

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Chapter 3.0 sets forth the affected environment and addresses the environmental consequences of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Alternatives with respect to 15 environmental resource areas. The discussions of the affected environment describe the present physical conditions, or the baseline conditions, in the area of the EIS Alternatives. Generally, the baseline used for the analysis of environmental impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reflects the conditions present at or about the time the EIS was initiated.

The area, or region of influence, is defined for each environmental resource based on the extent of physical resources that may be affected directly or indirectly by the EIS Alternatives, applying appropriate guidelines of regulatory agencies or common professional practice. Table 3-1 summarizes the environmental resource areas and associated regions of influence described in this San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center (SFVAMC) Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) Supplemental Draft EIS.

Table 3-1: Environmental Issues and Regions of Influence for the SFVAMC Long Range Development Plan

Environmental Issue	Region of Influence
Aesthetics	Project site and viewsheds to and from the project site
Air Quality	San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin
Community Services	Project site and contiguous communities
Cultural Resources	Project site and adjacent areas
Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management	Project site and associated floodplains, wetlands, and coastal zone designations
Geology and Soils	Project site and San Francisco region
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Global
Hydrology and Water Quality	Project site and associated subbasins
Land Use	Project site and adjacent land uses
Noise	Project site, surrounding areas, and traffic study areas
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	Communities contiguous with the project site and San Francisco Bay Area
Solid and Hazardous Materials	Project site and surrounding areas
Transportation and Parking	Project site and city of San Francisco in the vicinity of the project site
Utilities	Project site and contiguous communities
Wildlife and Habitat	Project site and contiguous wildlife corridors

The potential impacts of the EIS Alternatives are compared against the future No Action conditions for each environmental resource. Impacts are analyzed for both short-term (Phase 1) projects and long-term (Phase 2) projects associated with Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. “Short-term” projects are those that would occur during Phase 1,

which spans the 2012 through mid-2020 time frame; “long-term” projects are those that would occur during Phase 2, which spans the late 2020 through 2027 time frame. For the sake of simplicity, the analyses of each environmental resource area in this chapter refer to Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects as simply “short-term projects” and “long-term projects,” respectively.

Each Alternative (including Alternative 4, the No Action Alternative) is analyzed from the viewpoint of these 15 environmental resource areas. Indirect impacts are discussed for those resources only where they have the potential to occur (e.g., air quality, biological resources, cultural resources).

Impacts are analyzed and the findings are included in this Supplemental Draft EIS, applying the following levels of significance:

- Adverse Impact
- Potentially Adverse Impact
- Minor Impact
- No Impact
- Beneficial Impact

Adverse Impacts are defined in terms of context and intensity. Context is related to the uniqueness of a resource; intensity refers to the severity of the impact. Best management practices are incorporated into the project to limit the potential for an Adverse Impact. Where necessary, mitigation measures are identified for Adverse Impacts to limit the degree or magnitude of the action; rectify the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; or compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments. Potentially Adverse impacts are identified in some cases for Alternative 3 long-term projects at the potential new SFVAMC Mission Bay Campus, where an impact cannot be concluded to be Adverse or Minor without the determination of a specific project location.