4.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

4.8.1 Introduction

This section analyzes potential hazards and hazardous material impacts at the La Entrada Specific Plan (proposed project) site and in the surrounding area that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. The information presented in this section is based on a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report (Phase I ESA) prepared by Earth Systems Southwest (Earth Systems) in December 2012 (Appendix H), the City of Coachella (City) General Plan Environmental Hazards and Safety Element (1996), the Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) (February 2006), and the Riverside County Operational Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) (March 2005).

4.8.2 Methodology

The information presented in this section is primarily based on a Phase I ESA Report, as stated above. The purpose of this report was to determine whether Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC) as defined in the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard 1527-05 are present or likely present due to past or current land use of the site and/or adjacent properties in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The term REC is defined as the presence or likely presence of an existing, past, or material threat of a release of hazardous substances or petroleum products in structures, ground, groundwater, or surface water on a site or adjacent sites. A site reconnaissance survey was conducted by Earth Systems on November 13, 2012, as part of the Phase I ESA. The site reconnaissance consisted of visual observations of the site, noting physical evidence of potential hazards or possible sources of contamination and identifying visual evidence of possible impacts to the subject site. In addition, a computerized search of State and federal environmental databases and a review of local regulatory records regarding the site and neighboring areas were completed.

4.8.3 Existing Environmental Setting

Definitions. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines a hazardous waste as a substance that (1) has the potential to cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating reversible illness; and (2) is a potential substantial present or future hazard to human health or the environment when it is improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed. Hazardous waste is also defined as ignitable, corrosive, explosive, or reactive (Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Title 40: Protection of the Environment, Part 261).

A material may also be considered a hazardous material if it contains toxic chemicals. The EPA has created a list of specific hazardous wastes that are in forms of solids, semisolids, liquids, and gases. Private business and federal, State, and local government agencies can be producers of such hazardous wastes. Therefore, the EPA regulates the production and distribution of commercial and industrial chemicals to protect human health and the environment. The EPA is also responsible for preparing and distributing information to the public about these chemicals and their potential impacts,

as well as providing guidance to manufacturers in pollution prevention measures, such as more efficient processes and recycling used materials.

The State defines a hazardous material as a substance that is toxic, ignitable, or flammable; reactive; and/or corrosive. Furthermore, the State defines an extremely hazardous material as a substance that shows high acute or chronic toxicity, is carcinogenic (causes cancer), has bioaccumulative properties (accumulates in the body's tissues), is persistent in the environment, or is water reactive (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 22; California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5).

Proposed Project Site. The project site currently consists of 16 legal parcels totaling approximately 2,200 gross acres (ac). All parcels are vacant and undeveloped, consisting of small rock formations and desert vegetation. During the site reconnaissance conducted on November 13, 2012, two small mounds of an unidentified substance in plastic bags were observed on the west-central portion of the site. On May 9, 2013, these unidentified substances in plastic bags were identified as non-Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste solid. These plastic bags were removed and are no longer anticipated to be an environmental concern to the project site. The Uniform Hazardous Waste Manifest of these plastic bags is included in Appendix H.

According to aerial photographs taken of the site dating back to 1956, the site has never been developed. Since 1956 and 2002, respectively, agricultural and small mining activities have previously occurred on properties adjacent to the project site. According to the Phase I ESA, an Environmental Cleanup Lien (ECL)[1] is not likely to be required on the project site or in its vicinity due to the lack of evidence that a release has occurred on site.

Storm Drains, Wastewater, and Groundwater Wells. No man-made drainage features or groundwater wells were observed on site during the site reconnaissance.

Pipeline and Oil and Gas Wells. The California Department of Conservation (DOC), Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal website was reviewed as part of the Phase I report for information related to historic oil well drilling activities near the site. Maps posted on the website did not indicate the presence of oil wells having been drilled within a 1-mile (mi) radius of the site.

Cortese List (Pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5). The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers in an effort to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements in disclosing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) to develop (at least annually) an updated Cortese List. The California Department of Substances Control (DTSC) is responsible for a portion of the information contained in this list. Other State and local agencies are required to provide additional hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. The

[1] Recorded Environmental Cleanup Liens [ECLs] on a property are indicators that contamination exists or existed at the site. ECLs are "encumbrances on a property for the recovery of incurred cleanup costs on the part of a state, tribal, or federal government agency or other third party" (EPA 2006).

proposed project site is not included on any hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Use, Storage, and Disposal of Hazardous Materials. According to the Phase I ESA, minor debris consisting of old cans, plastic, glass, and tires was found on site. Due to the limited amount of debris, it is not considered a threat to introduce contaminants to the site. However, as previously stated, two small piles of unknown matter that appeared to have been a gel-like substance that had hardened in plastic bags were found on the west-central portion of the site. As previously stated, these unidentified substances in plastic bags were identified as non-RCRA hazardous waste solid and have since been removed. Therefore, these plastic bags are not anticipated to be an environmental concern to the project site.

Hazardous Materials Releases. As part of the Phase I ESA, Earth Systems conducted a database search of the project site and the vicinity. According to this report, there is a former solid waste disposal site located at the storm drain near Avenue 52; the site is located approximately 1,500 feet (ft) west of the proposed project site. Based on inspection reports from CalRecycle between December 2006 and December 2010, waste reported at the site generally consisted of nonhazardous debris such as old tires and household materials. Therefore, based on the types of waste that have been disposed of at this site, the location of the solid waste landfill off site, and current site closure, this former solid waste site would not have produced hazardous substances or materials on the project site. In addition, one gallon of hydrochloric acid associated with a ruptured acid bomb was previously released on site on March 3, 1996, near the crossing at the All American Canal and Avenue 52. Due to the fact that this was neutralized and cleaned up by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD), it is not considered to be a potentially hazardous material. A small-quantity generator was also found near the project site; however, due to the low amount of waste generated, it is not anticipated to be an environmental concern to the project site.

4.8.4 Regulatory Setting

A number of federal, State, and local laws have been enacted to regulate the management of hazardous materials. Implementation of these laws and the management of hazardous materials are regulated independently of the CEQA process through programs administered by various agencies at the federal, State, and local levels. An overview of the key hazardous materials laws and regulations that apply to the proposed project is provided below.

Federal Policies and Regulations.

Hazardous Materials Regulations. The EPA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) are all federal agencies that regulate hazardous materials. These regulations are primarily contained in CFR Titles 10, 29, 40, and 49. In particular, CFR Title 49 governs the manufacture of packaging and transport containers, packing and repacking, labeling, and the marking of hazardous material transport. Some of the major federal laws and issue areas include the following statutes (and regulations promulgated thereunder):

- **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA):** hazardous waste management
- **Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments Act (HSWA):** hazardous waste management
- **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA):** cleanup of contamination
- **Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA):** cleanup of contamination
- **Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know (SARA Title III):** business inventories and emergency response planning

The EPA is the principal federal agency responsible for the implementation and enforcement of hazardous materials regulations. However, in most cases State and local environmental regulatory agencies are responsible for the enforcement of environmental laws and regulations established at the federal level.

In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for establishing and developing policies and programs for emergency management at the federal, State, and local levels. These policies and programs are intended to ensure a national capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a full range of emergencies.

State Policies and Regulations. The DTSC and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) are the principal State agencies with jurisdiction over hazardous chemical materials management. Other State agencies that manage hazardous materials include the Department of Industrial Relations (State OSHA implementation), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Air Resources Board (ARB), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA-Proposition 65 implementation), and the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB). The California Highway Patrol and Caltrans both serve as the enforcement agencies for hazardous materials transportation regulations. Hazardous materials and waste transporters are responsible for complying with all packaging, labeling, and shipping regulations.

In addition, CCR Title 8, Sections 1532.1 and 1529, provide for exposure limits, exposure monitoring, respiratory protection, and good working practices by workers exposed to lead and asbestos. Lead- and asbestos-contaminated debris must be managed and disposed of in accordance with the applicable provision of the California Health and Safety Code.

Local and Regional Plans and Policies.

Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Riverside County LHMP was adopted in March 2005 by FEMA. The intent of the LHMP is to serve as a guide for decision-makers as they commit resources and reduce risk related to natural and other disasters. In addition, this plan establishes a Hazards List to identify potential hazards in the County. The Hazards List indicates the potential impact, specific locations where

the hazard may occur, and the magnitude the hazard may have on the economy, infrastructure, and citizens of the County.

As part of preparation of the LHMP, each participating jurisdiction conducted an assessment of hazards for its region in order to identify potential hazards in the County. These hazards include: wildfire, flooding, earthquakes, extreme weather, landslides, insect infestation, dam failure, hazardous materials incidents, transportation emergencies, pipeline/aqueduct incidents, blackout, toxic pollution, nuclear incidents, civil unrest, jail and prison incidents, and terrorism. Once potential hazards were identified, a list of mitigation strategies and goals was established to minimize impacts associated with hazards.

Riverside County Operational Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The Riverside County Operational Area EOP identifies the planned response to emergency situations related to natural disasters, technological incidents, and national security emergencies in the County. In addition, the EOP details how the Riverside County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) would direct and coordinate with County departments and other agencies in their emergency response activities.

City of Coachella General Plan. Hazards are addressed in the Environmental Hazards and Safety Element of the City's General Plan (1996).

Goal: The City shall coordinate with the appropriate agencies to reduce and manage the disposal of hazardous waste.

Objective: The City shall actively coordinate with property owners and the California Environmental Protection Agency to cause hazardous waste sites to be cleaned up prior to new development.

Policy: On any site specified as a Hazardous Waste & Substance Site, the City of Coachella is required to identify that fact prior to accepting as complete in any application for a development project. In addition, appropriate notification is required to be given to the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Goal: The City shall prepare a plan for short-term response to natural and man-made emergencies.

Objective: The City shall use a variety of means to promote preparation for and rapid recovery from hazardous events.

Goal: Reduce threats to the public health and safety from hazardous materials, especially threats induced by earthquakes.

City of Coachella General Plan Updated Safety Element. A Safety Element provides for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of

seismically induced surface rapture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides; subsidence, liquefaction, and other seismic hazards identified pursuant to Chapter 7.8 (commencing with Section 2690) of Division 2 of the Public Resources Code, and other geologic hazards known to the legislative body; flooding; and wildland and urban fires. The Safety Element includes mapping of known seismic and other geologic hazards. It also addresses evacuation routes, military installations, peakload water supply requirements, and minimum road widths and clearances around structures, as those items relate to identified fire and geologic hazards.

City of Coachella Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan. The City of Coachella Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan (July 2007) is the long-range comprehensive Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan document for the City of Coachella. This plan includes the following components:

- Defines the current and future fire-emergency medical protection environment.
- Defines acceptable life and property risk levels.
- Defines the optimal fire protection-emergency medical system, which provides the level of service commensurate with the level of accepted risk.
- Establishes policy in advance of change, permitting control of, rather than reaction to, the fire emergency-medical environment.
- Identifies and justifies the resources necessary to develop and operate the fire protection-emergency medical system.

The RCFD implements the City of Coachella Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan. This Master Plan identifies present and future operational needs so that cost-effective programs and budgeting and program solutions may be defined, rather than reacting to an undefined fire-emergency medical problem.

The availability of sufficient on-site water pressure is a basic requirement of the RCFD. The RCFD requires sufficient capacity for fire flow for public hydrants at a minimum fire flow of 2,500 gallons per minute (gpm) for multifamily residential development, 4,000 gpm for commercial uses, and 2,500 gpm for heavy industrial uses.

City of Coachella Municipal Code.

Chapter 2.56 (Emergency Services). This chapter of the City's Municipal Code provides for the preparation and carrying out of plans to protect the people and property of the City in the event of an emergency. In addition, this chapter outlines the direction of emergency organization efforts and describes the coordination of emergency functions of the City with other public agencies, organizations, and private parties.

Chapter 8.28 (Fire Code). This chapter of the City's Municipal Code established regulations related to hazards, including storage of flammable and combustible liquids, bulk storage of liquefied petroleum gases, storage of explosives and blasting agents, storage of compressed natural gas, storage of stationary tanks of flammable cryogenic fluids, and storage of hazardous materials. In addition, this chapter outlines regulations related to the amount and continuity of fuel (vegetation) available, firewood storage, proximity of vegetation to structures, and other measures aimed at "Hazard Reduction." Additional provisions include construction standards for new structures and remodels, road widths and configurations designed to accommodate the passage of fire trucks and engines, and requirements for minimum fire flow rates for water mains.

4.8.5 Project Design Features

As summarized in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, the proposed Specific Plan includes components that are referred to as Project Design Features. The Project Design Features related to Hazards and Hazardous Materials are:

- The Specific Plan proposes low-density residential uses with large lots in the northern portion of the site to allow incorporation of fuel modification zones into lots abutting open space areas and to allow for better compatibility with the existing land form. Maintenance of fuel modification/ management zones would be the responsibility of individual homeowners on private property.
- School sites have been located to ensure adequate separation from existing power lines and the adjacent Interstate 10 (I-10).

4.8.6 Thresholds of Significance

The thresholds for hazards and hazardous materials used in this analysis are consistent with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The effects of the proposed project on hazards and hazardous materials would be considered significant and adverse if the proposed project would:

Threshold 4.8.1: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;

Threshold 4.8.2: Create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;

Threshold 4.8.3: Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;

Threshold 4.8.4: Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;

Threshold 4.8.5: For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;

Threshold 4.8.6: For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;

Threshold 4.8.7: Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

Threshold 4.8.8: Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

4.8.7 Project Impacts

Threshold 4.8.1: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Project construction would involve the routine use of hazardous materials, including fuels, paints, and solvents. However, due to the fact that the amount of these materials during construction would be limited and regulated, they would not pose a significant threat or be considered a significant environmental hazard. The City is required to implement best management practices (BMPs) related to hazardous materials storage and use during construction. Mitigation Measure 4.8.1 requires the preparation of a hazardous materials contingency plan that would address the potential to encounter on-site unknown hazards or hazardous materials during project construction and how those materials would be handled, removed, stored, and disposed of to protect the environment, the project construction workers, and the general public. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.8.1 (Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan) during the construction process would reduce any potential release of a hazardous material during construction to a less than significant level.

Based on the site reconnaissance survey conducted as part of the Phase I ESA, the presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), lead-based paints (LBPs), and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) containing fixtures can be ruled out. ACMs are used in some building materials such as acoustical tiles, and PCBs are used in electrical transformers. Due to the fact that there are no existing buildings or structures on site, and the fact that the proposed project does not include demolition and/or utility relocation, the presence of these chemicals can be ruled out.

The Phase I ESA contains a photograph identifying two small piles of an unknown matter on the west-central portion of the project site. According to the report, it is assumed the material was a former gel substance that had since hardened inside a plastic garbage bag. On May 9, 2013, these unidentified substances in plastic bags were identified as non-RCRA hazardous waste solid and are not anticipated to be an environmental concern to the project site.

During excavation and filling activities, there is potential to encounter hazardous materials in soils on the project site. There is also potential for contaminated soils and groundwater on the project site, particularly in areas used for agriculture. Therefore, Mitigation Measures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 have been

prescribed to reduce impacts related to potential hazardous materials found in soils and groundwater during project construction. Mitigation Measure 4.8.2 requires the development of a Health and Safety Plan for soil and groundwater disturbance that would address potential risks to construction workers during construction. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 would reduce potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials during project construction to a less than significant level.

Operation of the proposed project would involve the use and storage of hazardous materials typical to residential, commercial, retail, public facility, and park uses, which would not result in a significant hazard to employees or community members when used correctly. Therefore, the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would not present a significant hazard to the public or the environment with regulatory compliance procedures in place, and impacts are considered less than significant.

Threshold 4.8.2: Create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As stated above under Threshold 4.8.1, project construction would involve the routine use of hazardous materials, including fuels, paints, and solvents. However, due to the fact that the amount of these materials during construction would be limited and regulated, they would not pose a significant threat or be considered a significant environmental hazard. In addition, the City is required to implement BMPs related to hazardous materials storage and use during construction, and to prepare a hazardous materials contingency plan that would address the potential to encounter on-site unknown hazards or hazardous materials (Mitigation Measure 4.8.1). With implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.8.1 (Hazardous Material Contingency Plan) during the construction process, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, and impacts are considered less than significant. In addition, the proposed project includes a Project Design Feature that will ensure all schools proposed as part of the project will be located away from the IID power lines and the I-10. Implementation of this Project Design Feature would reduce potential hazards associated with accident conditions to a less than significant level.

Project operation would involve the use of potential hazardous materials (i.e., solvents, cleaning agents, paints, and pesticides) typical of residential, commercial, retail, public facility, and park uses; however, when used correctly, these materials would not result in a significant hazard to employees or community members. Operation of the proposed project would not produce hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials, substances, or waste beyond the typical household and commercial materials just described. Therefore, the proposed project would not create significant hazards to the public or to the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of materials into the environment since no acutely hazardous materials would be handled on site. No additional mitigation is required.

Threshold 4.8.3: Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school

Less than Significant Impact. As previously stated in the discussion under Threshold 4.8.2, above, the proposed project would not produce any hazardous emissions or handle acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Therefore, the schools included as part of the proposed project would not be impacted by hazardous emissions or materials. In addition, the project site and immediate properties do not contain any existing school facilities. No additional mitigation is required.

Threshold 4.8.4: Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment

No Impact. The proposed project is not included on any hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, and no mitigation is required.

Threshold 4.8.5: For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area

No Impact. The project site is located approximately 4 mi northeast of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport (formerly known as Thermal Airport) and is therefore, not within two miles of a public airport. Additionally, the project site is not within an airport land use plan and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working on site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse impacts associated with aviation safety and airports, and no mitigation would be required.

Threshold 4.8.6: For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area

No Impact. The project site is not within the vicinity of a public airport or private airstrip and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working on site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse impacts associated with aviation safety and airports, and no mitigation would be required.

Threshold 4.8.7: Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is located within an area subject to the Riverside County EOP and the Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional LHMP. Both County

plans are designed to aid decision-makers and responsible agencies in their response during emergency situations.

The proposed project would include multiple emergency vehicle access routes to and from the project site, making direct access to the site easier. In addition, project plans would be subject to review and approval by the RCFD to ensure that all structures and roadway widths would apply with regulations related to emergency vehicle access. Therefore, in order to be approved, the proposed project would be compliant with all City and County codes and ordinances regulating emergency access.

The proposed project would result in a significant increase in traffic on and around the project site, such that the development would potentially result in significant delays to emergency vehicles. However, because the proposed project would accommodate the future development of police and fire stations, and secondary emergency access as part of the project circulation design that would be reviewed for approval by the City Fire Department; therefore, potential impacts related to emergency vehicle delays would be reduced to a less than significant level.

The Riverside County Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan addresses emergency response and evacuation procedures during events such as earthquakes, hazardous materials incidents, floods, national security emergencies, wildfires, and landslides. The City's General Plan Environmental Hazards and Safety Element addresses fire hazards and hazards and materials, among other hazards. As previously discussed, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public related to safety hazards or hazardous materials. As discussed under Threshold 4.8.8, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to wildfires. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan or the City's General Plan Environmental Hazards and Safety Element. Impacts related to potential conflicts with an adopted emergency response plan would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

For discussion of impacts related to other hazards covered in the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Master Plan and the City's Environmental Hazards and Safety Element, refer to the following sections in this EIR:

- Section 4.6, Geology and Soils: This section discusses hazards associated with earthquakes and landslides.
- Section 4.9 Hydrology and Water Quality: This section discusses hazards associated with flooding.
- Section 4.14, Public Services and Utilities: This section discusses hazards related to emergency response times.

Threshold 4.8.8: Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands

Less than Significant Impact. According to the County of Riverside Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, the project site is located in an area that has a low to moderate wildfire hazard potential. Project development would be required to meet the requirements of the City's Fire Code for uses within the Moderate fire risk zone. Compliance with the fire code and any applicable design components

required by the City's Fire Department would ensure that potential wildfire risks are less than significant. Furthermore, operation of the proposed project would not increase the potential for wildland fires. Implementation of the project design feature that includes fuel modification areas would reduce impacts related to hazards associated with wildfires. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant adverse risk of loss, injury, or death related to wildland fires. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

4.8.8 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 4.8.1 **Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan.** Prior to issuance of grading permits, the Riverside County Fire Chief or designee shall review and approve a hazardous materials contingency plan that addresses the potential to encounter on-site unknown hazards or hazardous substances during construction activities. The plan, which will be prepared by the project applicant for review and approval by the City of Coachella Director of Development Services, shall indicate that if construction workers encounter underground tanks, gases, odors, uncontained spills, or other unidentified substances, the contractor shall stop work, cordon off the affected area, and notify the Riverside County Department of Public Health (RCDPH). The RCDPH responder shall determine the next steps regarding possible site evacuation, sampling, and disposal of the substance consistent with local, State, and federal regulations during construction periods.

Disposal of Potentially Hazardous Materials During Construction. During construction activities, the project applicant shall immediately notify the City of Coachella Building Official and the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD), Health Hazardous Materials Division, Division Chief, if any unknown substances or potentially hazardous materials are encountered. The County Health Hazardous Materials Division Chief shall determine the appropriate procedures for the handling and disposal of the materials in accordance with local, State, and federal regulations.

Mitigation Measure 4.8.2 **Health and Safety Plan for Soil and Groundwater Disturbance During Construction.** Prior to issuance of any grading permits, the project applicant shall submit a Health and Safety Plan to the City of Coachella Building Official for review and approval. The program shall be consistent with local, State, and federal regulations and shall encompass all subsurface soil disturbance and groundwater activities during construction activities. The Health and Safety Plan shall include the following components:

- A summary of all potential risks to construction workers, monitoring programs, maximum exposure limits for all site chemicals, and emergency procedures;

- The identification of a site health and safety officer;
- Methods of contact, phone number, office location, and responsibilities of the site health and safety officer;
- Specification that the site health and safety officer shall be contacted immediately by the construction contractor if evidence of soil or groundwater contamination is encountered during site preparation and construction; and
- Specification that the RCFD shall be notified if evidence of soil contamination is encountered, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board shall be notified if groundwater contamination is encountered.

4.8.9 Cumulative Impacts

The hazardous materials study area considered for cumulative impacts consists of (1) the area that could be affected by proposed activities, such as the release of hazardous materials, and (2) the areas affected by other projects whose activities could directly or indirectly affect the presence or fate of hazardous materials on site. In general, only the project site and areas adjacent to the project site are considered for cumulative impacts due to the limited potential impact area associated with release of hazardous materials into the environment.

As stated previously, project construction would involve the routine use of hazardous materials, including fuels, paints, and solvents. However, the amount of these materials during construction would be limited and regulated. Therefore, they would not be considered a significant environmental hazard. Implementation of BMPs would further reduce any impacts associated with hazardous materials during project construction.

Project operational activities would involve the use of storage of household hazardous materials typical of commercial businesses and residences. These uses would not present a significant hazard to the residents of the community or to the environment with regulatory compliance procedures in place.

The transport of hazardous materials is regulated by the California Highway Patrol, and local police and fire departments specialize in emergency response procedures for safely responding to spills of hazardous substances on public roads. Additionally, implementation of the previously mentioned mitigation measures would ensure that hazardous materials would be adequately monitored during construction activities to ensure there would be no significant adverse impact to the environment or to the public health. Therefore, the temporary transport of existing hazardous materials and the future transport of household hazardous materials to and from the project site would not result in a significant cumulative hazard.

Mitigation Measures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 address the potential encounter to on-site unknown hazards or hazardous substances during project construction. Therefore, impacts related to hazardous materials in soils, groundwater, and use of hazardous materials on site would be regulated through implementation of both Mitigation Measures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2. Therefore, the proposed project's

contribution to hazards and hazardous materials cumulative impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of these mitigation measures.

The proposed project, when considered with other cumulative projects, may be subject to risks associated with wildland fires as a result of the natural open space. It is anticipated that future development will comply with the City Wildland Fire Plan, and the City and County Fire Code, both of which address fire prevention, and would be applicable to wildland fires. In addition, in the event of an emergency, the County and the City maintain Emergency Operations Plan to respond to any emergencies. As a result, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts associated with exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires would not be considered cumulatively considerable, and the impact would be less than significant.

4.8.10 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The proposed project would not result in significant unavoidable adverse land use impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials with the implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.8.1 through 4.8.2.