

## 4.14 Aesthetic Resources

Sections	Figures	Tables
4.14.1 Introduction, Key Concepts, and Terminology	4.14-1 Landscape Units and Scenic Roadways	4.14-1 Matrix for Ranking Aesthetic Resource Value
4.14.2 Setting / Affected Environment	4.14-2 Landscape Units of Northern Monterey Coastal Area	4.14-2 Applicable Regional and Local Plans and Policies Relevant to Aesthetic Resources
4.14.3 Regulatory Framework	4.14-3a Existing Setting	4.14-3 Summary of Impacts – Aesthetic Resources
4.14.4 Evaluation Criteria	4.14-3b Existing Setting	
4.14.5 Approach to Analysis	4.14-4 Existing Views of MPWSP Desalination Plant Site from Highway 1	
4.14.6 Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Project	4.14-5 Visual Simulation of Terminal Reservoir from General Jim Moore Boulevard	

This section addresses the potential aesthetic and visual quality impacts associated with implementation of the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project (MPWSP or proposed project). Aesthetic resources, also referred to as visual resources, are comprised of the visible natural and built landscape features that exist in the project vicinity. The study area for aesthetic resources includes designated scenic roadways, scenic vistas, and other scenic resources, as well as the daytime and nighttime lighting environment in the project area.

*Comments received on the April 2015 Draft EIR related to aesthetic resources concern the proposed project’s compatibility with Fort Ord Dunes State Park, physical descriptions of the subsurface slant wells and MPWSP Desalination Plant, and recommendations for improvement measures related to facility design, screening, and nighttime lighting where not otherwise required to address a significant impact. This section has been modified to address these comments. Specifically, MPWSP’s relationship to Fort Ord Dunes State Park is addressed in Section 4.14.6.1. Physical descriptions of the subsurface slant wells and MPWSP Desalination Plant are addressed in Section 4.14.6.2, Operational and Facility Siting Impacts. Recommended mitigation measures for facility design, screening, and nighttime lighting are addressed in Sections 4.14.6.1 and 4.14.6.2.*

### 4.14.1 Introduction, Key Concepts, and Terminology

This assessment of the proposed project’s impacts on aesthetic resources describes environmental baseline conditions in terms of visual character, visual quality, visual sensitivity, and landscape exposure; presents an evaluation of the potentially affected aesthetic resources as viewed from various points throughout the project area; and determines whether construction and/or operation of the proposed project components could adversely affect the identified aesthetic resources. The subsections that follow describe key terms and concepts used throughout this section.

#### 4.14.1.1 Visual Character

Visual character is the unique set of landscape features that combines to make a view. These features include native landforms, water, and vegetation patterns as well as built features such as buildings roads, and other structures.

### 4.14.1.2 Aesthetic Resource Value

A site's overall aesthetic resource value is determined by considering three factors: visual quality, visual sensitivity, and landscape exposure. These three factors are described below.

#### ***Visual Quality***

The intrinsic aesthetic appeal, or visual quality, of a landscape or scene is a function of both its natural elements and anthropogenic (human-induced) modifications. Landscapes composed of elements with compatible lines, shapes, forms, colors, and contrasts tend to be of high visual quality. Landscapes with high levels of disturbance that promote disharmony, reduce variety, or introduce chaotic assemblages of shapes and forms into a landscape (visual clutter) are generally considered to be of low visual quality. Occasionally, anthropogenic modifications may add to the aesthetic appeal of a landscape. For example, vineyards often add pleasing patterns and colors to a landscape. The visual quality of a particular setting is typically rated as low, moderate, or high depending on the relationships of the above-described landscape elements.

#### ***Visual Sensitivity***

Visual sensitivity refers to the level of interest or concern the public has for a particular visible landscape. Areas that attract people because of their aesthetic appeal (e.g., parks, trails, and scenic highways, where expectations for aesthetically pleasing views are high) have high visual sensitivity. In contrast, developed urban areas, industrial parks, and other areas with highly modified landforms are typically considered to be of low visual sensitivity. This evaluation rates visual sensitivity as low, moderate, or high.

#### ***Landscape Exposure***

Landscape exposure is a measure of the length of time (duration) and the frequency with which a particular landscape is generally observed. A rural landscape may be seen frequently and/or for long durations, but only by a few local residents, whereas an uninhabited landscape crossed by a highway may be seen by numerous travelers, but only for brief periods. In both cases, the landscape would be considered to have a high degree of exposure. The number of viewers and the duration of view are equally important in determining landscape exposure.

Consideration of the factors described above—visual quality, visual sensitivity, and landscape exposure—yields a qualitative measure of the overall aesthetic resource value of a given area. **Table 4.14-1** provides a matrix for assigning the aesthetic resource value of a site by ranking these factors as low, moderate, or high. Each factor contributes equally in determining the overall aesthetic resource value of a given landscape. The aesthetic resource value is determined by cross-referencing the visual quality ranking (column headings on top of horizontal axis), the landscape exposure (column headings on bottom of horizontal axis), and the visual sensitivity (row headings on vertical axis). For example, a site with a visual quality rating of moderate (center three columns), landscape exposure of high (center right column), and visual sensitivity of high (bottom row) would have an aesthetic resource value of high.

**TABLE 4.14-1  
MATRIX FOR RANKING AESTHETIC RESOURCE VALUE**

		Visual Quality								
		Low			Moderate			High		
Visual Sensitivity	Low	L	L	M	L	M	M	M	M	M
	Moderate	L	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	H
	High	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	H	H
		Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High
Landscape Exposure										

NOTES:

L = Low      M = Moderate      H = High

### 4.14.1.3 Visual Impact Severity

Visual impact severity is a measure of how profoundly the existing visual setting would be disturbed by implementation of the proposed project. The level of impact is typically evaluated from a public vantage point and takes into consideration the proposed structures, architectural details, and landscaping. Visual impact severity is given a low, moderate, or high rating depending on an evaluation of the following three factors: visual contrast with the surrounding setting; the dominance of the proposed project relative to the surrounding features; and the potential for the proposed project to impair public views of valued aesthetic features such as trees, ridgelines, water, sky, or other distinctive landforms.

## 4.14.2 Setting/Affected Environment

### 4.14.2.1 Scenic Routes

Several roads in the Monterey region have been designated as scenic roadways by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and/or the local jurisdictions, or are deemed eligible for such designation. Designated scenic roadways and eligible scenic roadways in the project area include Highway 1, Highway 68, Reservation Road, and Carmel Valley Road. In addition, the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail is considered to be an important scenic route due to its sweeping coastal views.

**Highway 1.** Highway 1 is an important regional travel corridor within the project area. This highway varies from a two-lane surface state highway (with at-grade intersections) to a multi-lane freeway. Between the Santa Cruz County line and Highway 68, Highway 1 is eligible for designation as a scenic highway; the portion of Highway 1 between Highway 68 and the San Luis Obispo County line is a designated scenic highway; between the Salinas River and Highway 68, Highway 1 is eligible for designation as a scenic highway. Traffic volumes along Highway 1 are generally high, with average daily traffic ranging from 42,000 to 47,000 vehicles between Highway 156 and the city of Marina; and from 50,000 to 83,000 vehicles between Marina and the city of Monterey's southern boundary (Caltrans, 2015).

**Highway 68.** Highway 68, also known as the Monterey-Salinas Highway, is a state highway connecting Monterey with Salinas. The segment of Highway 68 extending from Highway 1 in the city of Monterey to the Salinas River is a state-designated scenic highway; the segment of Highway 68 extending from the Salinas River to the city of Salinas is eligible for designation as a scenic highway. Between the Highway 1 interchange in Monterey and the Reservation Road interchange in Spreckles, average daily traffic volumes on Highway 68 range from 21,800 to 29,000 vehicles (Caltrans, 2015).

**Highway 156.** Highway 156 is a state highway that serves as an important link between the Monterey Peninsula and destinations in the San Francisco Bay Area and Central Valley. The approximately 4-mile segment extending from Highway 1 to Highway 101 is a state-designated scenic highway. In addition, the approximately 1.5-mile segment of Highway 156 extending north from its junction with Highway 1 (north of Molera Road) through Castroville to the TAMC railroad overcrossing (west of Castroville Boulevard) is a Monterey County-designated scenic highway. Between Highway 1 and Highway 101, average daily traffic volumes on Highway 156 range from 29,000 to 31,000 vehicles (Caltrans, 2015).

**Reservation Road.** Reservation Road traverses the project area through both Marina and Monterey County, providing two travel lanes in each direction. The segment of Reservation Road that passes through unincorporated Monterey County is a County-proposed scenic corridor. The *City of Marina General Plan* indicates that Reservation Road provides scenic views of the inland hills in Marina (City of Marina, 2000).

**Carmel Valley Road.** Carmel Valley Road is a county-proposed scenic route from Highway 1 to Arroyo Seco Road. The *Monterey County General Plan* identifies the Carmel Valley as a prominent feature along this route. In the vicinity of the proposed Carmel Valley Pump Station site, Carmel Valley Road is both a four- and two-lane road. The segment between Highway 1 and Del Mesa Drive includes travel lanes in each direction. East of Del Mesa Drive, Carmel Valley Road provides one travel lane in each direction (Monterey County, 2010a).

**Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail.** The Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail is an 18-mile paved scenic path that extends from Castroville to Pacific Grove. Views from the trail include agricultural fields, open space and park lands, and the sandy beaches and dunes along the Monterey Bay coast.

#### 4.14.2.2 Landscape Units

The coastal landscape of northern Monterey County is agriculturally rich, visually diverse, and recognized for its aesthetic character. This evaluation characterizes the visual setting in Monterey County and provides a framework for evaluating the visual effects of the proposed project by describing the region in terms of “landscape units” based on the Federal Highway Administration’s Method of Visual Resource Analysis (FHWA, 1987). The landscape units represent combinations of physical and cultural features that contribute to varying degrees of visual quality. For this analysis, landscape units are strictly aesthetic delineations based on factors such as land use, location, degree of urbanization, and boundaries of vegetation communities. The landscape units used in this evaluation to describe the regional landscape are: Urban and Built-up; Hillside

Residential; Agricultural; Beaches and Coastal Dunes; Grass and Rangeland; Riparian; Coastal Shrub; Oak Woodland; and Forested Hills. The distribution of the various landscape units in the project area and vicinity is shown in **Figure 4.14-1**; representative photographs of these landscape units are provided in **Figure 4.14-2**.

### ***Urban and Built-up Landscape Unit***

This landscape unit includes the cities of Monterey, Marina, Seaside, and Carmel Valley, as well as the surrounding unincorporated areas that are considerably built-up. This landscape unit is characterized by the predominance of anthropogenic features (i.e., urban development). Due to the high level of anthropogenic modifications, this landscape unit is generally considered to be of low visual quality. The proposed Brine Discharge Pipeline, the Pipeline to CSIP Pond, and the MPWSP Desalination Plant, as well as portions of the proposed Source Water Pipeline, the new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and the Castroville Pipeline would be constructed within or adjacent to the Urban and Built-up landscape unit north of Reservation Road. A portion of the Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements, portions of the proposed new Transmission Main, ASR pipelines (ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, and ASR Recirculation Pipeline), ASR-5 Well and ASR-6 Well, and Carmel Valley Pump Station, would be constructed within or adjacent to the Urban and Built-up landscape unit south of Reservation Road. The Urban and Built-up areas in which the proposed facilities would be constructed range in visual quality from low (e.g., highly developed commercial/industrial corridors) to moderate (e.g., tree-lined neighborhood streets).

### ***Hillside Residential Landscape Unit***

This landscape unit consists of single-family residential housing on large lots in and around hillside areas. It is distinguished from the Urban and Built-up landscape unit by the substantially greater distance between dwellings. The hillsides are both wooded and open and often offer expansive views. The visual quality of this landscape unit is moderate to high because of its distinctive relief, semi-natural state, and open views of land, sky, and ocean. No project components would be constructed within the Hillside Residential landscape unit north of Reservation Road. A portion of the proposed Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements as well as the Main System–Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements would be located within or adjacent to the Hillside Residential landscape unit south of Reservation Road.

### ***Agricultural Landscape Unit***

North of Reservation Road, an Agricultural landscape unit extending along the Salinas River and north to the Salinas Valley is known for its rural and agricultural aesthetic. The quintessential rural landscape brings to mind vast agricultural fields, farmhouses, water towers, and small dusty towns. The visual quality of this landscape unit varies from moderate to high, depending on the degree to which cultural features (crops, utilities, industry, highways, etc.) either contribute to or detract from its original feel. Portions of the proposed Castroville Pipeline, Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, and Pipeline to CSIP Pond would be constructed adjacent to the Agricultural landscape unit north of Reservation Road. There is no Agricultural landscape unit in the vicinity of the MPWSP facilities located south of Reservation Road.

### ***Beaches and Coastal Dunes Landscape Unit***

The Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape unit is one of the most distinctive in the project area and tends to attract people because of its aesthetic appeal. The coastal dunes are up to 100 feet tall and have moderate to steep slopes stabilized to varying degrees by scattered patches of dune scrub. The dunes and adjacent Monterey Bay (within MBNMS) display soft forms, curved lines, and distinctive natural color contrasts that are visually appealing. This landscape unit contains gently sloped, broad, white-sand beaches that extend along an increasingly curved arc from Moss Landing to Monterey. The majority of this unit lies west of Highway 1, extends south from the Salinas River to a point near the Monterey/Pacific Grove city limits, and is generally of high visual quality. North of Reservation road, the proposed seawater intake system and a portion of the Source Water Pipeline would be located within the Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape unit. South of Reservation Road, an approximately 2-mile segment of the new Transmission Main would be sited within the Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape unit.

### ***Grass and Rangeland Landscape Unit***

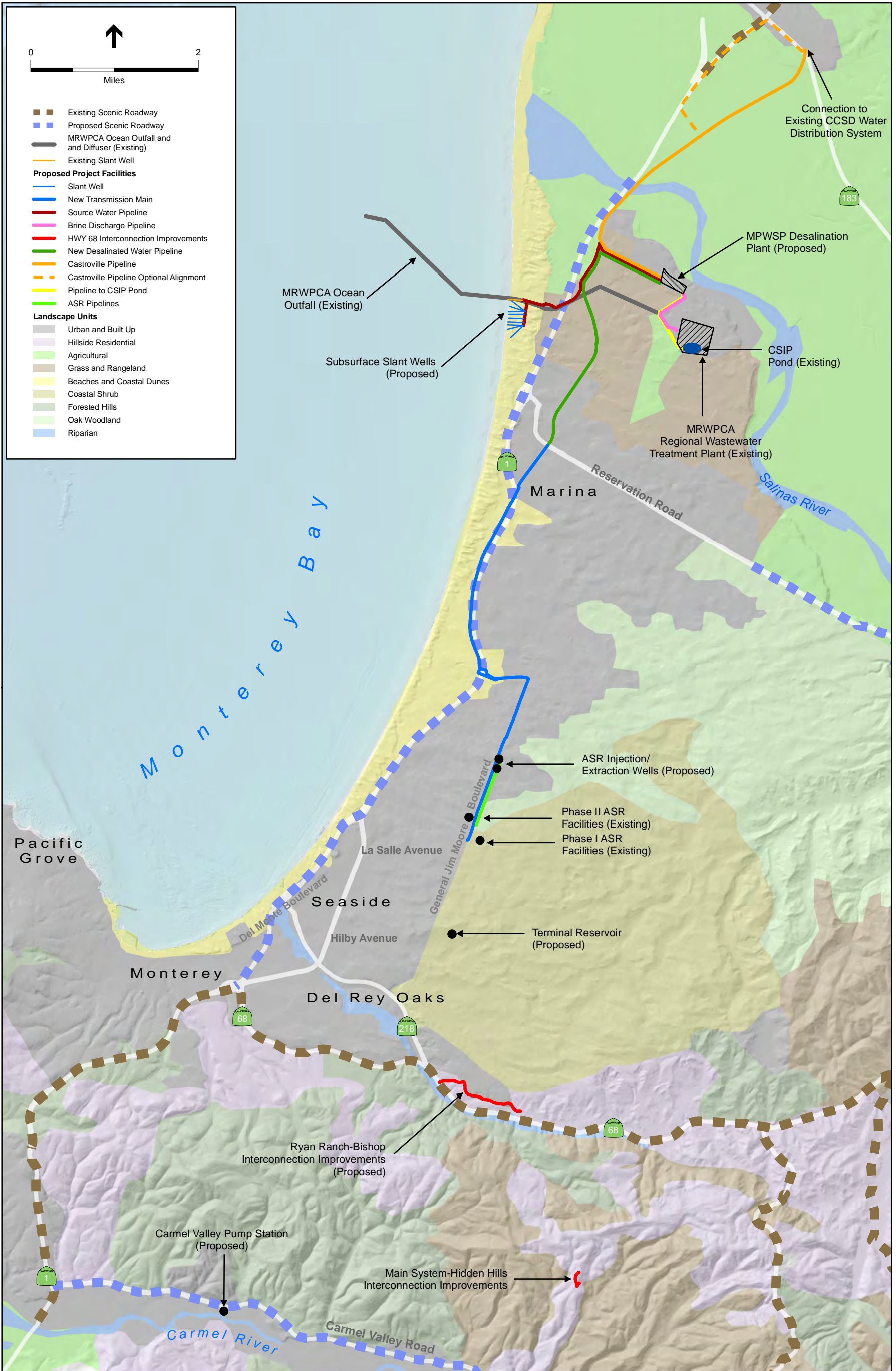
This landscape unit consists of natural grassland habitat or undulating grass-covered hills that have been previously logged or grazed. The visual quality of the Grass and Rangeland landscape unit is moderate to high depending on whether the area has been degraded by human activity. Land uses commonly found in this landscape unit include grazing land, farmland, and utility infrastructure. Portions of the proposed new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Source Water Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, and Brine Discharge Pipeline would be constructed within or adjacent to the Grass and Rangeland landscape unit north of Reservation Road. No project components would be located within the Grass and Rangeland landscape unit south of Reservation Road.

### ***Riparian Landscape Unit***

This landscape unit consists of wetlands, marshes, sloughs, and stream corridors. These areas are often flat and contain wetland vegetation and riparian trees, including cottonwood, sycamores, and willows. Views of the sky and surroundings in the Riparian landscape unit are limited because of the low elevation. However, the presence of water, pleasing color contrasts, and a variety in vegetation give moderate to high visual quality to this landscape. North of Reservation Road, a segment of the proposed Castroville Pipeline would cross the Riparian Landscape Unit at the Salinas River. There are no proposed MPWSP facilities south of Reservation Road that would occur within the Riparian Landscape Unit.

### ***Coastal Scrub Landscape Unit***

The Coastal Scrub landscape unit occupies non-urbanized areas within well-stabilized sand dunes in and around the cities of Marina and Seaside and the former Fort Ord military base. This landscape is mantled with vegetation and characterized by gently rolling hills of up to 400 feet above sea level. The majority of this hilly landscape unit affords open views of adjacent scenery and the sky. The visual quality of this unit is moderate to high depending on whether the area has been negatively influenced by human activity (i.e., adjacent land uses, soil disturbance, power lines, etc.). No project components are proposed within the Coastal Scrub landscape unit north of Reservation Road. South of Reservation Road, the proposed Terminal Reservoir would be constructed within this landscape unit.



SOURCE: ESA, 2016; Monterey County, 2016

205335.01 Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project  
**Figure 4.14-1**  
 Landscape Units and Scenic Roadways

This page intentionally left blank





PL Urban Builtup Monterey



Hillside Residential



Agricultural



AG & Coastal Dunes



NM Rangeland



Riparian and Built up



Coastal Scrub



Oak Woodland



TF Forested Hills

4.14-9

SOURCE: ESA

205335

**Figure 4.14-2**  
Landscape Units of Northern Monterey Coastal Area

### ***Oak Woodland Landscape Unit***

Patches of coast live oak woodland are in areas containing older, more stable and developed soils. The Oak Woodland landscape unit, which is present in and around the former Fort Ord military base, has a dense to moderately open canopy and sparse herbaceous understory. The topography of this landscape unit consists of hills with gentle to moderate slopes. The Oak Woodland unit has a savannah-like to more densely wooded appearance, depending on canopy cover, which ranges from 20 to 60 percent of the ground surface. The visual quality of this landscape is moderate to high because this unit is primarily open space with minimal or no anthropogenic changes. There are no MPWSP facilities proposed for the Oak Woodland landscape unit.

### ***Forested Hills Landscape Unit***

This landscape unit primarily occurs in the mountains between the Pacific Ocean and the Carmel Valley, along the Highway 68 corridor, and in the Carmel Valley. The Forested Hills landscape unit consists almost entirely of large evergreen trees on moderate to steep slopes. Roads may crisscross the landscape, but these areas are typically remote and devoid of homes or other structures. The visual quality of this landscape is moderate to high depending on the steepness of topography, availability of views, and the degree of forest cover. There are no project components proposed within or adjacent to this landscape unit.

#### **4.14.2.3 Visual Setting of the Project Area**

This subsection describes the existing visual character of the areas in which MPWSP components would be constructed. In addition, photographs taken from representative public vantage points portrays the visual character of these locations. **Figure 4.14-2** presents the general setting photographs, which represent the landscape units depicted in **Figure 4.14-1**. **Figures 4.14-3a** and **4.14-3b** depict specific sites where MPWSP components are proposed.

The visual setting of each proposed facility site is described below in terms of its location within a particular landscape unit and its visual quality, visual sensitivity, and landscape exposure. The assigned rating for aesthetic resource value (low, moderate, or high) is based on a combination of these three factors, as shown in the matrix provided in **Table 4.14-1**. Existing lighting conditions at each site are also described relative to currently visible light sources.

### ***Subsurface Slant Wells***

The proposed subsurface slant wells would be located west of Highway 1 in the Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape unit at the CEMEX sand mining facility (see **Figure 4.14-3a**, Photo 1). The CEMEX site is characterized by highly disturbed, relatively uniform sandy basins that are devoid of vegetation and surrounded by steeply sloping, sparsely vegetated, white-sand dunes. The site contains cleared and bladed roads through the dunes and vegetation; dewatering pits; material stockpiles; a graveled equipment staging area and storage yard; several one-story administrative and warehouse structures; and several pieces of heavy equipment. Views of the area from passing vehicles on Highway 1 are partially screened by the intervening dunes and Monterey cypress trees along the site's eastern (landward) perimeter. Most of the site's facilities and operations are not



Photo 1. East-facing view of the CEMEX sand mining facility from beach access road (ESA, 2013).



Photo 2. Southeast-facing view from site of proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant (right) toward the Monterey Regional Environmental Park (ESA, 2013).



Photo 3. East-facing view from Charles Benson Road entrance to Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency's Wastewater Treatment Plant site (ESA, 2013).



Photo 4. Northeast-facing view along General Jim Moore Boulevard of the proposed ASR injection/extraction wells site (ESA, 2013).

4.14-11



Photo 5. East-facing view of Fremont Street along new Monterey Pipeline alignment (ESA, 2013).



Photo 6. North-facing view from Hilby Avenue towards General Jim Moore Boulevard (ESA, 2013).



Photo 7. South-facing view of Monterey Pump Station site (ESA, 2013).



Photo 8. South-facing view of Carmel Valley Pump Station site (ESA, 2014).

4.14-12

visible from the beach, due to the intervening dune topography. A sand road and several vertical structures are visible from the beach (e.g., processing plant and bollards protecting an existing monitoring well). However, they generally appear distant and subordinate to the existing dune landscape features. Sources of light and glare in the vicinity include nighttime lighting emanating from the CEMEX facility and low-volume automobile headlights from Highway 1. The visual quality of the Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape unit is generally high. However, due to extensive alterations to the natural features at the CEMEX facility, the visual quality of the site is considered moderate. The site's visual sensitivity is high because of its location along the coast and proximity to Highway 1, which is an eligible state scenic highway. The visual exposure of the site is low, since the site is partially screened by dunes and trees and is mainly visible only from automobiles traveling along Highway 1 at speeds of 60 miles per hour. Based on the above-described factors, the site for the proposed subsurface slant wells has a moderate aesthetic resource value.

### ***MPWSP Desalination Plant***

The proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant site lies within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit, adjacent to Charles Benson Road, southeast of the Dole and Budweiser processing facility at the northeast corner of Monte Road and Neponset Road, and northwest of the Monterey Regional Environmental Park, also known as the Monterey County landfill. The site is bordered on the west and north by agricultural lands and the Salinas River, and on the south by Armstrong Ranch. The proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant site was previously used for agricultural production but is currently fallow; as a result, the site is mainly composed of dead, low-lying, ruderal brush. The landscape of the proposed site is highly disturbed, with old crop rows evident in the soil beneath the dead brush (see **Figure 4.14-3a**, Photo 2). To the northwest, the Dole and Budweiser processing facility consists of warehouses and a large asphalt loading, sorting, and truck staging/parking yard with outdoor lighting for nighttime activities. To the southeast, development within the adjacent Monterey Regional Environmental Park consists of office buildings and. Structures on the Monterey Regional Environmental Park site range in size from one- to two-story buildings (up to approximately 30 feet tall), ranging in size from approximately 4,500 square feet to over 100,000 square feet. South of the Monterey Regional Environmental Park lies the several-hundred-acre Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency's (MRWPCA) Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and drying beds. The treatment plant includes primary clarifiers, trickling filters, and a generation plant, each rising to heights of approximately 35 to 45 feet (see **Figure 4.14-3a**, Photo 3).

Existing sources of light and glare near the MPWSP Desalination Plant site include automobile headlights along Charles Benson Road, nighttime lighting from the Dole and Budweiser processing facility, and nighttime security lighting from adjacent agricultural operations and the Monterey Regional Environmental Park. Overall, given the site's location within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit, and considering the industrial development surrounding the site, the visual quality is considered low. The visual exposure is low because this site is only seen for short durations by travelers along Charles Benson Road and is screened by rows of trees to the south and west. The visual sensitivity of the site is also rated low, as the area is not located within a

vista or view corridor and is not valued for recreational uses. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the MPWSP Desalination Plant site is low.

### ***Pipelines and Other Conveyance Facilities North of Reservation Road***

All pipeline segments, including those proposed for areas north of Reservation Road, would be buried beneath the ground surface.

#### **Source Water Pipeline**

The Source Water Pipeline alignment would traverse approximately 2.2 miles of mostly undeveloped terrain in the Beaches and Coastal Dunes, Grass and Rangeland, and Urban and Built-up landscape units, characterized by mostly open and flat terrain consisting of coastal scrub, grassland, and agricultural fields. The proposed alignment would extend east along the CEMEX access road from the proposed subsurface slant wells (described above), past agricultural lands, and beneath Highway 1 to Lapis Road. Along Lapis Road, the Source Water Pipeline would be collocated with the new Desalinated Water Pipeline and extend north within or adjacent to the existing road rights-of-way. The pipeline would continue south along Del Monte Boulevard to Charles Benson Road. The approximately 0.8-mile segment of the proposed Source Water Pipeline between Del Monte Boulevard and the proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant site, and the Source Water Pipeline Optional Alignment, would be constructed along Charles Benson Road. This segment would traverse Urban and Built-up and Grass and Rangeland landscape units, characterized by increasingly intensive land uses and with views more constrained by topography and mature cypress trees along Charles Benson Road.

Sources of light and glare in the surrounding area include nighttime lighting emanating from the CEMEX sand mining facility and the Monterey Regional Environmental Park, and headlights from low-volume automobile traffic along nearby roadways. Overall, given its location along Highway 1 (an eligible state scenic highway) and the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail, the visual sensitivity of the proposed Source Water Pipeline alignment is considered high. Because of the alignment's proximity to the coast and Highway 1 as well as its location within visually appealing topography, there is a high likelihood that the public would notice visual changes along the proposed pipeline alignment. However, because the alignment area is only fleetingly visible, mainly by local and regional motorists traveling along Highway 1 (at speeds of 60 miles per hour) or from Del Monte Boulevard, Lapis Road, and Charles Benson Road, the visual exposure of the alignment would be low. Because the proposed alignment would traverse varied landscapes, it is given a moderate rating for visual quality. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the proposed alignment for the Source Water Pipeline is moderate.

#### **New Desalinated Water Pipeline**

For purposes of the visual setting, the approximately 0.8-mile segment of the proposed new Desalinated Water Pipeline between Del Monte Boulevard and the proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant site, and the new Desalinated Water Pipeline Optional Alignment, would occur within the same setting as described above for the Source Water Pipeline Optional Alignment and corresponding segment of the proposed Source Water Pipeline. The segments of the new

Desalinated Water Pipeline proposed along Lapis Road and Del Monte Boulevard north of Marina Green Drive would occur within the Grass and Rangeland landscape unit (containing mostly undeveloped terrain, low scrub vegetation, and fallow fields). The segment along Del Monte Boulevard south of Marina Green Drive would occur within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit, characterized by light industrial, commercial and residential development, and intermittent open space areas. Sources of light and glare in the surrounding area include nighttime lighting emanating from existing development along Charles Benson Road and within the city of Marina and low-volume automobile headlights along nearby roadways.

Overall, given the new Desalinated Water Pipeline's location along a portion of the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail, the visual sensitivity of this alignment is considered moderate. For the same reason, there is a high likelihood that the public would notice visual changes along the pipeline alignment. However, because the alignment area is only fleetingly visible, mainly by local and regional motorists traveling along Highway 1 (at speeds of 60 miles per hour), or people traveling along Del Monte Boulevard, Lapis Road, and Charles Benson Road, the visual exposure of the alignment would be low. Given that the proposed pipeline would pass through both vast open space areas of fairly high visual quality and more densely developed areas of lower visual quality, the alignment is given a moderate rating for visual quality. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the new Desalinated Water Pipeline route is moderate.

### **Castroville Pipeline**

The approximately 0.8-mile segment of the proposed Castroville Pipeline between proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant site and Del Monte Boulevard, and the Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 2, would occur within the same setting as the Source Water Pipeline, Source Water Pipeline Optional Alignment, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and new Desalinated Water Pipeline Optional Alignment. The segment extending from Del Monte Boulevard to the CCSD Well #3 on Merritt Street would follow the TAMC right-of-way. The proposed route is almost entirely within the Agricultural landscape unit, characterized by predominantly flat agricultural land in row crop production, and with expansive views of exposed earth, silhouettes of far-off hills, and big skies. There are few sources of nighttime lighting along the proposed alignment; those that do exist are generally limited to distant vehicle headlights and exterior lighting from development in the Castroville area near the alignment's northern terminus. Given the uniformity of the landscape form and pattern, the sweeping views, and its proximity to proposed and designated scenic highways, the alignment is considered to have a moderate scenic quality. Similarly, given the agricultural landscape's contribution to the scenic appeal of this region, the visual sensitivity of the alignment is also considered moderate. The landscape exposure of the alignment is considered low, owing to its lack of prominence in views from public vantage points; the alignment may be visible, but is not conspicuous to motorists traveling along Highways 1 or 156. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the above-described segment of the Castroville Pipeline is moderate.

### **Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1**

Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1 is within both the Agricultural and Urban and Built-up landscape units. The landscape character in the vicinity of Nashua Road and the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail is predominantly flat agricultural land in row crop production. The character of the segment along Merritt Way and Merritt Street is urban, dominated by commercial and light industrial type development. Sources of nighttime lighting include vehicles traveling along Highways 1 and 156, and exterior lighting from development in the Castroville area. For the reasons described for the proposed Castroville Pipeline, above, and with consideration for Castroville's urban character, Optional Alignment is considered to have a moderate scenic quality and visual sensitivity. The landscape exposure of Optional Alignment is high; the alignment north of Nashua Road is visible to a large number of northbound motorists traveling on Highways 1 and 156 and users of the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail. However, as the alignment area is visible primarily to viewers in motion, views of the alignment are generally only fleetingly visible. For the above reasons, the aesthetic resource value of the Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment is moderate.

### **Brine Discharge Pipeline and Pipeline to CSIP Pond**

The proposed Brine Discharge Pipeline and Pipeline to CSIP Pond would extend from the MPWSP Desalination Plant site to the southern portion of the Monterey Regional Environmental Park. The pipelines would be sited at the intersection of Grass and Rangeland, Urban and Built-up, and Agricultural landscape units, characterized by undeveloped grasslands and agricultural fields to the south and southwest and the Monterey Regional Environmental Park MRWPCA Treatment Plant to the north and east. Sources of light and glare in the surrounding area include nighttime lighting emanating from the Monterey Regional Environmental Park and MRWPCA Treatment Plant, and automobile headlights along Charles Benson Road.

The visual exposure of the site is low because it is only seen for short durations by motorists traveling along Charles Benson Road or by visitors to the Monterey Regional Environmental Park. Furthermore, the visual sensitivity is low, as the area is not located within a vista or view corridor and is not valued for recreational uses. Given the surrounding industrial development, the visual quality is considered low. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the proposed Brine Discharge Pipeline and Pipeline to CSIP Pond alignments is low.

### ***Improvements to ASR System***

#### **ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells**

The proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would be located in an area that is currently vegetated with oak and conifer trees in the Fitch Park military housing community, within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit (see **Figure 4.14-3a**, Photo 4). In the project vicinity, General Jim Moore Boulevard is a recently improved north-south thoroughfare surrounded by open space, recreational facilities, and suburban land uses. This four-lane roadway has two travel lanes in each direction, separated by a landscaped median. The densely vegetated surroundings of the ASR injection/extraction wells sites contribute to a moderate visual quality. Potential sources of light and glare include automobile headlights, streetlights along General Jim Moore Boulevard, nearby golf course facilities, and adjacent residential areas.



While numerous residences are located in the area, the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would be visible only from those few homes adjacent to and west of General Jim Moore Boulevard. However, General Jim Moore Boulevard itself supports high daily traffic volumes, and the proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells sites would be slightly elevated above the road. As such, the sites are visible for short durations by motorists along this transportation corridor, and for longer durations by pedestrians and bicyclists. Therefore, the visual exposure of the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells sites is considered moderate. Additionally, while these facilities would not be within view of any designated scenic vistas or corridors, they would be located in a heavily vegetated area. Therefore, the visual sensitivity of the area is considered moderate. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the area is moderate.

### **ASR Pipelines**

The ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline, and ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline would extend along General Jim Moore Boulevard between the proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells and existing facilities at Coe Avenue. The proposed pipelines would be sited within the road right-of-way, between the Urban and Built-up and Oak Woodland landscape units. Heading south from the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, the landscape in this area is characterized by medium-density residential development and open space with dense stands of tall scrub vegetation and varying topography to the east, and golf course and public institutional development to the west. Sources of light and glare in the area include automobile headlights, streetlights along General Jim Moore Boulevard, nearby golf course facilities, and adjacent residential areas.

Despite the alignment's location within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit, the densely vegetated and open space areas on either side of the alignment contribute to the landscape's moderate visual quality. The pipeline would be sited within the road right-of-way, which is not an element important to the landscape's overall aesthetic appeal; therefore, the alignment is considered to have a low visual sensitivity. The alignment is visible primarily to motorists, but also cyclists and pedestrians traveling along General Jim Moore Boulevard. However, portions of the alignment may also be visible from residences situated along the roadway. As a result, the visual exposure is considered moderate. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value for the proposed ASR Pipelines route is moderate.

### ***Pipelines and Other Conveyance Facilities South of Reservation Road***

#### **New Transmission Main**

The new Transmission Main would extend from its connection with the new Desalinated Water Pipeline at Reservation Road in Marina to existing facilities at the General Jim Moore Boulevard/Coe Avenue intersection in Seaside. The alignment would be sited within the Urban and Built-up and Beaches and Coastal Dunes landscape units—the former generally occurring to the east of Highway 1 and the latter generally occurring to the west. The character of the alignment area within Marina, east of Highway 1, is similar to that described previously for the adjacent segment of the new Desalinated Water Pipeline (south of Marina Green Drive), defined primarily by medium-density commercial and residential development. The visual character of the alignment area west of Highway 1, including that of the new Transmission Main optional

alignment, is defined by the adjacent highway to the east and mostly undeveloped expanses of coastal dunes, low-lying dune vegetation, and intermittent glimpses of the ocean to the west. The character of the alignment area within Seaside, east of Highway 1, is similar to that described previously for the ASR pipelines, defined by low density institutional and commercial development and residential communities, interspersed with large and mostly undeveloped patches of mature coastal scrub vegetation. Sources of light and glare along the alignment include nighttime lighting emanating from the developments in the vicinities of segments east of Highway 1, as well as automobile headlights along nearby roadways.

The visual quality of the proposed new Transmission Main alignment area overall is considered moderate, accounting for the mostly undeveloped coastal dunes landscape and associated views along the west side of Highway 1, as well as the more varied mix of urban, suburban, and open landscapes to the east. The visual sensitivity of the alignment area is considered moderate; segments to the west of Highway 1 are scenic areas, whereas segments along the more varied landscapes east of Highway 1 have less aesthetic appeal. The exposure of the site is considered high; the alignment area would be visible to users of the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail and motorists along Highway 1 and surface streets, as well as from adjacent residences as described for ASR Pipelines, above. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the new Transmission Main route is high.

### **Terminal Reservoir**

The Terminal Reservoir would be constructed on a site in the Coastal Shrub landscape unit. This site lies on a small ridge, surrounded by gently sloping hills and is covered with low scrub vegetation. The area has been disturbed to varying degrees by earthmoving activities associated with the expansion of General Jim Moore Boulevard and restoration and redevelopment at the former Fort Ord military base. The visual context on the west side of General Jim Moore Boulevard, opposite the proposed Terminal Reservoir site, includes high-voltage power lines, unpaved service roads, and residential development (see **Figure 4.14-3b**, Photo 6). Two large water storage tanks owned by the city of Seaside are visible from the intersection of Hilby Avenue and General Jim Moore Boulevard. Surrounding light and glare could emanate from such sources as nearby homes and automobile headlights along General Jim Moore Boulevard.

Existing overhead power lines and densely developed residential areas located within the adjacent Urban and Built-up landscape unit to the west diminish the visual quality of the proposed Terminal Reservoir site. Therefore, the site is given a moderate rating for visual quality. The visual exposure of the site is high, as it could be visible from several blocks of residences along Mescal Street and from vehicles traveling along General Jim Moore Boulevard. A small number of area residents would have distant views of the site; motorists on General Jim Moore Boulevard would have only fleeting views of the site. The visual sensitivity of the site is rated moderate, since the adjacent area is mostly vegetated and undeveloped, yet it is not situated within a scenic vista or view corridor and is not valued for recreational uses. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the Terminal Reservoir site is moderate.

### **Carmel Valley Pump Station**

The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be located approximately 240 feet south of Carmel Valley Road near the intersection of Rancho San Carlos Road. The proposed pump station site falls within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit. The area is characterized by inconspicuous, large-lot, low-density single-family residential development nestled between undulating hills covered in coastal scrub and oak woodlands to the north, and the wooded Carmel River corridor to the south (see **Figure 4.14-3b**, Photo 8). Sources of nighttime lighting include exterior lighting from homes adjacent to the site and headlines from occasional traffic along Carmel Valley and Rancho San Carlos Roads. In this area, Carmel Valley Road is a proposed scenic highway. For these reasons, the visual quality of the landscape is high. However, the site's visual sensitivity and landscape exposure are considered low. Despite its proximity to Carmel Valley Road, the site contributes little to the landscape's aesthetic appeal; the site is flat, disturbed and without mature vegetation, and is not plainly visible from any nearby public vantage point. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the Carmel Valley Pump Station site is moderate.

### **Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements**

The Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements would extend from the intersection of Highway 68 and Ragsdale Drive, through the Ryan Ranch community, and then along Ragsdale Drive, Lower Ragsdale Drive, Wilson Drive, and Blue Larkspur Lane. This route is located between the Hillside Residential and Urban and Built-up landscape units, an area characterized by suburban commercial/business-park development amid large tracts of vegetated open space. Sources of light and glare include nighttime lighting emanating from the surrounding Urban and Built-up landscape and automobile headlights along nearby roadways. The visual sensitivity is considered high given this project component's proximity to Highway 68, which is a state scenic highway. The visual exposure is moderate, as the alignment area is visible to motorists for several blocks. Despite the nearby commercial/business-park development, the vegetated open spaces surrounding the proposed Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements contribute to a moderate visual quality. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the Ryan Ranch–Bishop Interconnection Improvements is moderate.

### **Main System–Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements**

The Main System–Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements alignment would extend for approximately 1,200 feet along Tierra Grande Drive within the Hillside Residential landscape unit. This area consists of single-family homes on large lots amid rolling hills and vast open spaces. Sources of light and glare include nighttime lighting emanating from nearby residences and automobile headlights along nearby roadways. The visual quality of this landscape unit is moderate due to the semi-natural state and open views of undeveloped lands. The visual exposure of the area is moderate. A small number of residents along Tierra Grande Drive would have views of construction activities associated with the Main System–Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements. Motorists on upper Tierra Grande Drive would only have fleeting views of construction activities as they drove by the construction zone. The visual sensitivity of the site is rated moderate, because the adjacent area is mostly vegetated and undeveloped, yet not located

within a vista or view corridor and not valued for recreational uses. Based on the above-described factors, the aesthetic resource value of the Main System–Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements is moderate.

### 4.14.3 Regulatory Framework

This section provides an overview of notable federal, state, and local environmental laws, policies, plans, regulations, and/or guidelines relevant to aesthetic resources. A brief summary of each is provided, along with a finding regarding the MPWSP’s consistency with those regulatory requirements. The consistency findings concern the MPWSP as proposed, without mitigation. Where the MPWSP, as proposed, would be consistent with the applicable regulatory requirement, no further discussion of project consistency with that regulatory requirement is provided. Where the MPWSP, as proposed, would be potentially inconsistent with the applicable regulatory requirement, the reader is referred to a specific impact discussion in Section 4.14.6, Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Project, below, where the potential inconsistency is addressed in more detail. Where applicable, the discussion in Section 4.14.6 identifies feasible mitigation that would resolve the potential inconsistency.

#### 4.14.3.1 Federal Regulations

##### ***Guidelines for Desalination Plants in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary***

As discussed in previous sections, MBNMS regulations are found in Title 15, Part 922 of the United States Code. In addition, the Guidelines for Desalination Plants in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (“Desalination Plant Guidelines”) were developed to guide siting, review, and development of desalination facilities in a manner that is protective of MBNMS resources. The Guidelines specify that desalination plants should be designed to minimize visual impacts on coastal resources. The subsurface slant wells would be located near the coast. However, due to intervening dune topography, they would be mostly, if not entirely, screened from view from the beach and offshore areas within MBNMS. As such, the project would not be expected to conflict with the Guidelines. Furthermore, mitigation has been identified to ensure that the slant well facilities avoid or minimize contrast with the surrounding setting (see Impact 4.14-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.14-3a, Facility Design). No other MPWSP facilities are proposed for locations that would be visible from MBNMS or would inhibit views of MBNMS. The Desalination Plant Guidelines are further addressed in Section 6.4 of this EIR/EIS.

##### ***Coastal Zone Management Act***

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 provides for management of the nation’s coastal resources, including the Great Lakes, and balances economic development with environmental conservation. The California Coastal Commission has jurisdiction for CZMA implementation throughout the state.<sup>1</sup> The California Coastal Act contains numerous enforceable

---

<sup>1</sup> Except within the San Francisco Bay-Delta where the Bay Conservation and Development Commission has authority for implementation of CZMA within its jurisdictional area.

policies that are directed at protecting and, where feasible, restoring coastal resources. The California Coastal Commission applies the Coastal Act's policies when reviewing applications for coastal development permits in California state waters, including coastal scenic resources. The Coastal Commission also applies land use policies when reviewing federally licensed and permitted activities to ensure they are consistent with the State's coastal management program in accordance with the CZMA federal consistency provision. The Coastal Commission considers an application for a coastal development permit to cover the requirement for an applicant submitting a consistency certification to the Coastal Commission. Typically, the Coastal Commission will provide its response (concurrence, conditional concurrence, or objection) in its staff report for the coastal development permit.

### **4.14.3.2 State Regulations**

#### ***California Scenic Highway Program***

Three roadways in the project area—Highway 1, Highway 156, and Highway 68—are officially designated as state scenic highways (see **Figure 4.14-1**; Caltrans, 2011). Their corridors (defined as the area of land roughly adjacent to and visible from the highway) are subject to protection and regulation with respect to land use, site planning, advertising, earthmoving, landscaping, and design. For Caltrans to grant the status of Officially Designated State Scenic Highway, the local jurisdiction(s) must implement a Corridor Protection Program, either by adopting ordinances, zoning, and/or planning policies to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or by documenting that such regulations already exist in various portions of local codes. Policies to prevent the visual degradation of roadway view corridors include County of Monterey General Plan policy GMP-3.3 and North County Area Plan policy NC-3.1. MPWSP pipeline construction would involve ground disturbance and vegetation removal in proximity to designated scenic highways. However, such disturbances would be temporary, limited to the construction phase and, upon completion of construction, pipeline alignments would be returned to their approximate pre-construction condition. No other MPWSP components would be visible from designated scenic highways. Therefore, the MPWSP would be consistent with the California Scenic Highway Program.

#### ***California Coastal Act***

Some MPWSP facilities would be located in the California Coastal Zone, as defined in the California Coastal Act (Section 30103). Land use decisions within the Coastal Zone are subject to the provisions of the Coastal Act, which is administered by the California Coastal Commission. The Coastal Act requires local governments in the Coastal Zone to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP) that contains a land use plan and land use regulations to implement provisions of the Coastal Act. Once the Commission "certifies" (approves) the LCP, permit-issuing authority is transferred to the local government, subject to the terms of the certified LCP. For local jurisdictions without a certified LCP, the Commission retains permit-issuing authority under the Coastal Act. As stated in Coastal Act Section 30251, a primary objective of the Coastal Commission is to protect the scenic and visual character of the California coast. The Commission applies this standard to its review of applications for coastal development permits as well as to

LCP certifications. For the reasons described for the California Scenic Highway Program, MPWSP construction activities would be consistent with Coastal Act policies related to aesthetic resources. Operation of the MPWSP subsurface slant well operation would be potentially inconsistent with the Coastal Act's scenic resource protection policies. Potential effects on such coastal resources are discussed in Impacts 4.14-1 and 4.14-3.

#### **4.14.3.3 Applicable Regional and Local Land Use Plans and Policies**

**Table 4.14-2** presents the regional, and local land use plans, policies, and regulations pertaining to aesthetic resources that are relevant to the MPWSP and that were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and indicates project consistency with these regulatory requirements. Where the analysis concludes the proposed project would be consistent with the applicable requirement, the finding is noted and no further discussion is provided. Where the analysis concludes the proposed project would be potentially inconsistent with the applicable requirement, the reader is referred to the specific impact discussion in Section 4.14.6, Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Project. In that subsection, the significance of the potential conflict is evaluated. Where the effect of the potential conflict would be significant, feasible mitigation is identified to resolve or minimize that conflict.

**TABLE 4.14-2  
APPLICABLE REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Project Planning Region	Applicable Plan	Plan Element/ Section	Project Component(s)	Specific Plan, Policy, or Ordinance	Relationship to Avoiding or Mitigating a Significant Environmental Impact	Project Consistency with Plan, Policy, or Ordinance
City of Marina (coastal zone and inland areas)	City of Marina General Plan	Community Land Use - Primary Policies	Subsurface slant wells, Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and new Transmission Main	<b>Policy 2.4.4:</b> Wherever possible, lands with significant agricultural, natural habitat, or scenic value shall be retained and protected from degradation.	This policy is intended to preserve and protect significant landscape values.	<u>Potentially Inconsistent:</u> Pipeline construction would temporarily disrupt the scenic quality of Marina's coastal Highway 1 corridor. However, these facilities would be buried below ground surface. Following construction, work areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition. Elements of the subsurface slant wells would be located aboveground and could be visible from the beach. This issue is addressed in Impact 4.14-3, which identifies mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid this potential inconsistency. <i>The project's implications for agricultural and biological resources are discussed in EIR/EIS Sections 4.16 and 4.6, respectively. Refer to Tables 4.16-2 and 4.6-2 for additional discussion of project's conformity with applicable Marina General Plan policies related to these resource areas, respectively.</i>
City of Marina (coastal zone and inland areas)	City of Marina General Plan	Community Design & Development - Open Spaces and Significant Natural Features	Subsurface slant wells, Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and new Transmission Main	<b>Policy 4.17.3:</b> Within built-up areas, existing topography shall be retained to make natural land forms more evident. This requirement of the General Plan may be fulfilled by minimizing grading and cutting and filling for roadways, by providing public space with outlooks at the higher elevations, and by locating taller structures on the upper slopes of hills.	This policy is intended to protect the visual integrity of natural landforms.	<u>Consistent:</u> Pipelines and the MPWSP seawater intake system would be sited primarily within previously disturbed areas and not involve substantial grading that would result in noticeable landform alterations in built-up areas.
City of Marina (coastal zone and inland areas)	City of Marina General Plan	Community Design & Development – Scenic and Cultural Resources	Subsurface slant wells, Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and new Transmission Main	<b>Policy 4.126.3:</b> The visual character and scenic resources of the Marina Planning Area shall be protected for the enjoyment of current and future generations. To this end, ocean views from Highway One shall be maintained to the greatest possible extent; development on the primary ridgeline of the Marina dunes shall be avoided; new development proposed for the Armstrong Ranch should maintain an adequate setback from Highway One; landscape screening and restoration shall be provided as appropriate; new development should be sited and designed to retain scenic views of inland hills from Highway One, Reservation Road, and Blanco Road; and architectural review of projects shall continue to be required to ensure that building design and siting, materials, and landscaping are visually compatible with the surrounding areas.	This policy is intended to preserve and protect Marina's visual character and scenic resources.	<u>Consistent:</u> Pipeline and well construction would temporarily disrupt the scenic quality of Marina's coastal Highway 1 corridor. All pipelines would be buried below ground surface. As discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, following construction, all pipeline areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition. Above-ground components of the subsurface slant wells would be low profile (8-12 inches in height) and distant (0.5 mile) from Highway 1. At this distance, these facilities would not be noticeable or obstruct coastal views from Highway 1.
City of Marina (coastal zone)	City of Marina Local Coastal Land Use Plan	Policies	Subsurface slant wells, Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, and new Transmission Main	<b>Policy 33:</b> To protect scenic and visual qualities of the Coastal area including protection of natural landforms, views to and along the ocean, and restoration and enhancement of visually degraded areas except in areas presently being mined.	This policy is intended to protect and enhance the scenic and visual quality of the Marina coast.	<u>Potentially Inconsistent:</u> Elements of the subsurface slant wells would be located aboveground; the above ground features could be visible, and the test well would be visible from the beach. This issue is addressed in Impact 4.14-3, which identifies mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid this potential inconsistency.
City of Seaside (coastal zone and inland areas)	Seaside General Plan	Conservation/ Open Space	New Transmission Main, ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline, and Terminal Reservoir	<b>Policy COS 8.1:</b> Participate in local and regional efforts to reduce light pollution of night skies.	This policy is intended to protect dark night skies from impacts of light pollution.	<u>Consistent:</u> None of the project components proposed within Seaside's jurisdiction would require nighttime construction or lighting. The ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells may require temporary nighttime construction and nighttime lighting. However, these project components are proposed for lands under federal jurisdiction and, therefore, would not be subject to Seaside General Plan policies.
City of Seaside (coastal zone and inland areas)	Seaside General Plan	Urban Design	New Transmission Main, ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline, and Terminal Reservoir	<b>Policy UD-1.1:</b> Enhance the City's image and identity within the region's natural setting.	This policy is intended to ensure the aesthetic character of new development within the city is compatible with that of its natural surroundings.	<u>Potentially Inconsistent:</u> Development of an above-ground Terminal Reservoir east of General Jim Moore Boulevard could be incompatible with Seaside's natural setting. This issue is addressed in Impact 4.14-3, which identifies mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid this potential inconsistency. The ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would be constructed above ground and within Seaside, but would not be subject to this policy because they would be sited on federal lands. The remaining project components proposed within Seaside would not involve aboveground elements.

**TABLE 4.14-2 (Continued)  
APPLICABLE REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Project Planning Region	Applicable Planning Document	Plan Element/Section	Project Component(s)	Specific Plan, Policy, or Ordinance	Relationship to Avoiding or Mitigating a Significant Environmental Impact	Project Consistency with Plan, Policy, or Ordinance
City of Seaside (coastal zone and inland areas)	Seaside General Plan	Urban Design	New Transmission Main, ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline, and Terminal Reservoir	<b>Policy UD-3.1:</b> Protect private views of significant natural features, such as the Monterey Bay, Roberts Lake, the Pacific Ocean, the surrounding mountains and other important viewsheds.	This policy is intended to protect private views from disruption caused by new development.	<u>Potentially Inconsistent:</u> Development of an above-ground Terminal Reservoir east of General Jim Moore Boulevard could affect private views of the surrounding hillsides. This issue is addressed further in Impact 4.14-3, which identifies mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid this potential inconsistency. The ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would be constructed above ground and within Seaside, but would not be subject to this policy because they would be sited on federal lands. The remaining project components proposed within Seaside would not involve aboveground elements.
City of Seaside (coastal zone and inland areas)	Seaside General Plan	Urban Design	New Transmission Main, ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline and Terminal Reservoir	<b>Policy UD-3.2:</b> Preserve the unique public views visible from the Highway 1 Corridor between Fremont Boulevard and the northern boundary of the city as identified in the Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) Plan.	This policy is intended to protect designated important public view corridors within the city.	<u>Consistent:</u> The proposed project would involve no aboveground components between Fremont Boulevard and the northern boundary of the city that would be visible from the Highway 1 corridor. Therefore, no unique views would be affected.
City of Seaside (coastal zone and inland areas)	Seaside General Plan	Urban Design	New Transmission Main, ASR Conveyance Pipeline, ASR Pump-to-Waste Pipeline, ASR Recirculation Pipeline, and Terminal Reservoir	<b>Implementation Plan UD-3.2.1:</b> Establish and enforce design guidelines in the Seaside Zoning Ordinance to preserve and protect the public viewsheds.	This policy is intended to protect designated important public viewsheds within the city.	<u>Consistent:</u> No above-ground project components are proposed within a Seaside designated public viewshed.
County of Monterey (inland areas)	Carmel Valley Master Plan	Area Development	Carmel Valley Pump Station and Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy CV-1.20:</b> Design ("D") and site control ("S") overlay district designations shall be applied to the Carmel Valley area. Design review for all new development throughout the Valley, including proposals for existing lots of record, utilities, heavy commercial, and visitor accommodations, but excluding minor additions to existing development where those changes are not conspicuous from outside of the property, shall consider the following guidelines:  b. Development either shall be visually compatible with the character of the valley and immediate surrounding areas or shall enhance the quality of areas that have been degraded by existing development.  c. Materials and colors used in construction shall be selected for compatibility with the structural system of the building and with the appearance of the building's natural and man-made surroundings.	This policy is intended to ensure visual compatibility of development within the Carmel Valley Master Plan area.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be comparable in scale to surrounding development. Further, prior to approval, the Carmel Valley Pump Station would be required to undergo design review, which would ensure policy conformity. The Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements would be buried below ground and, therefore, would be visually compatible with the immediate surrounding areas.
County of Monterey (inland areas)	Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan	Conservation/Open space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Ryan Ranch-Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy GMP-3.3:</b> The Greater Monterey Peninsula Scenic Highway Corridors and Visual Sensitivity Map (Figure 14) shall be used to designate visually "sensitive" and "highly sensitive" areas generally visible from designated Scenic Highways. The following policies shall apply to areas that have one of these designations:  <b>Part e:</b> New development to be located in areas mapped as "sensitive" or "highly sensitive" and which would be visible from a designated scenic route shall maintain the visual character of the area. In order to adequately mitigate the visual impacts of development in such areas, the following shall be required:  1. Development shall be rendered compatible with the visual character of the area using appropriate siting, design, materials, and landscaping; 2. Development shall maintain no less than a 100-foot setback from the scenic route right-of-way; 3. The impact of any earth movement associated with the development shall be mitigated in such a manner that permanent scarring is not created; 4. Tree removal shall be minimized; 5. Landscape screening and restoration shall consist of locally native plant and tree species consistent with surrounding native vegetation; 6. Architectural review of projects shall be required to ensure visual compatibility of the development with the surrounding area; and 7. New development in open grassland areas shall minimize its impact on the uninterrupted viewshed.	This policy is intended to protect designated important views of scenic areas generally visible from designated scenic highways.	<u>Consistent:</u> Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Castroville Pipeline, and Ryan Ranch-Bishop Interconnection Improvements construction activities would occur within areas identified by the County as "sensitive" or "highly sensitive" and would be visible during construction from designated or eligible scenic highways. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, construction-period disturbance would be temporary and all pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition.



**TABLE 4.14-2 (Continued)**  
**APPLICABLE REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Project Planning Region	Applicable Planning Document	Plan Element/Section	Project Component(s)	Specific Plan, Policy, or Ordinance	Relationship to Avoiding or Mitigating a Significant Environmental Impact	Project Consistency with Plan, Policy, or Ordinance
County of Monterey (inland areas)	Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan	Conservation/Open space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Ryan Ranch-Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy GMP-3.4</b> Plant materials shall be used to integrate manmade and natural environments, to screen or soften the visual impact of new development, and to provide diversity in developed areas.	The intent of this policy is to soften and screen the visual impact of new development.	<u>Consistent:</u> Views of the proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant would be screened by existing trees along Charles Benson Road. The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be comparable in size and scale to surrounding development and not plainly visible from adjacent roadways. Therefore, additional vegetative screening is not expected to be necessary. Nevertheless, prior to approval, the Carmel Valley Pump Station would be required to undergo design review, which would ensure policy conformity. All pipelines would be buried below ground so would have no visual impact requiring screening.
County of Monterey (coastal zone and inland areas)	Monterey County General Plan	Conservation and Open Space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Carmel Valley Pump Station, Main System--Hidden Hills and Ryan Ranch--Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy OS-1.1:</b> Voluntary restrictions to the development potential of property located in designated visually sensitive areas shall be encouraged.	This policy is intended to protect visually sensitive areas from new development.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Carmel Valley Station would be the only above-ground project component constructed within a Monterey County-designated visually sensitive area. This facility would be small, relative to its surroundings, and would be located on a disturbed site that is not plainly visible from nearby roadways. As discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project (), construction-period disturbance would be temporary and all pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition. All pipelines would be buried below ground.
County of Monterey (coastal zone and inland areas)	Monterey County General Plan	Conservation and Open Space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Carmel Valley Pump Station, Main System--Hidden Hills and Ryan Ranch--Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy OS-1.2:</b> Development in designated visually sensitive areas shall be subordinate to the natural features of the area.	This policy is intended to limit development in a way that will preserve natural features in visually sensitive areas.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be the only above-ground project component constructed within a Monterey County-designated visually sensitive area. At 500-square-feet, this facility would be subordinate to the natural features of the area. As discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, construction-period disturbance would be temporary and all pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition. All pipelines would be buried below ground.
County of Monterey (coastal zone and inland areas)	Monterey County General Plan	Conservation and Open Space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Carmel Valley Pump Station, Main System--Hidden Hills and Ryan Ranch--Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy OS-1.12:</b> The significant disruption of views from designated scenic routes shall be mitigated through use of appropriate materials, scale, lighting and siting of development. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy, except: 1) large-scale agricultural processing facilities, or 2) facilities governed by the Agricultural and Winery Corridor Plan.	This policy is intended to reduce the disruption of view from designated scenic routes through application of mitigation measures.	<u>Consistent:</u> The proposed project would not involve any components that would significantly disrupt views from designated scenic routes such as Highways 1 or 68.
County of Monterey (coastal zone and inland areas)	Monterey County General Plan	Conservation and Open Space	Source Water Pipeline, MPWSP Desalination Plant, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, Carmel Valley Pump Station, Main System--Hidden Hills and Ryan Ranch--Bishop Interconnection Improvements	<b>Policy OS-5.5:</b> Landowners and developers shall be encouraged to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and native vegetation in visually sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridges, and watersheds. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy.	This policy is intended to protect the natural character of visually sensitive areas.	<u>Consistent:</u> Construction of the MPWSP Desalination Plant and Carmel Valley Pump Station are proposed for construction on previously disturbed sites and would not require substantial alteration of natural terrain or native vegetation. All pipelines would be buried below ground. Pipeline construction period activities could require alterations to existing natural terrain and removal of native vegetation. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, upon completion of construction, all pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate preconstruction condition.

**TABLE 4.14-2 (Continued)  
APPLICABLE REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Project Planning Region	Applicable Planning Document	Plan Element/Section	Project Component(s)	Specific Plan, Policy, or Ordinance	Relationship to Avoiding or Mitigating a Significant Environmental Impact	Project Consistency with Plan, Policy, or Ordinance
County of Monterey (coastal zone)	North County Land Use Plan	Resource Management	Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline	<b>Policy 2.2.2.1:</b> Views to and along the ocean shoreline from Highway 1, Molera Road, Struve Road, and public beaches, and to and along the shoreline of Elkhorn Slough from public vantage points shall be protected.	This policy is intended to protect important public views two and along the shoreline.	<u>Consistent:</u> Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline construction activities would be temporarily visible from Highway 1. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, the pipelines would be buried below ground and all pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction conditions. Once constructed, the Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline would not interfere with views to and along the shoreline from Highway 1.
County of Monterey (coastal zone)	North County Land Use Plan	Resource Management	Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline	<b>Policy 2.2.2.2:</b> The coastal dunes and beaches, estuaries, and wetlands should be designated for recreation or environmental conservation land uses that are compatible with protection of scenic resources. Facilities that are provided to accompany such uses shall be designed and sited to be unobtrusive and compatible with the visual character of the area.	This policy is intended to protect the visual character and recreational opportunities of dunes, beaches, estuaries, and wetlands from incompatible land uses.	<u>Consistent:</u> Within North County Land Use Plan area, the Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline would be constructed within existing disturbed roadway and railroad rights-of-way, and not be sited in dunes, beaches, wetlands, or estuaries. Therefore no such scenic resources would be affected.
County of Monterey (coastal zone)	North County Land Use Plan	Resource Management	Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline	<b>Policy 2.2.2.4:</b> The least visually obtrusive portion of a parcel should be considered the most desirable site for the location of new structures. Structures should be located where existing topography and vegetation provide natural screening.	This policy is intended to minimize the visual impact of a new structure.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline would be sited within or along existing disturbed roadway and railroad rights-of-way. Once constructed, these facilities would be buried below ground and not be visible.
County of Monterey (coastal zone)	North County Land Use Plan	Resource Management	Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline	<b>Policy 2.2.2.5:</b> Structures should be located to minimize tree removal and grading for the building site and access road. Disturbed slopes should be returned to their previous visual quality. Landscape screening and restoration should consist of plant and tree species complementing the native growth of the area.	This policy is intended to minimize the disruption to the landscape's visual quality tree removal and grading,	<u>Consistent:</u> The Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline would require trenching along existing disturbed roadway and railroad rights-of-way. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, disturbed pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition.
County of Monterey (coastal zone)	North County Land Use Plan	Resource Management	Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline	<b>Policy 2.2.3.3:</b> Structures shall generally be sited so as not to block public views of the shoreline; development proposals shall be revised if necessary to accomplish this goal. Necessary structures in public view between the road and the shoreline (such as agricultural buildings) shall be functionally designed and sited as to protect the maximum possible open views. Other development in public view between the road and the shoreline (such as residential or commercial structures) shall be designed with materials, colors, landscaping, and fencing appropriate to the rural setting.	This policy is intended to protect important public views two and along the shoreline.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Source Water Pipeline and new Desalinated Water Pipeline would be buried below ground and would not block public views of the shoreline. Disturbed pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition.
County of Monterey (inland areas)	North County Area Plan	Conservation/Open Space	Castroville Pipeline	<b>NC-3.1.</b> Within areas designated as "sensitive" or "highly sensitive" on the Scenic Highway Corridors and Visual Sensitivity Map (Figure 15), landscaping or new development may be permitted if the development is located and designed in such a manner that public views are not disrupted.	This policy is intended to protect important public views to and along scenic highway corridors and visually sensitive areas.	<u>Consistent:</u> The Castroville Pipeline would be buried below ground and would not permanently disrupt public views. Disturbed pipeline construction areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition.

SOURCES: City of Marina, 2000, 1982; City of Seaside, 2004, 2013; Monterey County, 1982, 1985, 1996, 2010a, 2010b.

## 4.14.4 Evaluation Criteria

Implementation of the proposed project would have a significant impact related to aesthetic resources if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or visual impact on coastal resources;
- Substantially damage a scenic resource, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway corridor;
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or
- Create a substantial new source of light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

## 4.14.5 Approach to Analysis

This analysis of impacts on aesthetic resources examines the temporary (i.e., construction) and permanent (i.e., operational) effects of the proposed project based on application of the significance criteria outlined above. The analysis is divided into two main categories: (1) temporary and permanent scenic resource and visual character impacts, and (2) temporary and permanent lighting and glare impacts. Each criterion is discussed in the context of project components that share similar characteristics and/or geography. This structure parallels that of the environmental context, or setting, as presented in Section 4.14.2.3, Visual Setting of the Project Area. The impact conclusions consider the potential for changes in environmental conditions as well as consistency with applicable regulatory requirements enacted to protect the environment. Unless otherwise specified, the impact analysis and determinations for pipelines with optional alignments consider and apply to both the proposed pipeline alignment and optional alignment(s). The cumulative effects of the proposed project, when considered together with the effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, are discussed in Section 4.14.7, Cumulative Effects of the Proposed Project.

The impact analysis is based on field observations conducted by ESA in September 2013 and April 2016; review of project maps and drawings; analysis of aerial and ground-level photographs; a rendering of the approximate size and location of the Terminal Reservoir as viewed from General Jim Moore Boulevard; and review of a variety of data available in public records, including local planning documents. The determination that a project component would or would not result in a “substantial” adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character considers the aesthetic resource value of the site and the MPWSP component’s visual impact severity (e.g., the nature and duration of the impact). The approach to determining aesthetic resource value and visual impact severity is described above in Section 4.14.1, Introduction, Key Concepts, and Terminology. For example, a project component with a high impact severity that would be located on a site with a low aesthetic resource value would result in a less-than-significant impact with respect to scenic or visual character. In other words, new conspicuous structures or visual changes in areas with a low aesthetic resource value may not necessarily result in substantial adverse effects on visual resources.

The determination that a project component would result in a substantial adverse effect related to light and glare considers the ambient lighting conditions of the project area and the types and locations of receptors that could be adversely affected by project components emitting or reflecting light. Spill-over of light beyond project sites has the potential to create a visual nuisance or hazard, interfering with vision, sleep, privacy and general enjoyment of the natural nighttime condition. Similarly, glare is caused by sunlit or artificial light reflecting from finished surfaces, such as glass windows and other reflective materials, which can result in similar nuisance or hazard conditions. Reflective light, such as that reflected from dark or mirrored glass building materials, is more common in urbanized portions of the project area. Light sensitive receptors include motorists; people within residential areas; and, in some situations, natural areas. Substantial adverse effects related to lighting and glare would result if the project were to cause nighttime or reflective light to extend beyond the project limits and result in a visual nuisance or hazard for light-sensitive receptors. Effects related to lighting impacts on natural areas are discussed in Section 4.6, Terrestrial Biological Resources.

For this analysis, the proposed facility sites and representative portions of the proposed pipeline alignments were photographed and observed from public vantage points (see photos in **Figures 4.14-3a** and **4.14-3b**). These observation points are representative examples of publicly accessible viewpoints from which the MPWSP components would normally be seen, either temporarily (during construction) or permanently (as aboveground structures). Section 4.14.1, Introduction, Key Concepts, and Terminology, describes these locations in more detail. The potential physical changes resulting from the MPWSP components are described below.

### 4.14.6 Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Project

**Table 4.14-3** presents the potential impacts on aesthetic resources as well as significance determinations for each impact.

**TABLE 4.14-3  
 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS – AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Impacts	Significance Determinations
<b>Impact 4.14-1:</b> Construction-related impacts on scenic resources (vistas, roadways, and designated scenic areas) or the visual character of the project area and its surroundings.	LS
<b>Impact 4.14-2:</b> Temporary sources of substantial light or glare during construction.	LSM
<b>Impact 4.14-3:</b> Permanent impacts on scenic resources (vistas, roadways, and designated scenic areas) or the visual character of the project area and its surroundings.	LSM
<b>Impact 4.14-4:</b> Permanent new sources of light or glare.	LSM
<b>Impact 4.14-C:</b> Cumulative impacts related to aesthetic resources.	LSM

NOTES:

LS = Less than Significant, no mitigation proposed  
 LSM = Less than Significant impact with Mitigation

### 4.14.6.1 Construction Impacts

#### **Impact 4.14-1: Construction-related impacts on scenic resources (vistas, roadways, and designated scenic areas) or the visual character of the project area and its surroundings. (Less than Significant)**

Project construction activities could result in temporary impacts on scenic resources and the visual character of the project area and vicinity. Construction sites, vehicles, equipment and materials, stockpiles, and exposed soils would be temporarily visible from multiple public vantage points. Staging areas would include vehicle and equipment storage in the vicinity of MPWSP sites, generally within existing paved areas, and would not involve ground disturbing, vegetation removal, or other types of activities that would substantially impact scenic resources or the visual character of the area. Potential impacts on scenic resources and visual character as a result of construction activities are described below.

#### **Subsurface Slant Wells**

Construction activities for the subsurface seawater intake system would take place on the coast of Monterey Bay, in the CEMEX active mining area in northern Marina. As noted previously, the site of the proposed slant wells has been visually disturbed due to sand mining activities. Portions of the site are devoid of vegetation, have modified topography, and have been developed with temporary and permanent facilities. Mining equipment regularly moves throughout the mining area on the site. However, because of its proximity to Highway 1 and the coast, the site is considered to have a moderate aesthetic resource value (see Section 4.14.2, Setting/Affected Environment, for additional discussion).

Construction of the remaining subsurface slant wells in the CEMEX active mining area would take approximately 15 months to complete, and could take place anytime throughout the overall 24-month construction duration for the proposed project. Due to the site's topography and vegetation, views of the work areas would be limited from locations outside the CEMEX property. Viewed from the east, the worksite would largely be screened from view by the intervening dunes and Monterey cypress trees along the site's eastern (landward) perimeter. Motorists traveling along Highway 1 at speeds of 60 miles per hour would have distant and fleeting views of the work. Views from the beach would be similarly obscured by the large sand dunes that exist between the beach and the proposed well sites; however, such views would be nearer and longer in duration.

Given the industrial nature of the site, with its varied topography, denuded areas, and existing mining operations, construction activities would not contrast with the site's existing setting. Nor would these activities appear dominant, relative to the site's features and existing equipment, facilities, and operations. While increased construction activity would temporarily detract from the naturalistic aesthetic of the coast as viewed by passersby, these activities would not impair public views of the coast. For these reasons, project construction would have a moderate visual impact severity.

Construction of the subsurface slant wells would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character and the impact would be less than significant.

### **MPWSP Desalination Plant**

The MPWSP Desalination Plant site is located amidst agricultural fields and industrial land uses. The site lies within the Urban and Built-up landscape unit and, as discussed in Section 4.14.2, Setting / Affected Environment, the site has a low aesthetic resource value. Project construction would not contrast with the surrounding setting or appear dominant relative to surrounding features or land uses. This is because similar land disturbing activities and large equipment usage are commonplace in the operations on adjacent agricultural lands and the industrial Monterey Regional Environmental Park, also known as the Monterey County Landfill. Project construction would not impair public views of valued aesthetic resources. There are no designated scenic roadways or scenic viewpoints from which the MPWSP Desalination Plant site or construction activities would be visible. Rows of eucalyptus and Monterey Cypress trees to the south and west of the site would largely screen construction activities from passersby on Charles Benson Road. Motorists on Highways 1 and 183 would not likely notice project construction, given the distance of more than a mile between these highways and the MPWSP Desalination Plant site, and considering its proximity to the adjacent industrial park. For these reasons, project construction would have low visual impact severity.

Construction of the MPWSP Desalination Plant would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character and the impact would be less than significant.

### **Pipelines and Other Conveyance Facilities North of Reservation Road**

Pipeline construction would involve use of heavy equipment, trenching, and other earthwork that could be visible to public viewing areas. Pipeline installation would occur primarily within roadways. Outside of these areas, pipeline construction would involve limited removal of mature vegetation, including landscaping and trees. These impacts would not occur in the vicinity of a designated scenic highway, nor would they be to a degree that resulted in substantial damage to or degradation of scenic resources or visual quality of the alignment area. The duration of construction would be brief, as pipeline installation would typically progress at a rate of 150 to 250 feet per day, for a total of approximately 4 to 6 months, depending on the pipeline segment. Upon completion of construction, the disturbed area would be returned to its approximate pre-construction condition. Therefore, impacts would be temporary.

Pipeline construction would not substantially degrade the aesthetic character or scenic vistas in the vicinity of the proposed pipeline alignments. For these reasons, the visual impact of pipeline installation would be less than significant. The following subsections describe the locations where temporary impacts would occur for each pipeline component.

#### **Source Water Pipeline**

Source Water Pipeline construction could be visible to motorists along Highway 1, an eligible state scenic highway. These activities could temporarily contrast with the surrounding environment, but would not dominate the landscape or have a permanent effect on coastal views. Views of construction activities by motorists along Highway 1 would primarily be distant and fleeting due to high vehicle speeds. As construction of the pipeline approaches and crosses

beneath Highway 1, the potential would be greater for motorists to notice the construction activities. Construction activities would also be briefly visible to passing motorists and bicyclists on Del Monte Boulevard, Lapis Road and the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail. For these reasons, the impact severity of construction activities associated with the proposed Source Water Pipeline would be low.

#### New Desalinated Water Pipeline

Pipeline construction could be visible to motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, traveling along area roads, as well as from some residential areas in Marina. Views of construction activities by motorists and cyclists and pedestrians traveling along the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail would mostly be fleeting, as they would view the work while passing by or through the construction zone. Views of construction activity from residential areas in Marina and from Vince Dimaggio and Locke-Paddon Parks would be longer in duration. Construction activities would also be briefly visible to passing motorists and bicyclists on Del Monte Boulevard, Lapis Road, and the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail. These activities could temporarily contrast with the surrounding environment, but would not dominate the landscape or have a permanent effect on scenic views. For these reasons, the impact severity of construction activities associated with the new Desalinated Water Pipeline would be low.

#### Castroville Pipeline and Optional Alignment 2

Pipeline construction could be visible to motorists traveling along Monte Road, and possibly to motorists traveling along Highway 1. Views of construction activities by motorists would mostly be fleeting, as they would be in motion, traveling at speeds of 35 to 60 miles-per-hour. Given the degree of intensive agricultural activity along this alignment, the proposed pipeline construction activities would not contrast with the surrounding environment, nor would they dominate the landscape or have a permanent effect on scenic views. For these reasons, the visual impact severity of construction activities associated with the Castroville Pipeline would be low.

#### Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1

The effects of the Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment construction would be similar to those described for the proposed Castroville Pipeline alignment. Construction activities north of Nashua Road would be more prominently visible to motorists traveling along Highway 1. Similarly, within Castroville, the work would be visible to motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians traveling along Merritt Way and Merritt Street for longer durations. The overall effect would not be substantially different and the visual impact severity of construction activities would remain low.

#### Brine Discharge Pipeline and Pipeline to CSIP Pond

The Brine Discharge Pipeline and Pipeline to CSIP Pond would be constructed within or adjacent to the Grass and Rangeland, Urban and Built-up, and Agricultural landscape units, characterized by undeveloped grasslands and agricultural fields to the south and southwest and the Monterey Regional Environmental Park MRWPCA Treatment Plant to the north and east. Construction activities would be visible for short durations to motorists traveling along Charles Benson Road as well as from areas within the Monterey Regional Environmental Park and MRWPCA Regional

Wastewater Treatment Plant. Because the aesthetic resource value is low and construction activities would be in keeping with the types of activities already occurring in this area, there would be no appreciable contrast with the surrounding setting, and the work would not appear dominant relative to other activities on adjacent properties. Consequently, the impact severity of construction activities for the Brine Discharge Pipeline and the Pipeline to CSIP Pond would also be low.

### **Pipelines and Other Facilities South of Reservation Road**

#### **Improvements to ASR System**

The ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells and ASR Conveyance Pipelines would be constructed in an area of moderate aesthetic resource value. ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells and ASR Conveyance Pipeline construction activities would be visible from General Jim Moore Boulevard and from nearby residences. Pipeline construction would proceed at a rate of approximately 150 to 250 feet per day and last 5 months; well construction would last 12 months. During this time, area residents, motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians traveling along General Jim Moore Boulevard would be exposed to views of construction activities of the type described for pipelines above, which would be conspicuous and would contrast with the aesthetic character of the surrounding landscape. Such views would be fleeting, as the viewers would be in motion. Given the width of the travel corridor, the expansive views it offers, and the height and mass of area structures and vegetation, the proposed work would not dominate the landscape, nor would it impair public views. For these reasons, the visual impact severity would be low. The visual impact of the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells and ASR Conveyance Pipeline installation would be less than significant.

#### **Pipelines South of Reservation Road**

Pipeline construction south of Reservation Road would involve the same types of activities and effects, and progress at the same general rate, as that described for pipelines north of Reservation Road. The effects would be temporary. Pipeline construction would not substantially degrade the aesthetic character or scenic vistas in the vicinity of the proposed pipeline alignment. For these reasons, the visual impact of pipeline installation would be less than significant. The following subsections describe the locations where temporary impacts would occur for each pipeline component.

The aesthetic resource value of pipeline alignment areas south of Reservation Road, which include lands within the Highway 1 and 68 scenic corridors, generally ranges from low to moderate, and most segments would be constructed within paved or disturbed roadway rights-of-way or utility easements. The aesthetic resources effects of the new Transmission Main (except the segment west of Highway 1, discussed below) and Ryan Ranch-Bishop and Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements construction activities, and those associated with their respective optional alignments, would be substantially similar to those described for the new Desalinated Water Pipeline.

A segment of the proposed new Transmission Main would be constructed within the TAMC right-of-way, west of Highway 1 and east of Fort Ord Dunes State Park. Construction activities along portions of this segment would be visible to motorists traveling along Highway 1 and



cyclists and pedestrians traveling along the Monterey Peninsula Recreational Trail. Construction activities would contrast with the naturalistic setting of the Fort Ord Dunes State Park and coast to the west. The work would not appear dominant among the prominent dunes and state highway on either side of the alignment. Given the alignment's proximity to a proposed scenic corridor and established public viewpoints, the visual impact severity would be moderate.

#### Terminal Reservoir

The Terminal Reservoir would be constructed on a site approximately 1,000 feet east of General Jim Moore Boulevard. The site has a moderate aesthetic resource value. Due to its distance from the road and due to the intervening rolling and vegetated topography, the site would be minimally visible to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians traveling on General Jim Moore Boulevard, and from nearby residences. Nor would it substantially contrast with, dominate, or otherwise impair scenic views from public vantage points. While the proposed project area is located near the Fort Ord National Monument, the portion of the Monument nearest the work area is closed to the public due to potential hazards from unexploded ordinance. The nearest publicly accessible portions of the Fort Ord National Monument are located between 2 and 3 miles to the north or east of the Terminal Reservoir site. The visual impact severity would, therefore, be low.

Proposed construction would not degrade the aesthetic character or scenic vistas in the vicinity of the Terminal Reservoir site. For these reasons, Terminal Reservoir installation would be expected to have a less than significant impact with respect to aesthetic resources.

#### Carmel Valley Pump Station

The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be located in an area of moderate aesthetic resource value, characterized by large-lot, low-density single-family residential development nestled between undulating hills covered in coastal scrub and oak woodlands to the north, and the wooded Carmel River corridor to the south. The pump station site, which is set back from Carmel Valley Road by about 250 feet, has been previously disturbed and is not plainly visible from any nearby public vantage points. For these reasons, the work would not contrast with the setting, dominate the landscape, or otherwise impair scenic views. The visual impact severity is considered low.

Proposed construction would not degrade the aesthetic character or scenic vistas in the vicinity of the Carmel Valley Pump Station site. For these reasons, Carmel Valley Pump Station installation would be expected to have a less than significant impact with respect to aesthetic resources.

### Impact Conclusion

Construction equipment and machinery, spoils stockpiles, vegetation removal, and exposed earth associated with the implementation of many project components would be temporarily visible to motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and other observers such as nearby residents and park visitors. Some of these construction activities would be visible from Highways 1, 68, and 156, which are eligible for designation or officially designated as State Scenic Highways. These construction activities could disrupt the visual character of the surrounding areas. However, due to the temporary nature of these construction effects, and because work areas would be restored to their

approximate pre-construction condition upon completion of construction, such impacts would be less than significant. Although mitigation is not required to reduce a significant impact under CEQA, this EIR/EIS recommends implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-1 (Maintain Clean and Orderly Construction Sites)**.

### ***Recommended Mitigation Measure***

Although not required to reduce the above-described aesthetic resources impacts to a less-than-significant level, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-1 (Maintain Clean and Orderly Construction Sites)** is recommended for all construction sites to address temporary aesthetic resources impacts. The mitigation measure would require basic daily site maintenance (such as storing construction materials and equipment away from public view and removing construction debris promptly at regular intervals) and construction area screening where appropriate.

#### **Mitigation Measure 4.14-1: Maintain Clean and Orderly Construction Sites.**

As part of contract specifications, CalAm shall include a requirement that the construction contractor(s) keep staging and construction areas as clean and inconspicuous as practicable by storing construction materials and equipment at the proposed construction staging areas or in areas that are generally away from public view when not in use, and by removing construction debris promptly at regular intervals. If necessary, additional appropriate screening (e.g., temporary opaque fencing) shall be used at construction sites to buffer views of construction equipment and material, where the use of such screening materials would not further degrade the visual character or further obstruct views of scenic resources or vistas in the area. Screening is not required for pipeline construction areas.

---

#### **Impact 4.14-2: Temporary sources of substantial light or glare during construction. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Nighttime construction activities would require temporary construction lighting, which could introduce substantial light into the project area. As discussed in Chapter 3, Description of the Proposed Project, Section 3.5, Project Construction, the majority of construction activities would occur during the daytime and would not cause light effects. However, extended work hours into the night could be necessary during construction of certain project components, including the subsurface slant wells along the coast, the proposed ASR injection/extraction wells (ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells), and the MPWSP Desalination Plant. There would be no nighttime lighting at staging areas. Unless otherwise exempted, nighttime construction may be subject to local ordinances governing work hours. See Section 4.12, Noise and Vibration, for additional discussion.

Project construction would not require large amounts of reflective materials that would result in substantial adverse effects related to glare. Any reflective materials required for project construction would be incidental to the construction process, limited to work areas, and be temporary. Therefore, MPWSP construction would have a less-than-significant effect related to glare. The topic of glare is not addressed further in this section.

### Subsurface Slant Wells

As discussed in Section 4.14.2.2, Landscape Units, the subsurface slant wells would be located in an area that is generally dark, with sources of nighttime lighting originating primarily from within the CEMEX sand mining facility and from vehicle headlights along Highway 1. Construction activities associated with the subsurface slant wells would be required to occur 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, for a total of 15 months (but could occur anytime over the 24-month overall construction period). Nighttime construction activities would involve the use of high output lamps, such as halogen, mercury vapor, or high-pressure sodium lamps, which would introduce a new substantial source of light into the area. The drilling sites would be approximately 1,900 feet seaward of Highway 1 and approximately 0.5 mile north of the nearest residences. Despite the distance and intervening vegetation and dune topography, increased lighting could adversely affect nighttime views of this mostly undeveloped stretch of coastline from the viewpoint of Highway 1 motorists and coastal Marina residents.

The impact from nighttime lighting associated with subsurface slant well construction would be potentially significant. **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** requires CalAm to implement site-specific nighttime construction lighting measures, including the use of light shields, directing lights downward, and using the minimum wattage necessary. With implementation of these measures, the temporary light impacts associated with nighttime construction of subsurface slant wells would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

### MPWSP Desalination Plant

The MPWSP Desalination Plant would be constructed on a vacant parcel that currently does not contain substantial sources of light. Nearby sources of light include headlights from vehicles traveling along Charles Benson Road and nighttime security lighting in adjacent agricultural areas and at the adjacent industrial park. Construction activities and lighting requirements would be similar to those described above for the subsurface slant wells. The MPWSP Desalination Plant construction activities could occur for up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for approximately 24 months, creating a new substantial source of temporary lighting. The only potentially affected receptors would be motorists traveling along Charles Benson Road at night. However, the site is screened from view along Charles Benson Road by a row of mature eucalyptus and Monterey Cypress trees. Beyond Charles Benson Road, the road nearest the site is Del Monte Boulevard, located more than 0.5 mile to the west. Two homes located 0.5 and 1 mile northwest of the plant site are located within view of the Dole and Budweiser processing facility, Highway 1, and Monte Road. The nighttime light from these sources would be more than that from nighttime construction of the MPWSP Desalination Plant. As a result, any nighttime lighting impacts on area motorists and area residents would be negligible.

The temporary lighting impacts associated with nighttime construction at the MPWSP Desalination Plant would be less than significant.

### **Pipelines North of Reservation Road with Nighttime Lighting**

The pipelines and other conveyance facilities proposed for areas north of Reservation Road would be constructed in settings similar to those described above for the subsurface slant wells and the MPWSP Desalination Plant. These pipelines are the Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Castroville Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, and all related optional alignments. However, segments of the Castroville Pipeline and Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1 would pass through a more densely developed area of Castroville, which has more diverse and intensive nighttime lighting than other portions of the project area north of Reservation Road. Pipeline construction may involve nighttime construction, which might be necessary to meet the MPWSP construction schedule. Pipelines and conveyance facilities north of Reservation Road that could require nighttime construction include the Source Water Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, and Castroville Pipeline, as well as any corresponding optional alignments. Nighttime construction activities would require the use of lighting similar to or the same as that required for the subsurface slant wells and MPWSP Desalination Plant. Such construction lighting would introduce substantial sources of light into areas that presently have little nighttime lighting. This light would affect nighttime views from and could temporarily affect nighttime motorists' vision along Highway 1, Highway 156 (for Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1), Merritt Way (for Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1), Merritt Street, Monte Road, Lapis Road, Charles Benson Road, and Del Monte Boulevard.

The impact from nighttime lighting associated with pipeline construction activities would be potentially significant. **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** requires CalAm to implement site-specific nighttime construction lighting measures, including the use of light shields, directing lights downward, and using the minimum wattage necessary. With implementation of these measures, the temporary light impacts associated with nighttime construction of pipelines north of Reservation Road would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

### **ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells**

The primary source of lighting in the vicinity of the proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells is street lighting along General Jim Moore Boulevard; however, other sources of light in the area include headlights from automobiles traveling along General Jim Moore Boulevard, golf course and institutional facilities, and residential development. Construction of the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would normally occur during the daytime; however, continuous 24-hour construction would be necessary for up to 8 weeks during well completion and testing. Construction lighting would introduce a new substantial source of light to the area, which could adversely affect nighttime views in the area, including by impairing motorists' ability to see the road or oncoming traffic, or disrupting residents of the nearby Fitch Park Military Housing area (e.g., prevented them from sleeping).

The potential impacts from nighttime lighting associated with ASR injection/extraction wells construction activities would be potentially significant. **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** requires implementation of site-specific construction

lighting control measures, as described above. With these measures implemented, temporary nighttime construction lighting impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

### **ASR Conveyance Pipelines, Ryan Ranch- Bishop Interconnection Improvements, and Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements**

As noted previously, pipeline construction would typically take place during daytime hours although nighttime construction might be necessary along certain segments to meet the MPWSP construction schedule. This EIR/EIS assumes that construction of the ASR Conveyance Pipelines, Ryan Ranch- Bishop Interconnection Improvements, and Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements would occur only during daytime hours. As a result, no construction-related light impacts would result during installation of these facilities.

### **New Transmission Main**

Nighttime construction may be necessary for certain segments of the new Transmission Main and its optional alignment. Ambient nighttime lighting varies throughout the project area south of Reservation Road. There is some existing nighttime lighting from overhead street lights, shopping centers, and other commercial uses along Marina's Del Monte Boulevard. Sources of nighttime lighting are more diverse, fewer, and more dispersed west of Highway 1 in Marina and Seaside, along General Jim Moore Boulevard; these areas tend to be the darkest within the planning area.

Nighttime construction lighting would introduce substantial sources of new light into areas that presently have little nighttime lighting and increase ambient nighttime lighting within other areas. This light would affect nighttime views and could temporarily affect nighttime motorists' vision along Highway 1 and other roadways along which nighttime pipeline construction would occur.

The impact related to temporary sources of light during construction of the new Transmission Main and its optional alignment is considered potentially significant. However, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, which requires that CalAm implement site-specific nighttime construction lighting measures, including using light shields and directing lights downward, would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

### **Terminal Reservoir and Carmel Valley Pump Station**

The Terminal Reservoir and Carmel Valley Pump Station would be constructed during daylight hours. No impact related to lighting during construction would result.

### **Consistency with Regulatory Requirements**

In addition to the physical impacts described above, as noted in Section 4.14.3, Regulatory Framework, MPWSP nighttime construction could conflict with applicable regulatory requirements related to aesthetic resources. Elements of the proposed MPWSP may be potentially inconsistent with provisions of the California Coastal Act and Seaside General Plan that were established for the purpose of avoiding or minimizing impacts on aesthetic resources. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime**

**Lighting Measures**), requires that CalAm implement site-specific nighttime construction lighting measures. With these measures implemented, the MPWSP would be consistent with the above-noted regulatory requirements.

### **Impact Conclusion**

Project construction activities have the potential to introduce temporary sources of substantial light into the project area. This impact would be significant but mitigable for the subsurface slant wells and the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, as well as for the Source Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, new Transmission Main, and their corresponding optional alignments. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, which requires site-specific construction lighting controls, would reduce the potential impacts of nighttime construction lighting to a less-than-significant level. No impacts related to nighttime lighting would result from construction of the ASR pipelines, Terminal Reservoir, Carmel Valley Pump Station, Ryan Ranch- Bishop Interconnection Improvements, and Main System-Hidden Hills Interconnection Improvements.

### **Mitigation Measures**

*Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 applies to all project components where nighttime construction is required, including the subsurface slant wells and the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, as well as the Source Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, Castroville Pipeline, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, new Transmission Main, and their corresponding optional alignments.*

#### **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2: Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures.**

To prevent exterior lighting from affecting nighttime views, the design, construction, and operation of lighting at MPWSP facilities, shall adhere to the following requirements:

- Use of low-intensity street lighting and low-intensity exterior lighting shall be required.
- Lighting fixtures shall be cast downward and shielded to prevent light from spilling onto adjacent offsite uses.
- Lighting fixtures shall be designed and placed to minimize glare that could affect users of adjacent properties, buildings, and roadways.
- Fixtures and standards shall conform to state and local safety and illumination requirements.

CalAm shall ensure these measures are implemented at all times during nighttime construction and for the duration of all required nighttime construction activity.

### 4.14.6.2 Operational and Facility Siting Impacts

#### **Impact 4.14-3: Permanent impacts on scenic resources (vistas, roadways, and designated scenic areas) or the visual character of the project area and its surroundings. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Permanent new aboveground facilities, if visible from public vantage points, could affect scenic resources or substantially degrade the existing character of the project area and its surroundings. This discussion of permanent new facilities is limited to aboveground project components. Once constructed, the proposed pipelines would be underground and thus would have no permanent impacts on scenic resources or the visual character of the area.

#### **Subsurface Slant Wells**

The new subsurface slant well sites would be located within a large depression in the interior of the CEMEX property, surrounded by dunes that rise in elevation from 10 to 50 feet above the base of the depression. The existing well site (WS-1) is also located in the interior of the property and surrounded by similar topography. As discussed in Section 4.14.2, Setting / Affected Environment, the proposed location of the subsurface slant wells has a moderate aesthetic resource value. Above-ground components associated with each of the six subsurface slant well sites include one 8-inch-tall concrete wellhead vault per slant well, 12-inch-tall concrete pump-to-waste vault, and an approximately 11-foot-tall fiberglass electrical control cabinet. At five of the subsurface slant well sites, the above-ground facilities would be constructed atop a concrete pad, ranging in size from 5,250 to 6,025 square feet.

The site's dune topography and vegetation would substantially limit views of the subsurface slant well sites from locations outside of the CEMEX property. From a distance of approximately 2,000 feet, the above-ground subsurface slant well facilities may be visible to motorists traveling along an approximately 0.5-mile segment of Highway 1. As motorists would be traveling at speeds of 60 miles per hour and focused on the road, rather than distant views to the west, potential views from this vantage point would be fleeting. Views from the beach would be similarly obscured by the intervening dune topography; although, such views would be nearer and longer in duration. Given their size relative to the surrounding dune topography and other structures on the site, the above-ground facilities would not appear dominant relative to surrounding features and would not obstruct coastal views. At the same time, the design, color, and texture of the surface of these facilities could make them more conspicuous or incompatible with the coastal setting. Incompatible surfacing could detract from the visual character of the area. For these reasons, the visual impact severity is considered moderate.

The impact of the subsurface slant wells on scenic coastal resources and visual character would be significant. **Mitigation Measure 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** requires that CalAm design the facilities to avoid or minimize contrast with the surrounding setting. With implementation of this measure, the aesthetic resources impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

### **MPWSP Desalination Plant**

The MPWSP Desalination Plant would be constructed on the upper terrace (approximately 25 acres) of a 46-acre parcel, adjacent to the industrial Monterey Regional Environmental Park. As discussed in Section 4.14.2, Setting / Affected Environmental, the site is located in the Urban and Built-up landscape unit and has a low aesthetic resource value. As described more fully in Section 3.2.2, MPWSP Desalination Plant, structures proposed for the site would generally range in size from 6,000 to 30,000 square feet in area and rise to heights of up to 35 feet.

A row of mature eucalyptus and Monterey cypress trees along Charles Benson Road would screen or block views to the MPWSP Desalination Plant from the south and west (including from Highway 1), and the river terrace in this area would partially obstruct views of the MPWSP Desalination Plant from areas farther east. **Figure 4.14-4** shows the site of the proposed MPWSP Desalination Plant as viewed from Highway 1. As shown in the photograph, considering the distance to the Monterey Regional Environmental Park and its existing industrial character, the facilities proposed at the MPWSP Desalination Plant site would not be particularly discernible from Highway 1. As such, the MPWSP Desalination Plant facilities would not contrast with the surrounding setting. Similarly, the proposed facilities would not dominate the setting relative to surrounding features; developments in the adjacent Monterey Regional Environmental Park and MRWPCA Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant are of a similar size and scale. Given the site's low aesthetic resource value, absence of scenic resources, and limited visual accessibility, operation of the MPWSP Desalination Plant would not impair public views of aesthetic resources. For these reasons, the visual impact severity is considered low.

Operation of the MPWSP Desalination Plant would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character and the impact would be less than significant.

### **ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells**

The proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells would be located immediately east of General Jim Moore Boulevard and south of Ardennes Circle in the Fitch Park military housing area. Along the tree-lined General Jim Moore Boulevard are single-family residences, a golf course, and a school. There are no scenic highways in the immediate vicinity. As discussed in Section 4.14.2, Setting / Affected Environmental, these facilities would be located in an area with moderate aesthetic resource value.

Permanent aboveground structures associated with the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells include pump houses and fencing. The pump and electrical control system for each well would be housed in an 11-foot-tall, 900-square-foot concrete pump house. A 9.5-foot-tall security fence would enclose the approximately 0.4- and 0.5-acre area around the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, respectively.

These facilities would be noticeable from General Jim Moore Boulevard and nearby residences. The aboveground facilities would be small relative to existing structures and buildings in the area and would not block any views of scenic resources. As other ASR facilities and other utility infrastructure exists along General Jim Moore Boulevard, including the ASR Phase I project located 1 mile to the south, the proposed ASR wells would not be out of character with the surrounding area. However, depending upon the design and finish of the pump houses and fences, the ASR-5





SOURCE: ESA, 2013

205335.01 Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project

**Figure 4.14-4**

Existing Views of MPWSP Desalination Plant Site from Highway 1

and ASR-6 facilities could contrast with the surrounding residential setting. The visual impact severity of these ASR system improvements would, therefore, be moderate.

The presence of the MPWSP ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells could have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character, which would be significant. **Mitigation Measures 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** and **4.14-3b (Facility Screening)** require that CalAm design the facilities to avoid or minimize contrast with the surrounding setting and screen them from public view to the extent feasible. With implementation of this measure, the impact would be less than significant.

### **Terminal Reservoir**

The site of the proposed Terminal Reservoir, which is located approximately 1,000 feet east of General Jim Moore Boulevard, has a moderate aesthetic resource value.

The Aboveground Tanks Option would be constructed on a 0.75-acre concrete pad. The Terminal Reservoir would consist of two 3-million-gallon tanks; each tank would be 33 feet tall and 130 feet in diameter. Security fencing would enclose a 3.5-acre area around the Terminal Reservoir. **Figure 4.14-5** shows a simulated view of the Terminal Reservoir from General Jim Moore Boulevard.

As indicated in the figure, the mostly undeveloped area surrounding the reservoir is devoid of trees or other massive structures, and the large tanks of the Terminal Reservoir would be a prominent feature in the landscape, even when viewed from a distance. Therefore, the Terminal Reservoir would potentially contrast with the surrounding area and would likely be noticed by a casual observer. While they would not dominate the landscape, as viewed from General Jim Moore Boulevard, the Terminal Reservoir tanks would be noticeable along the horizon. These facilities would not be noticeable from the publicly accessible portions of the Fort Ord National Monument, which are located approximately 3 miles northeast of the Terminal Reservoir site. Nevertheless, because of impacts on scenic views from General Jim Moore Boulevard, the visual impact severity of the Terminal Reservoir would be high.

Operation of the Terminal Reservoir could have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character and the impact would be significant. As discussed for the ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells, implementation of **Mitigation Measures 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** and **4.14-3b (Facility Screening)** would reduce such impacts to a less-than-significant level.

### **Carmel Valley Pump Station**

The Carmel Valley Pump Station would be located in an area characterized by residential development, scrub-covered hills, and the wooded Carmel River corridor. The aesthetic resource value of the Carmel Valley Pump Station site is considered moderate. Above-ground facilities associated with the Carmel Valley Pump Station include a 500-square-foot, 11-foot-tall pump station enclosure. A separate 100-square-foot electrical control building would be constructed outside of the pump station building. The structures would be subordinate in size to structures on adjacent properties, most of which are more than 1,000 square feet in area. The pump station site, which is set back from Carmel Valley Road by about 250 feet, is not plainly visible from any



Existing View



Simulated View

SOURCE: ESA, 2013

205335.01 Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project  
**Figure 4.14-5**  
Visual Simulation of Terminal Reservoir  
from General Jim Moore Boulevard

nearby public vantage points due to intervening topography and vegetation. For these reasons, the Carmel Valley Pump Station would not contrast with the setting, dominate the landscape, or otherwise impair scenic views. The visual impact severity is considered low.

Operation of the Carmel Valley Pump Station would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources or visual character and the impact would be less than significant.

### **All Pipelines**

All proposed pipelines would be installed below ground and would not involve substantial removal of vegetation and or trees that would substantially damage scenic resources or degrade the visual quality of the alignment areas. Therefore, no permanent impact on visual resources would result.

### **Consistency with Regulatory Requirements**

In addition to the physical impacts described above, as noted in Section 4.14.3, Regulatory Framework, MPWSP operations could conflict with applicable regulatory requirements related to aesthetic resources. Elements of the proposed MPWSP may be potentially inconsistent with provisions of the California Coastal Act, Marina General Plan and Local Coastal Program, and Seaside General Plan that were established for the purpose of avoiding or minimizing impacts on aesthetic resources. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, **Mitigation Measures 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** and **4.14-3 (Facility Screening)** require that CalAm design the facilities to avoid or minimize Terminal Reservoir contrast with the surrounding natural setting and screen these facilities from public view. With these measures implemented, the MPWSP would be brought into conformance with the above-noted regulatory requirements.

### **Impact Conclusion**

Permanent aboveground facilities proposed for the MPWSP could have an adverse impact on scenic resources or the existing visual character of facility sites within the project area. This impact would be significant but mitigable for the subsurface slant wells, ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells, and Terminal Reservoir. This impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of **Mitigation Measures 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** and **4.14-3b (Facility Screening)**, which require that CalAm design the facilities to avoid or minimize contrast with the surrounding setting and ensure the facilities are screened from public views to the extent feasible. Although mitigation is not required for the MPWSP Desalination Plant, or the Carmel Valley Pump Station, this EIR/EIS recommends implementation of **Mitigation Measures 4.14-3a (Facility Design)** and **4.14-3b (Facility Screening)** for all above-ground project components to further reduce potential aesthetic resources effects and facilitate compatibility of project design with the natural and built environment. No operational impacts related to scenic resources and visual character would result from below-ground facilities, including proposed pipelines and optional alignments.

## **Mitigation Measures**

*Mitigation Measure 4.14-3a applies to the subsurface slant wells, ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells, and Terminal Reservoir; could also apply to other facilities, but not required to avoid a significant impact.*

### **Mitigation Measure 4.14-3a: Facility Design.**

CalAm shall avoid reflective exterior finishes and treat visible structures with earth-tone finishes to reduce contrast with the ground surface and increase compatibility with the visual setting. Primary structures shall be treated with complementary colors in the brown, tan, gray, or green color spectrum, or with other natural colors. Choose paint and exterior finishes to ensure that structures blend into the surrounding landscape.

*Mitigation Measure 4.14-3b applies to the ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells and Terminal Reservoir; could also apply to other facilities, but not required to avoid a significant impact.*

### **Mitigation Measure 4.14-3b: Facility Screening.**

CalAm shall ensure that fencing is designed to be minimally intrusive and to complement the architectural character of the proposed facility and the community. Fencing design shall be coordinated with nearby landscaping and MPWSP facility design to ensure all project components blend with the surrounding community and/or natural setting. Native plants, trees, or shrubs shall be used whenever practicable to screen views of the proposed aboveground facilities. Facility screening shall be in keeping with the character of the site and setting, and walled perimeters shall be avoided in natural settings to minimize the dominance of structures.

---

## **Impact 4.14-4: Permanent new sources of light or glare. (*Less than Significant with Mitigation*)**

New sources of light and glare emanating from or reflecting off of the proposed facilities could disrupt the lighting environment of the project area as viewed from public vantage points and adjacent lands. An area's existing level of ambient light is a factor in determining project impacts, as the incremental effects of new lighting tends to be less pronounced in well-lit areas. This impact pertains to those project components that propose permanent exterior nighttime lighting. Project components that do not propose exterior lighting, including all pipelines, would not result in impacts with respect to introducing permanent sources of light or glare. None of the proposed facilities would have reflective finishes and so MPWSP operations would have no impact related to glare.

## **Subsurface Slant Wells**

The subsurface slant wells and the electrical control building and electrical control panel for the wells would not require additional exterior lighting. Therefore, this project component would not cause impacts related to new sources of light.

### **MPWSP Desalination Plant**

Lighting proposed at the MPWSP Desalination Plant site would be only that which is necessary for safety and security; it would be similar to existing light sources in the vicinity and would not be out of character with lighting at the adjacent industrial Monterey Regional Environmental Park and MRWPCA Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. Existing trees would screen site security lighting from direct view along Charles Benson Road, and there are no residential properties in the area that would be affected by nighttime lighting at the site. As a result, increased nighttime lighting at the MPWSP Desalination Plant would have a less-than-significant impact with respect to adverse effects on nighttime views.

### **All Pipelines**

Pipelines and other conveyance facilities would be located below ground and therefore would not cause or contribute to light impacts.

### **Improvements to ASR System**

Nighttime lighting at the proposed ASR injection/extraction wells could be required for site safety and security purposes. If not properly contained, light spillover from these proposed fixtures could adversely affect motorists' ability to see the road at night or disturb nearby residents. These effects would be most apparent to motorists and residents along General Jim Moore Boulevard and Ardennes Circle.

The potential impacts from unconfined nighttime lighting associated with ASR injection/extraction wells operation would be significant. However, with implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, the impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. The measure would reduce nighttime light impacts by requiring use of low-intensity lighting, and that lights be shielded or directed downward to prevent light spillage into adjoining areas.

### **Terminal Reservoir**

The Terminal Reservoir would require nighttime security lighting. Lighting for this facility would be similar to that discussed above for the ASR injection/extraction wells. However, the proposed Terminal Reservoir site is less developed and has less ambient night lighting. Permanent lighting proposed for the Terminal Reservoir would introduce a new source of nighttime light to the area. Due to the Terminal Reservoir site's distance from General Jim Moore Boulevard and residential developments, the lighting would not be highly visible from public areas. However, it would constitute the only source of light in an otherwise unlit and undeveloped area. As described for the ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells and while not necessary to mitigate a potentially significant impact, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** at Terminal Reservoir would insure the impact would be less-than-significant. Operation of the Terminal Reservoir therefore, would not cause or contribute to adverse light effects and the impact would be less than significant.

### **Carmel Valley Pump Station**

The Carmel Valley Pump Station would require minimal nighttime security lighting. The proposed site is located approximately 240 feet south of Carmel Valley Road. The area is dark at night and has few sources of nighttime lighting. While unlikely to affect area motorists due to intervening topography and vegetation, new sources of lighting at the Carmel Valley Pump Station site could disturb residents as near as 250 feet from the source.

The potential impacts from unconfined nighttime lighting associated with the Carmel Valley Pump Station would be significant. However, with implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, the impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

### **Consistency with Regulatory Requirements**

In addition to the physical impacts described above, as noted in Section 4.14.2, Regulatory Framework, MPWSP nighttime construction could conflict with applicable regulatory requirements related to aesthetic resources that were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Elements of the proposed MPWSP may be potentially inconsistent with provisions of the California Coastal Act and Seaside General Plan that were established for the purpose of avoiding or minimizing impacts on aesthetic resources. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, requires that CalAm implement site-specific nighttime lighting measures in facility design, construction, and operations. With these measures implemented, the MPWSP would be consistent with the above-noted regulatory requirements.

### **Impact Conclusion**

Project operations would introduce permanent sources of substantial light into the project area. This impact would be significant but mitigable for the ASR injection/extraction wells, Terminal Reservoir, and the Carmel Valley Pump Station. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, which requires site-specific lighting controls, would reduce the potential impacts of nighttime operations lighting to a less-than-significant level. Although such mitigation is not required for the MPWSP Desalination Plant or Terminal Reservoir, this EIR/EIS recommends implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** for all above-ground project components with permanent sources of nighttime lighting to further reduce potential light spillover and dark night skies impacts. No operational impacts related to nighttime lighting would result from below-ground facilities, including proposed pipelines and optional alignments.

### **Mitigation Measures**

*Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 applies to the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells and Carmel Valley Pump Station.*

#### **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2: Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures.**

(See Impact 4.14.2, above, for a description)

### ***Recommended Mitigation Measures***

Although not required, except to the extent discussed above, to reduce the above-described aesthetic resources impacts to a less-than-significant level; to the extent feasible, implementation **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)** is recommended for all above-ground project components with permanent sources of nighttime lighting, including the MPWSP Desalination Plant and Terminal Reservoir.

*Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 applies to the MPWSP Desalination Plant and Terminal Reservoir*

(See Impact 4.14.2, above, for a description)

---

## **4.14.7 Cumulative Effects of the Proposed Project**

The cumulative scenario and cumulative impacts methodology are described in Section 4.1.7. Table 4.1-2 lists potential cumulative projects.

### **Impact 4.14-C: Cumulative impacts related to aesthetic resources. (*Less than significant with mitigation*)**

The geographic scope of potential cumulative impacts on aesthetic resources encompasses the locations from which a viewer could see the MPWSP construction or operations elements along with views of other projects in the cumulative scenario. The timeframe during which the MPWSP could contribute to cumulative aesthetic resources effects includes the 24-month construction phase, as well as the anticipated approximately 40-year operations phase. A significant cumulative effect on aesthetic resources would result if the effects of the MPWSP combined in space and time with those of cumulative projects to cause substantial degradation of the same scenic resources. A significant cumulative effect related to light and glare would result if the effects of the MPWSP combined in space and time with those of other cumulative projects to cause substantial nuisance or hazard conditions on the same light-sensitive receptor.

### **Cumulative Construction Impacts**

As discussed in Impact 4.14-1, the MPWSP construction activities would have temporary adverse visual impacts (e.g., presence of construction vehicles, staging of materials, and exposure of soils). However, given their temporary nature and that these areas would be restored to their approximate pre-construction condition following construction, such impacts would not be expected to have a significant impact with respect to aesthetic resources. Projects described in Table 4.1-2 whose effects could combine with those of proposed project construction to have an adverse effect on scenic resources include Fort Ord Dunes State Park Campground (No. 46) and the Castroville Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing (No. 36). The remaining cumulative projects in proximity to the MPWSP and with construction schedules that could result in the types of effects described above either are not proposed for scenic areas or would not be visible from the MPWSP (or scenic resources affected by the MPWSP) due to topography or other visual obstruction.



Both projects are situated along scenic corridors, but also within near-highway areas and proximate to existing development. Construction of these projects would involve aesthetic resource impacts similar to those described for MPWSP construction in Impact 4.14-1. Such impacts would be visible mainly to motorists traveling along Highway 1 in Seaside and Highway 156 and Merritt Way in Castroville. Implementation of these projects concurrent with or sequential to the new Transmission Main or Castroville Pipeline Optional Alignment 1, respectively, would extend the duration of time passersby are exposed to these impacts. However, as motorists would be traveling at high rates of speed, and likely focused on the road, such views would be fleeting. The overall duration of the visual disturbance would be temporary, limited to the construction phases of these projects. For these reasons, the impact severity would not be substantially different from that described previously for individual pipeline construction. For these reasons, the effects of MPWSP construction would not combine with those of cumulative projects to cause a significant cumulative effect with respect to aesthetic resources (*less than significant*).

As analyzed in Impact 4.14-2, proposed project construction would have a less-than-significant impact related to glare, and potential glare would be minimal and site-specific and thus would not contribute to a cumulative aesthetic impact. However, construction could result in a significant nighttime lighting impact associated with nighttime construction of the subsurface slant wells, Source Water Pipeline, Brine Discharge Pipeline, Pipeline to CSIP Pond, new Desalinated Water Pipeline, new Transmission Main, Castroville Pipeline, and ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells. None of the projects identified in **Table 4.1-2** are proposed in areas or at a time that would be affected by proposed project-related nighttime construction lighting or glare. Therefore, no overlap with construction of these project elements is anticipated. If overlap did occur, the combined effects could exceed the established thresholds of significance, resulting in a significant cumulative impact. However, following implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.14-2 (Site-Specific Nighttime Lighting Measures)**, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact related to nighttime construction lighting, and its contribution to any cumulative impacts would be reduced to a level that is not cumulatively considerable because this measure would ensure that nighttime lighting has minimal spillover from active construction sites (*less than significant with mitigation*).

### **Cumulative Operations Impacts**

As analyzed relative to Impact 4.14-3, the MPWSP Desalination Plant, ASR-5 and ASR-6 wells, and the Carmel Valley Pump Station would have a less-than-significant effect related to scenic resources and visual character. The subsurface slant wells and Terminal Reservoir, as viewed from Highway 1 and General Jim Moore Boulevard, respectively, could result in significant impacts on scenic resources and visual character. However, none of these components would cause or contribute to a significant cumulative impact on scenic resources or visual character, because none of the projects identified in **Table 4.1-2** is proposed for a location that would be visible from an above-ground MWSP component and have an adverse effect on the same scenic resource. Consequently, the combined operations-related effects of the MPWSP and cumulative projects identified in **Table 4.1-2** would not result in a significant cumulative effect with respect to scenic resources and visual character (*less than significant*).

As analyzed in Impact 4.14-4, proposed project operation would have no impact related to glare. The effects of the MPWSP Desalination Plant's operational nighttime lighting would be less than significant. The proposed ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, the Terminal Reservoir, and the Carmel Valley Pump Station would each require nighttime security lighting that could have substantial adverse effects on nearby receptors. However, no projects identified in **Table 4.1-2** are proposed for areas that would be affected by MPWSP nighttime security lighting. Consequently, the combined operations-related effects of the MPWSP and cumulative projects identified in **Table 4.1-2** would not result in a significant cumulative effect with respect to permanent sources of light and glare (*less than significant*).

---

## References – Aesthetic Resources

- California Coastal Records Project, 2013. Image 200402008, City of Marina, North end, 2013. Available online at: <http://www.californiacoastline.org/cgi-bin/image.cgi?image=200402008&mode=sequential&flags=0&year=2004>. Accessed February 5, 2015.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), 2011. California Scenic Highway Mapping System. Updated September 7, 2011. Available online at: [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm). Accessed January 29, 2013.
- Caltrans, 2012. *2011 Traffic Volumes on California State Highways*. 2012. Available online at: [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/saferestr/trafdata/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/saferestr/trafdata/index.htm). Accessed February 19, 2013.
- City of Marina, 1982. *The City of Marina Local Coastal Land Use Plan*. Amended November 2013.
- City of Marina, 2000. *City of Marina General Plan*, amended December 31, 2006.
- City of Monterey, 2003a. *City of Monterey Del Monte Beach Local Coastal Plan Program Land Use Plan*. Adopted by City of Monterey June 2003. Certified by California Coastal Commission October 2003.
- City of Monterey, 2003b. *City of Monterey Harbor Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan*. Adopted by City of Monterey June 2003. Certified by California Coastal Commission October 2003.
- City of Sand City, 1982. *Sand City Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan*. Adopted March 23, 1982. Certified by the California Coastal Commission on December 2, 1982.
- City of Seaside, 2004. *Seaside General Plan*. Adopted August 5, 2004.
- Monterey County, 1982. *North County Land Use Plan*, certified 1982, updated March 9, 1995.
- Monterey County, 1985. *North County Area Plan*, adopted July 2, 1985.
- Monterey County, 1996. *Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan*. Adopted December 17, 1984.

Monterey County, 2010a. *2010 Monterey County General Plan*. Adopted October 26, 2010.

Monterey County 2010b. *Carmel Valley Master Plan, Supplemental Policies*, amended February 12, 2013.

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), 1987. *Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects*, 1987.

This page intentionally left blank