THAT IS NON-WHITE (%)	RANGE OF NON-WHITE POPULATION IN SBSP TRACT(S) (%)
Hayward	57	64 – 74
Fremont	52	48 – 79
San Jose	53	71 – 88
Sunnyvale	47	34 – 41
Mountain View	36	34 – 35
Menlo Park	28	75 – 79

*Source: US Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF1) and Summary File 3 (SF3)*

**Table 3.11-4 Percentage Population Below Poverty Level**

CITY	CITYWIDE INDIVIDUALS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL (%)	RANGE OF POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL IN SBSP TRACT(S) (%)
Hayward	10	5 – 8
Fremont	5	1 – 9
San Jose	9	9 – 13
Sunnyvale	5	5 – 6
Mountain View	7	2 – 4
Menlo Park	7	15 – 20

*Source: US Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF1) and Summary File 3 (SF3)*

evaluation, where the range of nonwhite population exceeds 50 percent, that area is considered to have a minority population. The SBSP Census tracts with minority populations are within the cities of Hayward, Fremont, San Jose, and Menlo Park. Low-income areas are defined as Census block groups where the percentage of the population below poverty status exceeds the countywide average. The percentages of people below poverty status in 2003 for Santa Clara County, Alameda County, and San Mateo County were approximately 9, 11, and 7 percent, respectively (US Census Bureau 2006). Only the tracts within the cities of San Jose and Menlo Park are considered low-income areas.

### 3.11.2 Regulatory Setting

Relatively few of the cities that surround the SBSP Restoration Project Area include relevant strategies, policies, and implementation measures pertaining to environmental justice in their general plans. Those that do are discussed below.

#### Federal Regulations

Executive Order (EO) 12898 requires all federal agencies to seek to achieve environmental justice by "...identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations."

## State Regulations

There are no specific requirements for the analysis of socioeconomic and environmental justice issues under state law. CEQA Guidelines Section 15131(a) through (c) provides guidance on the discussion of economic and social effects in an EIR. Specifically, such effects may be included in an EIR but “shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment.” However, economic and social effects may be used to determine the significance of physical changes caused by a project, but these changes “need not be analyzed in any detail greater than necessary to trace the chain of cause and effect.” CEQA Guidelines provide for the consideration of economic, social, and particularly housing factors together with technological and environmental factors to determine whether changes in a project are feasible to reduce or avoid the significant effects on the environment identified in the EIR.

## Regional/Local Regulations

### *Socioeconomics*

With the exception of the City of Hayward, none of the cities in the SBSP Restoration Project Area include policies related to socioeconomic and environmental justice in their general plans.

The Economic Development Element of the City of Hayward General Plan (adopted March 12, 2002 as amended October 21, 2003) (City of Hayward 2002) includes the following relevant policy related to socioeconomic:

Business Climate:

3. Promote Hayward as a city that has a broad variety of occupations and family incomes, ethnic diversity, diverse lifestyles and housing accommodations, a broad range of commercial services, educational and job opportunities, and many recreational opportunities.

### *Environmental Justice*

**City of San Jose.** The Land Use Element of the City of San Jose 2020 General Plan (2004) (City of San Jose 2004) provides the following goal pertaining to environmental justice:

Housing Goal:

2. Provide decent housing in a livable environment for all persons, including the homeless, regardless of such factors as age, race, sex, marital status, ethnic background or income.

**City of Sunnyvale.** The City of Sunnyvale General Plan (Housing and Community Revitalization Element 1992) (City of Sunnyvale 1992) includes the following relevant goals, policies, and action statements related to environmental justice:

GOAL D. Promote a Community in Which All People Regardless of their Ethnicity, Race, Religion, Marital Status, Handicap, Sex or Age Will Have an Equal Opportunity to Avail Themselves of Housing.

Policy D.1: Continue to support efforts of organizations which work toward eliminating unlawful discrimination in Sunnyvale.

Action Statements

D.1.a. The City shall continue its Age Discrimination Ordinance to discourage age discrimination.

D.1.b. The City should prepare an annual review of the Age Discrimination Ordinance based on the reports provided by the non-profit agency which monitors discrimination for Sunnyvale.

D.1.c. The City should continue to provide assistance to a local non-profit organization that provides services to those experiencing discrimination.

D.1.d. The City should review existing lending practices such as redlining to determine the extent to which these practices may inhibit the City achieving its General Plan goals and policies related toward housing development, and to allow for greater leverage and on-going income streams for housing programs.

Policy D.2: Continue to ensure that handicapped persons have access to newly constructed residential developments when required by code and encourage similar access in renovated structures.

Action Statements

D.2.a. The City should consider exploring the feasibility of providing greater handicapped access through the development review process (as a supplement to minimum state requirements).

D.2.b. The City should encourage handicapped access during renovations, when appropriate, and continue its home access program if funds remain available.

**City of Redwood City.** The City of Redwood City Strategic General Plan (adopted January 22, 1990) (City of Redwood City 1990) does not provide relevant goals or policies associated with environmental justice. However, the Quality of Life Expectations chapter describes “racial discrimination” as a “negative attribute” in Redwood City.

**City of East Palo Alto.** The Economic Development Element of the City of East Palo Alto General Plan (City of East Palo Alto 1999) provides the following policy pertaining to environmental justice:

Policy 3: The City shall actively encourage the development of new housing and rehabilitation of existing units which shall be affordable to very low and low income households based on East Palo Alto levels of affordability. Additionally, all residents displaced by a redevelopment project shall be given the opportunity to live within City boundaries in housing they can afford.

### 3.11.3 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### Significance Criteria

For the purposes of this EIS/R, the Project would have a significant impact if it would result in the following:

- Displace, relocate, or increase area businesses associated with the expected increase in recreational users;
- Change lifestyles and social interactions;
- Disproportionately affect minority communities or low-income communities;
- Change the ethnic or racial composition in the community; or
- Change local employment opportunities and community tax base.

The significance criteria identified above are established based on EO 12898 and the Environmental Impact Checklist for Some of the More Common Social Concerns in the USFWS Reference Handbook. Because CEQA does not identify social and economic effects as significant, NEPA regulations were used to determine potential effects.

No construction or demolition of any facilities that would change the community tax base would occur. Alternative A would not affect local employment opportunities. However, there may be minor increases in local employment opportunities associated with management of the tidal habitat/ponds and new recreational facilities under Alternatives B and C. The creation of additional jobs at USFWS and CDFG (the managing agencies), if any, would not substantially affect local employment opportunities.

As explained in Section 3.1.2, while both CEQ Regulations for Implementing NEPA and the CEQA Guidelines were considered during the impact analysis, impacts identified in this EIS/R are characterized using CEQA terminology. Please refer to Section 3.1.2 for a description of the terminology used to explain the severity of the impacts.

#### Program-Level Evaluation

##### ***SBSP Long-Term Alternatives***

***SBSP Impact 3.11-1: Displace, relocate, or increase area businesses, particularly those associated with the expected increase in recreational users.***

Shrimp harvesting is the only businesses which operates within the SBSP Restoration Project Area. Businesses which could be indirectly affected by the SBSP Restoration Project include businesses (*e.g.*, sporting good stores, bait shops, restaurants) that support the recreation users in the Project Area as well as area businesses that are adjacent to the Project Area.

***Alternative A No Action.*** Effects on brine shrimp harvesting, bay shrimp harvesting, and other area businesses are discussed below.

*Brine Shrimp Harvesting.* As described in the setting section, the commercial shrimp harvesting business in the Alviso pond complex has ceased since the implementation of the ISP. Although Alviso Ponds A12, A13, and A15 could be harvested for brine shrimp if their salinity levels increase, the shrimp harvesting companies do not currently have contracts to operate within these ponds. Under the No Action Alternative, USFWS, the landowning and land managing agency, would continue to operate and maintain the ponds in a manner similar to the ISP.

Because the brine shrimp harvesting business has generally ceased in the Alviso pond complex, further reduction of the brine shrimp harvest business is not expected to occur and potential effects would be less than significant.

*Bay Shrimp Harvesting.* As reported in the Final ISP EIR/EIS (2004), altered salinity profiles in the sloughs during the ISP period were predicted to be relatively small and localized and were, therefore, not expected to adversely affect the long-term quality or quantity of habitat for bay shrimp. Similarly, the health and mortality of the bay shrimp is also not expected to change substantially under SBSP long-term Alternative A. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

*Other Area Businesses.* Under the No Action Alternative, no new recreational facilities would be provided that could affect nearby businesses. Existing recreational facilities may be eliminated as some pond levees that support recreational facilities (e.g., trails) may deteriorate over the 50-year planning horizon. This potential reduction in recreational facilities is not expected to substantially affect area businesses. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Potential damage and disruption to area businesses from flooding events could continue to occur under Alternative A, as discussed in Section 3.3, Hydrology, Flood Management and Infrastructure. Please refer to Section 3.3 for further discussion of flooding impacts.

#### **Alternative A Level of Significance: Less than Significant**

***Alternative B Managed Pond Emphasis.*** Effects on brine shrimp harvesting, bay shrimp harvesting, and other area businesses are discussed below.

*Brine Shrimp Harvesting.* As described above under Alternative A, brine shrimp harvesting has ceased within the Alviso pond complex since the implementation of the ISP. Consequently, the conversion of the ponds to tidal habitat or reconfigured managed ponds as proposed under Alternative B would not adversely affect the shrimp harvesting business within the Project Area. As such, the impact would be less than significant.

*Bay Shrimp Harvesting.* As discussed in Section 3.6, Biological Resources, the SBSP Restoration Project is expected to have a net benefit to bay shrimp by increasing (to Bay levels) the salinities in some freshwater sloughs and channels in the South Bay and by increasing the amount of estuarine habitat. However, some managed ponds (e.g., those managed specifically for small shorebirds) may have higher salinity and lower DO than some existing ponds. Releases of water from these ponds when conditions are not optimal could result in localized areas of low DO and high salinity that may impair the health of, or

cause mortality of, bay shrimp. Although adverse effects on bay shrimp could occur in localized areas, the overall effect of the Project on bay shrimp would be less than significant. The Project has the potential to substantially enhance the shrimp populations, and as such it would provide economic benefits by revitalizing the bay shrimp harvesting industry.

*Other Area Businesses.* As discussed in Chapter 2, Description of Alternatives, while some existing trails would be removed under Alternative B, there would be an overall net increase in recreational facilities (e.g., trails, viewing areas, staging areas). These facilities would provide more opportunities for hiking, bicycling, birdwatching, kayaking, fishing, and other outdoor activities. According to USFWS's Banking on Nature 2004: The Economic Benefits to Local Communities of National Wildlife Refuge Visitation (2004), recreational visits to national wildlife refuges generate substantial economic activity. Therefore, an increase in recreational opportunities would have a beneficial impact on local businesses that sell sports equipment or cater to the visitors, although the precise benefits are not known. As such, this impact would be beneficial.

The repair of existing levees and construction of new flood protection levees proposed under Alternative B would protect existing infrastructure from damage and reduce disruption to area businesses from flooding events, as discussed in Section 3.3, Hydrology, Flood Management and Infrastructure. Please refer to Section 3.3 for further discussion of flooding impacts.

**Alternative B Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

*Alternative C Tidal Habitat Emphasis.* The impacts identified for Alternative B would also apply to Alternative C. More existing trails would be removed under Alternative C because a substantially larger portion of the Project Area would be converted to tidal habitat. The less-than-significant effects on brine shrimp harvesting and beneficial impacts on the bay shrimp industry and area businesses discussed for Alternative B are also expected to occur with implementation of Alternative C.

**Alternative C Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

---

**SBSP Impact 3.11-2: Change lifestyles and social interactions.**

*Alternative A No Action.* Alternative A would not include the construction of any new recreational facilities. Existing recreational facilities may be eliminated as some pond levees that support recreational facilities (e.g., trails) may deteriorate over the 50-year planning horizon. This would potentially reduce recreational opportunities for people living in the vicinity of these facilities. However, due to the availability of other recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the South Bay, people's lifestyles and social interactions would not be substantially affected by the potential decrease in recreational facilities. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.

**Alternative A Level of Significance: Less than Significant**

**Alternative B Managed Pond Emphasis.** Alternative B would provide connection trails and other recreational opportunities (e.g., viewing areas, interpretative stations identifying the value of surrounding natural and historic resources) within the SBSP Restoration Project Area which would enhance existing, nearby communities by providing access to outdoor space. The proposed recreation facilities would also be expected to increase use of the Project Area for recreation users coming from outside the immediate Project vicinity. Increased access to the Project Area and the associated increases in recreational facilities have the potential to change the lifestyle and social interactions of people living in the Project vicinity by encouraging more outdoor activities and cultivating an appreciation of the natural and historical resources in the region. Although this behavioral change cannot be quantified, the provision of opportunities for people's recreational enjoyment would be a beneficial impact.

**Alternative B Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

**Alternative C Tidal Habitat Emphasis.** Alternative C would provide recreational opportunities that are similar to those proposed under Alternative B. As such, the beneficial impacts discussed in Alternative B would also apply to Alternative C.

**Alternative C Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

---

**SBSP Impact 3.11-3: Effects disproportionately placed on minority and low-income communities or effects on the ethnic or racial composition in a community.**

Land uses in the vicinity of the SBSP Restoration Project Area consist primarily of commercial and industrial uses, although some residential uses are located within one mile of each pond complex. The percentages of non-white residents and individuals with incomes below the poverty level living in Census tracts that are partially contained within the SBSP Restoration Project Area are shown in Tables 3.11-3 and 3.11-4.

**Alternative A No Action.** Under the No Action Alternative, unplanned levee breaching, flooding, channel scour, conversion of managed ponds to seasonal ponds, and losses to public access would be expected. Certain levees that provide flood protection would be maintained in an effort to prevent flooding in nearby communities.

Impacts related to flooding and increases in mosquito populations, as discussed in Section 3.3, Hydrology, Flood Management and Infrastructure, and Section 3.10, Public Health and Vector Management, would be potentially significant under Alternative A. As noted in Section 3.11.1 above, minority and low-income communities are adjacent to the Project Area. Therefore, impacts related to flooding and increases in mosquito populations could disproportionately affect minority and low-income communities in the Project Area vicinity, resulting in potentially significant impacts.

**Alternative A Level of Significance: Potentially Significant**

**Alternative B Managed Pond Emphasis.** Restoration activities would occur and new recreational opportunities would be provided under this alternative. Construction activities would involve earthmoving activities that may cause short-term construction disturbance impacts on adjacent land uses (e.g., noise from construction equipment, increases in dust and truck traffic). All construction activities would occur entirely within the SBSP Restoration Project Area boundaries. Some of the construction activities would be in areas adjacent to minority or low-income communities. Specific land use disturbances are evaluated in Sections 3.9 (Land Use), 3.10 (Public Health and Vector Management), 3.12 (Traffic), 3.13 (Noise), and 3.14 (Air Quality).

Alternative B would be compatible with existing land uses and would not affect the open space character of the Project Area. There is some uncertainty as to whether the marsh ponds that are expected to develop in upland transition habitat under Alternative B would provide mosquito breeding habitat, thereby increasing mosquito abundance. However, the Adaptive Management Plan would monitor changes in mosquito abundance to ensure that impacts do not exceed the threshold of significance as described in Section 3.10, Public Health and Vector Management, and would not adversely affect people who live or work near the SBSP Restoration Project Area. In addition, construction activities would be temporary in nature and would be scattered both geographically throughout the Project Area and over time (during the 50-year planning horizon). Construction activities would result in primarily localized effects (e.g., increase noise or dust around the construction zone) that could occur near sensitive land uses (as shown in Figures 3.9-2 through 3.9-4 in Section 3.9, Land Use, the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 300, 600, and 500 ft from the Eden Landing, Alviso, and Ravenswood pond complexes, respectively). However, as identified in Section 3.13, Noise, and Section 3.14, Air Quality, mitigation measures are identified which would reduce such potential effects to less-than-significant levels. Due to the temporal nature of each phase of construction activities in the Project Area, their relative distance to surrounding communities, and the indiscriminate approach to restoration activities that are tied to achieving a mix of tidal habitat/managed ponds based on the Adaptive Management Plan (and not on the location of minority or low-income communities), this alternative would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income communities near the Project Area. In addition, implementation of this alternative would not change the existing ethnic or racial composition in the region.

By providing new recreational opportunities, Alternative B would increase public access to the outdoors for neighboring minority communities (although these facilities would likely be used equally by people from the entire region and not be limited to the adjacent communities only). The increase in recreational opportunities under this alternative would be beneficial to nearby communities.

**Alternative B Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

**Alternative C Tidal Habitat Emphasis.** The proposed activities and facilities under Alternative C would be similar to Alternative B. Implementation of Alternative C would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income communities. In addition, the increased recreational opportunities under this alternative would be beneficial to nearby communities.

**Alternative C Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

## **Project-Level Evaluation**

**Phase 1 Impact 3.11-1: Displace, relocate, or increase area businesses, particularly those associated with the expected increase in recreational users.**

### **Phase 1 No Action**

The following discussion addresses the No Action Alternative (Alternative A) at the project level.

Under the No Action Alternative, the landowners (USFWS and CDFG) would continue to operate and maintain the ponds in a manner similar to the ISP, although ongoing O&M activities would be scaled back. Because land uses would be similar to existing conditions and minimal changes would occur associated with O&M activities, the No Action Alternative would have a less-than-significant impact on area businesses (*e.g.*, shrimp harvesting and recreation-supporting businesses).

Potential damage and disruption to area businesses from flooding events could continue to occur under the No Action Alternative, as discussed in Section 3.3, Hydrology, Flood Management and Infrastructure. Please refer to Section 3.3 for further discussion of flooding impacts.

**Phase 1 No Action Level of Significance: Less than Significant**

### **Phase 1 Actions**

The following discussion addresses the Phase 1 actions (the first phase of Alternatives B and C) at the project level.

*Brine and Bay Shrimp Harvesting.* A discussion of brine and bay shrimp harvesting impacts is presented in SBSP Impact 3.11-1 above. Potential impacts on the shrimp harvesting business would be less than significant.

*Other Area Businesses.* Recreational businesses (*e.g.*, bait shops, outdoor equipment stores) are located outside of the SBSP Restoration Project Area. Other businesses that indirectly support recreational uses (*e.g.*, restaurants, shops) are also outside of the Project Area. Implementation of the Phase 1 actions, specifically the recreational components, may affect area businesses through the overall expected increase in recreational users coming to the area. As noted in SBSP Impact 3.11-1 above, according to USFWS's 2004 Banking on Nature 2004: The Economic Benefits to Local Communities of National Wildlife Refuge Visitation, recreational visits to national wildlife refuges generate substantial economic activity. The anticipated effect of increased commerce would be a beneficial impact on area businesses.

**Phase 1 Actions Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**

---

**Phase 1 Impact 3.11-2: Change lifestyles and social interactions.****Phase 1 No Action**

The following discussion addresses the No Action Alternative (Alternative A) at the project level.

Under the No Action Alternative, the landowners (USFWS and CDFG) would continue to operate and maintain the ponds in a manner similar to the ISP, although ongoing O&M activities would be scaled back. No public access is currently provided at the Phase 1 ponds except at Ponds A16 and SF2. The trails along Ponds A16 and SF2 are likely to be maintained or repaired along with the pond levees; however, the integrity of these trails could be affected over time, as discussed under Alternative A in SBSP Impact 3.11-2. Due to the availability of other recreational opportunities in the South Bay, people's lifestyles and social interactions would not be substantially affected by the potential decrease in recreational facilities. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.

**Phase 1 No Action Level of Significance: Less than Significant****Phase 1 Actions**

The following discussion addresses the Phase 1 actions (the first phase of Alternatives B and C) at the project level.

As discussed in SBSP Impact 3.11-2, proposed recreation and public access features in the Phase 1 ponds would have a beneficial effect on the lifestyle and social interactions of people living in the area by encouraging more outdoor activities and cultivating an appreciation of the natural and historical resources in the region. Although this behavioral change cannot be quantified, the increase in opportunities for people's recreational enjoyment would be a beneficial impact.

**Phase 1 Actions Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)****Phase 1 Impact 3.11-3: Effects disproportionately placed on densely populated minority and low-income communities or effects on the ethnic or racial composition in a community.****Phase 1 No Action**

The following discussion addresses the No Action Alternative (Alternative A) at the project level.

Under the No Action Alternative, the landowners (USFWS and CDFG) would continue to operate and maintain the ponds in a manner similar to the ISP, although ongoing O&M activities would be scaled back. Impacts related to flooding and increases in mosquito populations, as discussed in Section 3.3, Hydrology, Flood Management and Infrastructure, and Section 3.10, Public Health and Vector Management, would be potentially significant under Alternative A. As noted in Section 3.11.1 above, minority and low-income communities are adjacent to the Project Area. The Phase 1 ponds are within

Census tracts that include minority and low-income communities. Therefore, impacts related to flooding and increases in mosquito populations could disproportionately affect minority and low-income communities in the Project Area vicinity. This would be a potentially significant impact.

**Phase 1 No Action Level of Significance: Potentially Significant**

***Phase 1 Actions***

The following discussion addresses the Phase 1 actions (the first phase of Alternatives B and C) at the project level.

Similar to the discussion provided for the program-level alternatives (see SBSP Impact 3.11-3), the Phase 1 actions would involve earthmoving activities at each pond complex that may cause short-term construction disturbance impacts (*e.g.*, noise from construction equipment, increase in dust and truck traffic).

Construction activities would be temporary in nature (up to five months at each location) and would occur throughout the Project Area. The nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 4,000, 600, and 500 from Ponds E8A/E8X/E9, Pond A8, and Pond SF2, respectively. The open space character of the SBSP Restoration Project Area would not change. Due to the temporal nature of construction activities in the pond complexes, this alternative would not disproportionately affect the minority or low-income communities outside the Project Area. In addition, implementation of the Phase 1 actions would not adversely affect the existing ethnic or racial composition in the region.

By providing new recreational opportunities, the Phase 1 actions would increase public access to the outdoors for neighboring minority communities (although these facilities would likely be used equally by people from the entire region and not be limited to the adjacent communities only). The increase in recreational opportunities would be beneficial to nearby communities.

**Phase 1 Actions Level of Significance: Less than Significant (CEQA); Beneficial (NEPA)**