

## 3.11 Population and Housing and Environmental Justice

This section examines the existing population, housing, and employment conditions in Los Angeles County (County) as a whole. Data presented in this section was obtained from two U.S. Census Bureau data sets: 2010 census files and 2008–2012 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. According to Section 15382 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, “An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment.” Socioeconomic characteristics should be considered in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) only to the extent that they create adverse impacts on the physical environment.

### 3.11.1 Environmental Setting

#### Population

The proposed program is located in Los Angeles County, which has a population of approximately 10,017,068 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Like much of the Southern California region, Los Angeles County has experienced a population increase over the past decade. Between 2000 and 2012, the County experienced a growth rate of 3.8 percent, roughly two and a half times below the rest of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Region (10.4 percent) (SCAG, 2013). The County’s population is estimated to grow to 11,353,000 by 2035 (SCAG, 2012).

#### *Demographics*

According to the 2008–2012 ACS 5-year estimates data, the racial breakdown of Los Angeles County’s population is as follows:

- 27.8 percent White
- 47.7 percent Hispanic or Latino of any race
- 13.7 percent Asian
- 8.2 percent Black/African American
- 0.2 percent American Indian and Alaska Native
- 0.2 percent Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- 2.2 percent Other (two or more races; some other race)

The general distribution of demographics around the County based on 2010 census data shows that the Hispanic and Black/African American populations are most highly concentrated within the center of the County’s coastal basin, with the Black/African American population most highly concentrated within the cities of Baldwin Hills, Inglewood, Compton, and Carson. White populations within the County are most concentrated along the coastal western County boundary from Malibu down to Palos Verdes and along the coastal southern County boundary from Long Beach to Los Alamitos. The White populations are also concentrated along the Santa Monica Mountains and northern County limits, interspersed with mainly Hispanic and Asian populations

in the central San Fernando Valley. Concentrations of the Asian populations exist around South San Gabriel and North El Monte, as well as around mid-city Los Angeles, Westwood, Torrance, and Norwalk (Cable, 2013).

**Income**

In the County of Los Angeles, the median household income is \$56,241 according to the 2008-2012 ACS 5-Year Estimates data. Between the years of 2000 and 2012, the median household income for the County increased by an average of \$11,691 annually. Median household income levels vary widely by census tract throughout the County, with lower-income tracts primarily located in central, east, and south Los Angeles. Other lower-income census tracts lie in the northern edges of the County, including some in the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster.

The median household annual income for all cities/Permittees included in the 12 EWMP areas ranges from \$41,538 in the City of Industry to over \$250,000 in the City of Hidden Hills. This represents over a \$200,000 range in the EWMP areas. The cities’/Permittees’ median household income is \$75,350, which is almost \$20,000 higher than the County median household income level.

**TABLE 3.11-1  
 2014 LOS ANGELES COUNTY AREA MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME  
 CLASSIFICATION IN U.S. DOLLARS**

	2 persons in household	3 persons in household	4 persons in household
Extremely low income	20,500	23,050	25,600
Very low income	34,200	38,450	42,700
Low Income*	54,650	61,500	68,300
Median Income	51,850	58,300	64,800
Moderate Income	62,200	70,000	77,750

\*Low income exceeding median income is an anomaly just for LA County due to HUD historical high cost adjustments to median. Household lower-income figures are derived based on very-low income figures not adjusted by HUD to account for any exceptions.

SOURCE: California Department of Community Development, 2014

Median household income varies greatly throughout Los Angeles neighborhoods. “High” median household income levels are concentrated mostly along the western boundary of the County along the coast and in Santa Clarita bordering Ventura County. These areas include the majority of the Upper Santa Clara River, Malibu Creek, North Santa Monica Bay, Beach Cities, and Palos Verdes Peninsula EWMP areas, along with parts of the Santa Monica Bay Jurisdictions 2 and 3 and the Ballona Creek EWMP areas. “Low” median household income areas are concentrated in the southern center of the County, and include parts of the Upper Los Angeles River, Ballona Creek, and Dominguez Channel EWMP areas. “Medium” median household income areas are more evenly interspersed throughout the County (Los Angeles Times, 2014).

## Housing

There are approximately 3,441,416 housing units in Los Angeles County, with an average household size of 3.19 for owner-occupied units and 2.84 for renter-occupied units (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012). As for housing tenure, 47.3 percent of County units are owner-occupied and 52.7 percent are renter-occupied units. The County homeowner vacancy rate is 1.7 percent and the rental vacancy rate is 4.5 percent; these vacancy rates are much lower than the national rates (2.3 percent of homeowners and 7.5 percent of rentals). Vacancy rates are an indicator of housing market balance in the County, where high vacancy rates demonstrate low demand and/or high prices, and low vacancy rates demonstrates high demand and/or low prices in the housing market. The County's vacancy rates are relatively low compared to the national level, indicating a relatively high demand for housing in the region.

### 3.11.2 Regulatory Setting

#### Federal

Executive Order 12898 outlines federal actions to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations. Executive Order 12898 states that agencies shall identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. A new working group was created to develop strategies for programs and policies regarding minority and low-income populations to: promote enforcement of all health and environmental statutes, improve research and data collection in relation to health and environment, identify different patterns of consumption of natural resources, and ensure greater public participation.

#### Local

##### *County of Los Angeles General Plan*

A General Plan is a basic planning document that, alongside the zoning code, governs development in a city or county. The State requires each city and county to adopt a General Plan with seven mandatory elements: land use, open space, circulation, housing, noise, conservation, and safety, along with any number of optional elements as appropriate. The proposed EWMPs would be subject to the local plans and policies of the areas in which they are located. Because this Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) is a high-level assessment of projects spanning the entire County, it will discuss only the County-level goals and policies relating to the overall program.

##### **Housing Element (2014–2021)**

The Housing Element is a required section of the General Plan, and serves to address the existing and projected housing needs of a city or county, including their share of the regional housing need. State law requires each local government agency to update their Housing Element every 5 years, and submit it to the State Department of Housing and Community Development for review. Los Angeles County's Housing Element was updated most recently in early 2014 for the 2014–2021 planning period. This policy guide analyzes the housing needs of the unincorporated areas of the County, and its primary focus is to ensure decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable

housing for current and future residents in those areas. The following are the goals and policies from the Los Angeles County Housing Element that relate to the proposed program.

**Goal 5:** Neighborhoods that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and enhance public and private efforts to maintain, reinvest in, and upgrade the existing housing supply.

**Policy 5.2:** Maintain adequate neighborhood infrastructure, community facilities, and services as a means of sustaining the overall livability of neighborhoods.

**Goal 6:** An adequate supply of housing preserved and maintained in sound condition, and located within safe and decent neighborhoods.

**Policy 6.4:** Maintain and improve community facilities, public housing services, and infrastructure, where necessary, to enhance the vitality of older, low income neighborhoods.

### ***City General Plans***

The EWMP areas associated with the proposed program are located in multiple jurisdictions of Los Angeles County, which, aside from the County, also includes 46 cities. Each of these cities has their own independent General Plan and municipal code that regulates housing. Given that a project-level analysis for each structural Best Management Practice (BMP) proposed in the EWMPs is beyond the scope of this PEIR, an extensive listing of the housing policies and regulations of each of the participating Permittees is not provided in this PEIR.

## **3.11.3 Impacts Assessment**

### **Thresholds of Significance**

For the purposes of this PEIR and consistency with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project would have a significant impact on population and housing if it would:

- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Implementation of the proposed project may result in a potentially significant impact to environmental justice if the projects would:

- Affect the health or environment of minority or low-income populations disproportionately.

## Program Impact Discussion

**Impact 3.11-1: Implementation of the proposed program could induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).**

### **Structural (Regional, Centralized, and Distributed) BMPs**

The structural BMPs associated with the proposed program would be installed to treat existing water quality impairments and would not induce population growth in the EWMP areas, either directly or indirectly. The structural BMPs are not habitable structures and would not provide new homes or businesses. In addition, the structural BMPs would generally be located within existing urbanized areas that do not have structural BMPs to treat existing runoff; the implementation of structural BMPs within existing stormwater infrastructure would not indirectly induce growth as the BMPs do not provide growth opportunities, as occurs with the extension of roads or other infrastructure. The construction work force anticipated to support implementation of the proposed projects would be drawn from the local Los Angeles region workforce and would not require housing. Because of the relatively short construction durations (typically less than one year) of the various types of structural BMPs and large available construction workforce in the Los Angeles Region, it is assumed that construction workers would not have to travel far or add traffic to roads outside of the vicinity of the project sites.

In addition, while one of the main goals of the EWMP is to increase infiltration and potentially increase recharge of stormwater into the groundwater basin, the amount of water potentially recharged would not be enough to indirectly support population growth. This potential additional recharge would contribute to local water supplies, but would not alter population demographics. Therefore, there would be no impact on population growth, either directly or indirectly.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

### **Non-Structural (Institutional) BMPs**

Non-structural BMPs consist of policies, actions, and activities aimed at preventing pollutants from entering stormwater runoff; therefore, no physical impacts would occur in the EWMP areas. Non-structural BMPs would not include any direct or indirect population growth-inducing measures. There would be no impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

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**Impact 3.11-2: Implementation of the proposed program could displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.**

### **Structural (Regional, Centralized, and Distributed) BMPs**

The proposed program and implementation of associated structural BMPs would not impact existing housing or necessitate construction of additional or replacement housing elsewhere. Structural BMPs may be constructed on private parcels, but would not displace existing housing or necessitate replacement housing elsewhere. Although a property owner may decide to modify the structures on their property, that a structural BMP would not displace existing housing.

Distributed BMPs are most likely to be implemented in high-density urban, commercial, industrial, and transportation areas where they would either replace or improve upon existing stormwater infrastructure. These types of BMPs are generally “retrofit” type projects that replace existing impervious surfaces with pervious surfaces such as bioinfiltration cells, bioswales, porous pavement, and filter strips that tie into existing stormwater management systems. These projects may also augment the existing stormwater management systems with additional inlet screens, filter media systems, sediment removal systems, and diversions to sanitary sewer lines. Ground disturbance for distributed BMPs is typically less than 1 to 2 acres in extent, but may extend in some limited applications up to 5 acres where space is available. Any new construction would be implemented along sidewalks and streets, in parks, and on publicly owned lands and would have no direct impact on existing homes. If projects are implemented in residential areas or streets, the projects would likely provide an improvement to the community in terms of aesthetic appearance.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

### **Non-Structural (Institutional) BMPs**

The implementation of non-structural BMPs would not displace housing, as they do not involve structural elements and would not have a direct physical impact on the environment, as no construction or maintenance activities would be required. There would be no impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

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### **Impact 3.11-3: Implementation of the proposed program could displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.**

#### **Structural (Regional, Centralized, and Distributed) BMPs**

The currently planned program and implementation of associated structural BMPs would not displace any housing or people. Structural BMPs would generally be implemented along sidewalks and streets, in parks, and on publicly owned lands and would have no direct impact on existing homes or residents. Future regional and centralized structural BMPs under the EWMP may include private property, schools, and universities. These potential future structural BMPs are not anticipated to result in displacement of existing housing.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

**Non-Structural (Institutional) BMPs**

The implementation of non-structural BMPs would not displace any people, as they do not consist of structural improvements that would have a physical impact on the environment. No construction or maintenance activities would be required. There would be no impact.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

**Impact 3.11-4: Implementation of the proposed program could affect the health or environment of minority or low-income populations disproportionately.**

**Structural (Regional, Centralized, and Distributed) BMPs**

Structural BMPs would be located throughout the County and cities based on water quality priorities and site suitability, factors of which include space, soil type, proximity/connectivity to other BMPs, etc. Structural BMPs are not expected to be concentrated in any one area or city in particular within the EWMP areas. The structural BMPs are expected to be located on public lands (e.g., schools, parks, sidewalks, and road rights-of-way) throughout the EWMP areas and would be designed to capture, convey, and/or filter stormwater and surface runoff. The structural BMPs would treat surface water runoff in a manner that would not result in human contact with surface flows that are potentially harmful to health. Structural BMPs would not disproportionately affect the health or environment of minority or low-income populations. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant impact

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**Non-Structural (Institutional) BMPs**

Similar to structural BMPs, non-structural BMPs are expected to be implemented throughout the County area, with no concentration in any area in particular. Non-structural BMPs would consist of policies and measures taken to prevent surface water pollution, and by their non-structural and preventative nature are not expected to introduce a threat to the environmental or public health, much less a disproportionate threat to minority or low-income populations. Street sweeping is a non-structural BMP that requires temporary parking restrictions to allow for effective collection and removal of debris and sediment from the streets. Curb parking spaces tend to be used more in higher-density, predominantly rental communities. Prior to implementation of increased street sweeping activities to improve effectiveness of these measures, the impact on street parking would be assessed and frequency of restriction on street parking assessed to avoid impacts to

these communities that rely more heavily on street parking for residences and small businesses. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant impact

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## Cumulative Impact Discussion

### Structural (Regional, Centralized, and Distributed) BMPs

The proposed program would involve implementation of structural BMPs that would capture and/or infiltrate, filter, divert, or treat stormwater runoff. Structural BMPs would result in the improvement of existing stormwater infrastructure and stormwater quality, and would therefore not result in a direct or indirect increase in population or housing. Structural BMPs would be installed along sidewalks and streets and in other public areas, and would not displace existing people or housing. There would be no impacts to population and housing; therefore, there would be no cumulative impacts to population and housing.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

### Non-Structural (Institutional) BMPs

Non-structural BMPs consist of policies, actions, and activities aimed at preventing pollutants from entering stormwater runoff; there would not be physical impact to the environment. Non-structural BMPs would not include any direct or indirect population growth-inducing measures, and would not displace existing people or housing. There would be no impacts to population and housing; therefore, there would be no cumulative impacts to population and housing.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

### 3.11.4 Summary of Impact Assessment

Table 3.11-2 shows a summary of the structural BMPs requiring mitigation.

**TABLE 3.11-2  
 SUMMARY OF POPULATION AND HOUSING IMPACTS REQUIRING MITIGATION MEASURES**

Structural BMPs	Thresholds of Significance				
	Population Growth	Displaced Housing	Displaced Population	Disproportionate Impact on Minority Populations	Cumulative Impacts
<i>Applicable Mitigation Measures:</i>	None Required	None Required	None Required	None Required	None Required
<b>Regional BMPs</b>					
Regional Retention and Infiltration	No	No	No	No	No
Regional Capture, Detention and Use	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Centralized BMP</b>					
Biofiltration	No	No	No	No	No
Constructed Wetlands	No	No	No	No	No
Treatment/Low-Flow Diversions	No	No	No	No	No
Creek, River, Estuary Restoration	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Distributed BMPs</b>					
Site Scale Detention	No	No	No	No	No
LID – Infiltration/Filtration BMPs – Porous Pavement, Green Streets, Bioswale/Filter Strips, downspout disconnects	No	No	No	No	No
LID – Green Infrastructure – Capture and Use – Cisterns, Rain Barrels, Green roofs, Planter Boxes	No	No	No	No	No
Flow-through Treatment BMPs	No	No	No	No	No
Source Control Treatment BMPs (catch basin inserts/screens, hydrodynamic separators, gross solids removal devices)	No	No	No	No	No
Low-Flow Diversions	No	No	No	No	No

NOTE: These conclusions are based on typical size and function of BMPs.