

## 3.13 Transportation and Circulation

This section discusses the setting, regulatory framework, and impacts and mitigation measures regarding traffic and transportation services in the Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) areas. Temporary impacts related to construction of Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been identified and analyzed throughout the section.

### 3.13.1 Environmental Setting

#### Regional and Local Roadways

The network of regional and local roadways in the potentially affected areas of the EWMP areas consists of interstate freeways (e.g., I-405, I-710, and I-210), state highways (e.g., State Route [SR] 1, and SR 60), and numerous local roads that are under the jurisdiction of a particular city or Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Local roads provide access to the individual project work sites and also provide a connection between local land uses and major thoroughfares.

#### Public Transportation

Public transit service is provided by various agencies in the study area; for example, the Los Angeles County Metro, Torrance Transit, and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation Transit Service. Buses serve local and regional needs for public transportation with varying frequencies.

#### Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

The regional network of bicycle facilities includes a variety of Class I (bicycle paths), Class II (bicycle lanes, striped in roads), and Class III (bicycle routes without striping) bikeways within the cities and communities in the EWMP study areas. Pedestrian facilities consist of sidewalks and intersection crosswalks in built-up areas.

#### Truck Routes

Cities often develop a truck route plan, which designates truck routes to provide contractors with the preferred travel roadways to and from connecting local roadways. For example, the cities of Torrance and Los Angeles have such plans. Los Angeles County has a similar system of truck routes for unincorporated areas.

### 3.13.2 Regulatory Setting

#### State

##### *California Department of Transportation*

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is responsible for planning, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining all state highway and interstate freeway systems. As a result, any change to the state roadway system requires an Encroachment Permit from Caltrans.

Caltrans' construction practices require temporary traffic control planning "during any time the normal function of a roadway is suspended" (Caltrans, 2012). In addition, Caltrans has the discretionary authority to issue special permits for the movement of vehicles/loads exceeding statutory limitations on the size, weight, and loading of vehicles contained in Division 15 of the California Vehicle Code. Requests for such special permits require the completion of an application for a Transportation Permit. The California Highway Patrol is notified about transportation of oversize/overweight loads. In addition to maintaining highways, and general regulations and laws dealing with licensing, traffic signage, and other noncommercial driver requirements, state laws and regulations also govern motor carriers on roadways within the state.

## **Local**

### ***County and City Land Use Regulations and Ordinances***

Local regulations and ordinances vary widely in the program area. Traffic-related policies included in General Plans typically concern traffic resulting from project operation rather than project construction. However, some local jurisdictions incorporate restrictions to their General Plans that pertain to construction activities in or through their jurisdictional areas, such as assigning truck traffic routes or requiring the development of Traffic Control Plans.

## **3.13.3 Impact Assessment**

### **Approach and Methods**

This section assesses the transportation impacts that could result from the implementation of the proposed structural and non-structural BMPs. Because of the geographic scale of the program area and the range of actions that fall within the scope of the proposed program, this impact assessment was conducted at a programmatic level. Assumptions regarding the types of transport and the types of roads used to haul materials were used to assess the overall significance of program impacts. In determining the level of significance, the assessment assumed that the implementation of the proposed BMPs would comply with relevant federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ordinances, and guidance. It is assumed that supplemental project-level analysis of transportation-related impacts (e.g., traffic safety analysis of heavy vehicles traveling on, and turning onto and off of, local roads) would be required for site-specific structural BMPs prior to commencement of construction activity.

### **Thresholds of Significance**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) defines a significant effect on the environment as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the physical conditions of the area affected by a project. An impact related to transportation would be considered significant if it would result in any of the following, which are from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines:

- Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant

- components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit.
- Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.
  - Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.
  - Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment).
  - Result in inadequate emergency access.
  - Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

The following discussion of environmental impacts is limited to those potential impacts that could result in some level of potentially significant environmental change, as defined by CEQA. The project site is located in the County of Los Angeles, which has established level-of-service standards and a congestion management program that are intended to monitor and address long-term traffic impacts resulting from future development, but do not apply to temporary impacts associated with construction projects (bullet 2 in the list of guidelines). In addition, implementation of the proposed program would not affect air traffic patterns of airports in the program area (bullet 3 above). Also, implementation of the proposed program would not directly or indirectly eliminate existing or planned alternative transportation corridors or facilities (bicycle paths, lanes, bus turnouts, etc.), include changes in policies or programs that support alternative transportation, or construct facilities in locations in which future alternative transportation facilities are planned (bullet 6 in the list of guidelines). Therefore, no impact would occur under these three categories, and these categories are not discussed further within this section.

## **Program Impact Discussion**

### ***Effects on Performance of the Traffic Circulation System***

**Impact 3.13-1: The proposed program could intermittently and temporarily increase traffic levels and traffic delays due to vehicle trips generated by construction workers and construction vehicles on area roadways.**

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

Implementation of the proposed program would involve the installation of structural control measures that would be constructed as BMPs to reduce the impact of stormwater and non-stormwater on receiving water quality within the EWMP areas. The construction activities for the proposed distributed, centralized, and regional structural BMPs would generally require similar processes such as removal of existing aboveground and/or surface materials, ground disturbance (e.g., site preparation and grading), and construction of the structural control measure. The intensity and nature of the construction activity required for the different structural BMPs would vary, and the number of vehicle trips generated by that activity would similarly vary. A general description of the anticipated construction activities that would be required for each of the various

types of distributed, centralized, and regional structural BMPs are provided in Chapter 2.0, *Project Description*, of this Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). Construction activities of the various structural BMPs proposed in the EWMPs are anticipated to occur intermittently in the future, and would be subject to change, as the EWMPs are also planning documents that will be revised periodically to reflect new data, further modeling, emerging technologies, and results of BMP assessments. As such, the proposed locations of individual BMPs are subject to change throughout the EWMP process. Definitive construction equipment lists, material lists, construction methods, construction schedules, and workforce details would be developed in the future as specific structural BMP projects are finalized according to the EWMPs.

Vehicle trips would be generated primarily by construction workers commuting to and from the BMP work sites, and by trucks hauling materials and equipment to and from the sites. Construction equipment would be delivered to and removed from each site as needed. The construction traffic impacts associated with each individual structural BMP project would be short-term in nature and limited to the period of time when construction activity is taking place for that particular project. The primary off-site impacts resulting from the movement of construction trucks would include a short-term and intermittent lessening of roadway capacities due to the slower movements and larger turning radii of the trucks compared to passenger vehicles. Drivers could experience delays if they were traveling behind a heavy truck. The added traffic would be most apparent on the local roadways serving the facility sites. Although project-related traffic would be temporary, supplemental project-level analysis of potential site-specific impacts could determine that addition of project-generated traffic would be considered substantial in relation to traffic flow conditions on local roadways. For this program-level assessment, this impact is considered potentially significant.

To reduce the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the structural BMP projects, **Mitigation Measure TRAF-1** would be implemented; it would require all construction activities to be conducted in accordance with an approved construction traffic control plan. This would serve to reduce the construction-related traffic impacts to the maximum extent feasible. Thus, through the environmental review and development permit process, subsequent project-specific analysis by implementing agencies would be needed to determine specific required elements of the traffic control plans.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**TRAF-1:** For projects that may affect traffic, implementing agencies shall require that contractors prepare a construction traffic control plan. Elements of the plan should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Develop circulation and detour plans to minimize impacts to local street circulation. Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible.
- To the extent feasible, and as needed to avoid adverse impacts on traffic flow, schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.

- Install traffic control devices as specified in Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones where needed to maintain safe driving conditions. Use flaggers and/or signage to safely direct traffic through construction work zones.
- Coordinate with facility owners or administrators of sensitive land uses such as police and fire stations, hospitals, and schools. Provide advance notification to the facility owner or operator of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities.

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant with mitigation (The application of this mitigation measure to specific BMP types and categories are identified in Table 3.13-1.)

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

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, *Project Description*, non-structural/institutional BMPs do not include the construction of new facilities. Consequently, there would be no impacts related to transportation and traffic.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

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#### **Traffic Safety Hazards**

**Impact 3.13-2: Construction of the proposed program could potentially cause traffic safety hazards for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians on public roadways, and could increase traffic hazards due to possible road wear.**

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

The construction activities for the proposed distributed, centralized, and regional structural BMPs would not alter the physical configuration of the existing roadway network serving the area, and would not introduce unsafe design features. Impacts would be less than significant...

Curb and traffic flow designs would be subject to the design requirements imposed by local Departments of Traffic. Freeways, major arterials, and collectors are designed to accommodate a mix of vehicle types, including heavy trucks needed for temporary construction activities; therefore, impacts to traffic safety would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant

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

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, *Project Description*, non-structural/institutional BMPs do not include the construction of new facilities. Consequently, there would be no impacts related to transportation and traffic.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

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### ***Inadequate Emergency Access***

**Impact 3.13-3: The proposed program could result in inadequate emergency access during construction.**

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

Construction trucks generated by the individual structural BMP projects would interact with other vehicles on project area roadways, including emergency vehicles, but would not alter the physical configuration of the existing roadway network serving the area. As such, while individual emergency vehicles could be slowed if travelling behind a slow-moving truck, per vehicle code requirements, vehicles must yield to emergency vehicles using a siren and red lights. Lane closures would be subject to local Departments of Traffic requiring coordination with emergency providers. This potential impact is considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant impact

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

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, *Project Description*, non-structural/institutional BMPs do not include the construction of new facilities. Consequently, there would be no impacts related to transportation and traffic.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

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## **Cumulative Impact Discussion**

**Impact 3.13-4: Construction of the proposed program could contribute to cumulative impacts to traffic and transportation (traffic congestion, traffic safety, and emergency vehicle access).**

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

The geographic scope of potential cumulative traffic impacts includes access routes to regional and local roadways used for haul routes and construction equipment/vehicle access throughout the project area. Given the dispersion of individual structural BMP project construction vehicle trips over the study area, and the fact that the trips would occur over the course of each workday, the project-related traffic on any one roadway during any hour of the day would not be substantial, and the contribution to cumulative traffic conditions would be less than significant.

However, constructing the structural BMPs could result in intermittent and temporary traffic-related impacts in the cumulative context. Traffic impacts include temporary increases in traffic congestion and increased potential for traffic safety hazards. The project has the potential to contribute to potentially significant cumulative construction-related impacts as a result of (1) cumulative projects (such as land development projects) that generate increased traffic at the same time on the same roads as would the proposed program, causing increased congestion and delays; and (2) infrastructure projects in roads that would be used by project construction workers and trucks, which could delay project-generated vehicles past the work zones of those other projects.

The structural BMPs associated with the proposed program would be constructed in multiple jurisdictions of Los Angeles County, which aside from the County also includes 46 cities and LACFCD. As such, these structural BMP projects would be generally spread over a large geographic area within the County. These structural BMPs, in combination with other current and planned projects in the County, would result in an increase in construction-related traffic levels, which would temporarily increase the levels of congestion on roadways in areas where a construction project would occur. However, each construction project occurring in the multiple municipalities of the County would be subject to the applicable regulations (e.g., traffic control plans) established by their respective municipalities. Nonetheless, temporary increases in traffic would occur as a result of construction activities under the proposed program along with other related project construction activities in the County. Where a related project is located in proximity to a structural BMP site and is constructed concurrently with the structural BMP, the combined construction traffic levels could have a cumulative effect on nearby roadways. Thus, under circumstances where these simultaneous construction activities would occur in proximity to roads with existing congestion, the cumulative traffic impacts related to a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient traffic levels could be cumulatively considerable.

However, with implementation of traffic control plans for each project that has the potential to increase traffic, including circulation and detour plans, traffic control devices, and scheduling (to the extent feasible) truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours (as identified in **Mitigation Measure TRAF-1**) the project's contribution to the cumulative impacts from construction would be minimal. Once constructed, no impacts to traffic would result. Therefore, the contribution of structural BMPs to cumulative traffic conditions is less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** Implementation of **Mitigation Measure TRAF-1**

**Significance Determination:** Less than significant with mitigation (The application of these mitigation measures to specific BMP types and categories are identified in Table 3.13-1.)

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

As discussed in Chapter 2.0, *Project Description*, non-structural/institutional BMPs do not include the construction of new facilities. Consequently, there would be no cumulative impacts related to transportation and traffic.

**Mitigation Measures:** None required

**Significance Determination:** No impact

### 3.13.4 Summary of Impact Assessment

Table 3.13-1 shows a summary of the structural BMPs requiring mitigation.

**TABLE 3.13-1  
 SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION IMPACTS REQUIRING  
 MITIGATION MEASURES**

Structural BMPs	Thresholds of Significance			
	Traffic Circulation	Traffic Safety	Emergency Access	Cumulative Impacts
<i>Applicable Mitigation Measures:</i>	TRAF-1	None Required	None Required	TRAF-1
<b>Regional BMPs</b>				
Regional Detention and Infiltration	Yes	No	No	Yes
Regional Capture, Detention and Use	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>Centralized BMPs</b>				
Bioinfiltration	Yes	No	No	Yes
Constructed Wetlands	No	No	No	No
Treatment/Low-Flow Diversions	No	No	No	No
Creek, River, Estuary Restoration	No	No	No	No
<b>Distributed BMPs</b>				
Site Scale Detention	No	No	No	No
LID – Infiltration/Filtration BMPs – Porous Pavement, Green Streets, Bioswale/Filter Strips, downspout disconnects	No	No	No	No
LID – Green Infrastructure – Capture and Use – Cisterns, Rain Barrels, Green roofs, Planter Boxes	No	No	No	No
Flow-through Treatment BMPs	No	No	No	No
Source Control Treatment BMPs (catch basin inserts/screens, hydrodynamic separators, gross solids removal devices)	No	No	No	No
Low-Flow Diversions	No	No	No	No

NOTE: These conclusions are based on typical size of BMPs and the need for hauling materials off-site during construction.