

CHAPTER 9 GLOSSARY

A-WEIGHTED SOUND LEVEL (dBA): The sound level measured on an instrument containing an “A” filter, which electronically simulates the frequency response of the human ear under an average intensity of sound.

ACRE-FEET: The volume of water that would cover one acre of land to a depth of one foot. The equivalent of 43,560 cubic feet, or 325,829 gallons.

ALTERNATIVE: One choice of action from several that are concurrently possible.

AMBIENT NOISE: The all-encompassing noise associated with a given environment, being usually a composite of sounds from many sources near and far.

AQUIFER: A natural underground formation that is saturated with water, and from which water can be withdrawn.

AVERAGE DAILY TRIPS: The number of vehicles passing a given point on a road going in a given direction during a 24-hour period.

BASELINE: The ambient environmental condition existing in the absence of project development. “Future baseline” is a description of conditions that could occur in the future assuming no project development.

BEDROCK: The solid rock that underlies gravel, soil, and other superficial material.

BUILDOUT: A condition in which all development allowed by an adopted plan has been completed.

COMMUNITY NOISE EQUIVALENT LEVEL (CNEL): The average continuous noise level over a 24-hour period, with special weighting factors applied to noise events occurring in the nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM), the evening (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM), and the daytime (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM).

CRITERIA POLLUTANTS: Ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, inhalable particulates (particulate matter less than 10 microns), and lead, as defined by the California Air Resources Board.

DAY-NIGHT AVERAGE SOUND LEVEL (Ldn): The A-weighted average sound level in decibels during a 24-hour period with a 10 dB weighting applied to nighttime sound levels (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM). This exposure method is similar to the CNEL, but gives the same weighting to the evening time period (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM) as it does to the daytime period (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM).

DECIBEL (dB): A unit for expressing the relative intensity (loudness) of sounds. The decibel is the logarithm of the ratio of the intensity of a given sound to the faintest sound discernible by the human ear.

ENDANGERED: A species or subspecies of plant or animal whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy.

ENVIRONMENT: The natural and human physical conditions that exist in an area of study, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, traffic levels, safety levels, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: The evaluation of change in an environmental condition with respect to explicit criteria.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT: A public document prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act used by a governmental agency to analyze the significant environmental effects of a proposed project, to identify alternatives, and to disclose possible ways to reduce or avoid possible environmental damage.

EROSION: Process by which material is removed from the earth's surface (including weathering, dissolution, abrasion, and transportation).

ESTIMATE: A statement regarding future conditions based on non-mathematical analysis.

FAULT: A fracture or fracture zone along which there has been displacement of the sides relative to one another parallel to the fracture.

FEASIBLE: Capable of successfully being accomplished by reasonably available means.

GLARE: A light source, either reflected or direct, that is annoying or distracting.

GRADING: Alteration of existing slope and/or shape of the ground surface.

GROUND RUPTURE: Seismically-induced fracturing of the ground surface.

GROUNDWATER: Water beneath the surface of the earth.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE: A material or form of energy that could cause injury or illness to persons, livestock, or the natural environment.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE: Ground surface that cannot be penetrated by water. Includes paved and compacted surfaces, as well as those covered by buildings.

INFILTRATION: With reference to water and wastewater conveyance lines, infiltration is the introduction of underground water, such as groundwater, into wastewater collection systems. Infiltration results in increased wastewater flow levels.

INFLOW: With reference to water and wastewater conveyance lines, inflow is surface water, such as rainfall runoff, that enters a wastewater collection system. Inflow results in increased wastewater flow levels.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Permanent utility installations, including roads, water supply lines, sewage collection pipes, and power and communications lines.

INTERSECTION CAPACITY: The maximum number of vehicles that has a reasonable expectation of passing through an intersection in one direction during a given time period under prevailing roadway and traffic conditions.

LANDFILLING: A procedure for the disposal of solid wastes. The wastes are placed in a designated disposal site and covered with dirt or other fill material.

LANDSLIDE: Any downslope mass movement of rock or soil, including rock falls, earth flows, and landslides in the technical sense (a soil mass that retains its essential internal arrangement and becomes disjointed from its subsurface interface).

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT: An environmental condition change that does not exceed a stated CEQA standard of significance.

LEVEL OF SERVICE: A measure of the mobility characteristics of an intersection, as determined by vehicle delay that is estimated by a volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio. A V/C ratio of less than 0.60 corresponds to level of service "A," while a ratio of 1.00 and above corresponds to level of service "F."

LIQUEFACTION: A geologic phenomenon in which surface and near-surface materials (soils, alluvium, etc.) behave like a liquid during seismic shaking.

MITIGATION MEASURE: Action taken to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts.

MOBILE SOURCES: A source of air pollution that is related to vehicles, such as automobiles or buses.

NOISE: Annoying, harmful, or unwanted sound.

PERCENT SLOPE: A common way of expressing the slope of terrain, which is derived by dividing the change in elevation by the horizontal distance traversed. A 45-degree slope can thus be expressed as a 100-percent slope.

PERCOLATION: Downward movement of groundwater through soil and bedrock.

RAPTOR: A bird of prey, such as a hawk, eagle, or owl.

RARE: A condition in which a species or subspecies, although not presently threatened with extinction, exists in such small numbers throughout its range that it may be endangered if its environment is degraded or reduced in size.

RECYCLING: A variety of processes by which reusable materials in the solid or hazardous waste streams are separated for reuse.

RICHTER MAGNITUDE: A logarithmic scale ranging from one to ten, used to express the total energy of an earthquake. An increase of one unit represents a 60-fold increase in energy.

RIPARIAN VEGETATION: Plant life associated with a natural body of water.

SANITARY FLOW: That portion of wastewater flow that is generated by domestic, industrial, and commercial customers, as distinct from inflow and infiltration.

SEDIMENTATION: Process by which material suspended in water is deposited in a body of water.

SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT: An environmental impact that exceeds a stated CEQA standard of significance. According to State Guidelines, an economic or social change by itself is not considered a significant adverse impact. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.

SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACT: An environmental impact that exceeds a stated CEQA standard of significance that cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures.

SILT: Soil composed of particles finer than fine sand and coarser than clay.

STATIONARY SOURCE: A source of air pollution that is not mobile, such as a heating plant or an exhaust stack from a laboratory.

SURFACE WATER: Water running in streams or rivers.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT: Programs designed to encourage alternatives to private automobile use, such as increased reliance on public transit, carpooling, and bicycles.

TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT: Programs designed to reduce demands on transportation systems by influencing how and when commute trips occur.

VEGETATION COMMUNITY: A group of plant species commonly occurring together in roughly similar proportions.

VOLUME-TO-CAPACITY RATIO: In reference to transportation, ratio of peak hour use to capacity.

