

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

**Draft Environmental Assessment**

## **Lake Casitas Fire Station Upgrades**

**EA-12-058**



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Mid Pacific Region  
South-Central California Area Office  
Fresno, California**

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## **Mission Statements**

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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# Section 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) acquired certain lands in the Casitas Watershed as part of the Reclamation Development Act (Act). The Act authorized the purchase of 3,560 acres of private lands (referred to as open space land) surrounding Lake Casitas as a means to protect the lake's water quality, and provide for the preservation of public outdoor recreation. In 1962, Reclamation and the United States Forest Service (Forest Service) entered into an agreement granting the Forest Service the right to occupy and use 4.2 acres next to open space lands for the purpose of maintaining an administrative center and fire station on those 4.2 acres. The agreement was later amended in 1976 to expand the fire station to 12.2 acres (see Appendix A). The area used for the fire station is shown in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1 Project Location

At the north end of the reservoir, a variety of recreational improvements have been added over the years by private concessionaires. These include boat ramps, campsites, hiking trails, a water park and special events areas. These improvements are guided by the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the property, which balances the need to provide recreational opportunities to the public with the need to store and deliver public drinking water. Reclamation issued a Record of Decision for the most recent RMP on April 11, 2011 (Reclamation 2011).

## **1.2 Need for the Proposed Action**

The Forest Service has proposed the relocation of an existing leach line at the Fire Station site and installation of various improvements for fire response. The existing leach line crosses an intermittent stream, south of the Fire Station, and then travels uphill into a forested area. While the location of the leach line is consistent with applicable regulations, crossing a stream that supplies Lake Casitas with drinking water is a concern. The Forest Service has proposed realigning the leach line to flow north, away from any streams and into an area where influence to the lake water would be negligible.

The Forest Service has also identified a need to increase the fire station's response capabilities so that it can contain and extinguish larger fires. For purposes of efficient project management they would like to combine the expansion project with the leach line relocation project. Consolidating the two actions into one project would also reduce operational disruptions from construction.

## **1.3 Relevant Legal and Statutory Authorities**

Several Federal laws, permits, licenses and policy requirements have directed, limited or guided the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and decision-making process of this Environmental Assessment (EA) and include the following as amended, updated, and/or superseded (all of which are incorporated by reference):

### ***Resource Management Plan***

Use and development of the area around Lake Casitas is governed by the 2011 RMP.

## **1.4 Scope**

The footprint of the Proposed Action includes the 4.2 acres at Lake Casitas in Ventura County which were covered by the original agreement between Reclamation and the Forest Service, plus additional adjacent land for a total of approximately 8 acres. The proposed improvements are considered to be permanent; once constructed, they would remain in place for the foreseeable future.

## **1.5 Resources of Potential Concern**

This EA will analyze the affected environment of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative in order to determine the potential direct and indirect impacts and cumulative effects to the following resources:

- Water Resources
- Land Use
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Indian Sacred Sites
- Indian Trusts Assets
- Air Quality
- Global Climate
- Noise
- Recreation

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## Section 2 Alternatives Considered

This EA considers two possible actions: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative reflects future conditions without the Proposed Action and serves as a basis of comparison for determining potential effects to the human environment.

### 2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, the fire station's septic system would remain in its current configuration. It would continue to cross the intermittent stream south of the station and discharge to the same forested area. The other proposed improvements to the fire station would not be completed. Firefighting capacity would remain as it currently exists, without facilities for additional helicopters or support equipment.

### 2.2 Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to allow a variety of improvements to the fire station located at Lake Casitas in Ventura County, California. The proposed improvements consist of:

- Sanitary Sewer Leach Line Relocation
- Decontamination Basin Site Preparation
- Additional Helipad Preparation
- 10,000 Gallon Water Tank Installation
- Emergency Equipment Station Installation
- Road, Fence and Gate Improvements
- Emergency Landing/Staging Area Clearing

The improvements are described in more detail below and are shown in Figure 2-1.

#### ***Sanitary Leach Line Relocation***

The Forest Service is proposing to relocate their sanitary sewer line and leach field. The new line would follow the existing driveway generally to the north and then turn to the northwest, where it would split into the new leach field as shown in Figure 2-1. Infiltration tests for the new leach field location have already been completed and demonstrated that Ventura County's septic installation standards could be met. Following installation of the new sanitary line and leach field, the roadway would be restored to its original state. The old line would be pumped out completely, capped off and buried in place.

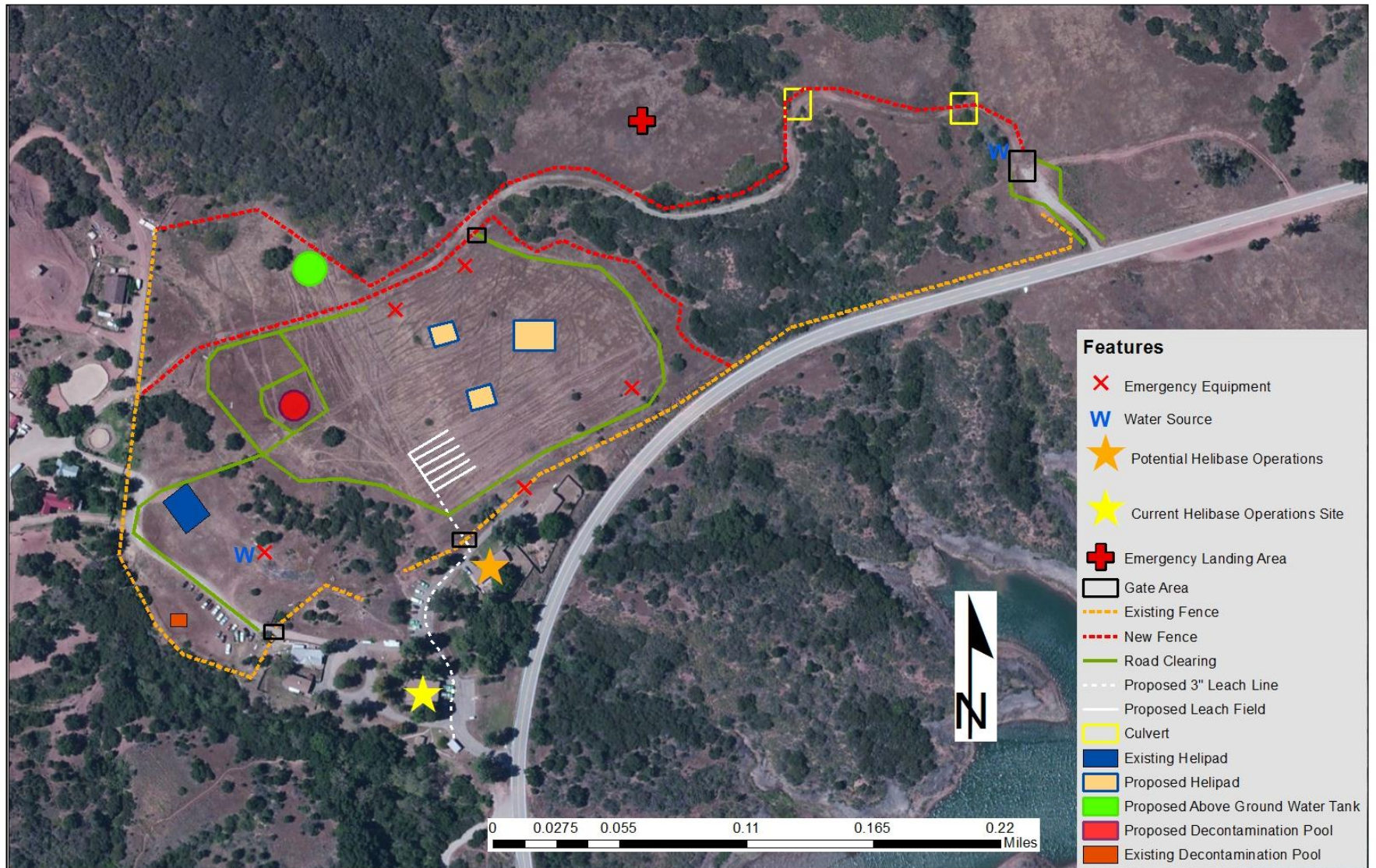


Figure 2-1 Proposed Improvements (Conceptual)

### ***Decontamination Basin Site Preparation***

A pad is proposed to support a portable basin to decontaminate firefighting equipment that is brought in from outside the area to limit the potential for invasive species to be introduced. The pad would be approximately 12 feet by 12 feet by 4 inches thick and would be composed of decomposed granite. No excavation would be necessary to install the pad, but the site would be compacted and graded prior to placing the pad material. The site is routinely cleared of vegetation with hand tools; no new large-scale clearing would be needed.

### ***Additional Helipad Preparation***

The Forest Service has proposed the addition of three additional helicopter pads, two of which would be 20 feet by 20 feet. The third would be designed for larger helicopters and would be 30 feet by 30 feet. The designated areas would be cleared of brush and other obstructions using hand tools. When fire operations require the additional landing areas, temporary landing guides would be placed in the center of the cleared area to guide pilots. No excavation would be necessary, but leveling and compaction may be needed to ensure drainage and stability.

### ***10,000 Gallon Water Tank Installation***

The Forest Service has proposed the addition of a 10,000 gallon water storage tank north (uphill) from the decontamination pool pad. The tank would be plastic and measure approximately 140 inches in diameter and 160 inches in height. The base would likely be compacted aggregate.

### ***Emergency Equipment Station Installation***

Stands for crash rescue equipment and portable lighting stations would be placed at each of the locations near the helipads marked with a red X in Figure 2-1.

### ***Road, Fence and Gate Improvements***

The existing secondary access road would be upgraded to handle traffic and fire crew equipment. The road base material would be restored and thickened, and drainage would be improved by regrading, installing new culverts and cleaning existing culverts. A widened area for vehicle turnaround would be added at the eastern gate, and internal circulation roads would also be cleared as shown in Figure 2-1.

To meet security requirements, the existing fence around the property would also be repaired and upgraded, and additional fencing would be installed as shown. Adjacent property owners have requested that the eastern gate be made automatic. This would require an extension of electrical service (overhead line with drop-pole) from Casitas Pass Road.

### ***Emergency Landing/Staging Area Clearing***

An emergency landing area and staging area for fire equipment is proposed to the northeast of the fire station and main helicopter landing area. The area has been used for training purposes in the past and is already heavily disturbed. Some clearing may be necessary to make the area suitable for aircraft or heavy vehicles.

## **2.2.1 Environmental Commitments**

The Forest Service shall implement the following environmental protection measures to reduce environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action (Table 2-1). Environmental

consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented. Copies of all reports shall be submitted to Reclamation.

**Table 2-1 Environmental Protection Measures and Commitments**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Protection Measure</b>
Biological	Before any construction activities begin on the proposed project, a Reclamation-approved biologist shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel about the California red-legged frog, its habitat, and the necessary measures to protect or avoid it on-site. Attendance sheets identifying attendees and the contractor/company they represent (with signatures confirming that they completed the training) will be provided to Reclamation.
Biological	A Reclamation approved biological monitor shall be on-site during all work that involves ground disturbance, culvert cleaning and installation, or clearing of vegetation. Before any of these activities occur, the biological monitor shall slowly walk the site of potential disturbance (including areas where heavy equipment or vehicles may operate) and adjacent lands within 25 feet of such areas, visually canvassing it for California red-legged frogs. If any litter, debris, or rocks could obscure a frog, the area shall be inspected. If a California red-legged frog is found in the action area, work on the project shall be postponed until a Reclamation biologist has been notified and has provided permission to continue (additional avoidance measures may be required prior to beginning work).
Biological	If the project is not completed before the onset of fall or winter rains, each morning following a night that has any measurable precipitation, before work begins, the on-site biologist shall examine the work site for California red-legged frog, including open pipes, and beneath vehicles. If a California red-legged frog is discovered, work shall not start; the biologist shall photograph the frog's dorsal side if possible. A Reclamation biologist shall be notified within 24 hours of the finding of a California red-legged frog at the project site, and provided with the photograph. Work shall not commence until additional measures have been determined by the Reclamation biologist.
Biological	To prevent the inadvertent entrapment of wildlife during construction, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials. If the holes or trenches cannot be closed, one or more escape ramps constructed of earthen-fill or wooden planks with a slope of 2:1 shall be installed. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they will be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. If at any time wildlife is found trapped or injured, Reclamation must be contacted immediately.
Biological	Construction shall not occur at nighttime.
Biological	If possible, work shall occur outside of the migratory bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31) to avoid take of nesting birds in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If work must occur during the breeding season, a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction nesting bird surveys in and within 500 feet of the project area. If nesting birds are found within 500 feet of the project area, Reclamation shall be contacted for further guidance prior to the commencement of work on the project.
Biological	If work must occur during the migratory bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31), no more than 15 days prior to the initiation of work on the project, a qualified biologist shall conduct surveys for ground-nesting birds, with an emphasis on the grasshopper sparrow, in and within 300 feet of all areas to be graded, excavated or cleared of vegetation. If an active nest is found, Reclamation shall be contacted for further guidance prior to the initiation of work on the project.
Biological	All project areas that have been cleared of vegetation shall be kept clear of vegetation to discourage future grasshopper sparrow nesting in these areas.
Biological	If the project will occur during the Least Bell's Vireo's nesting season (February 15- July 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey to determine if there are any active nests in the project area. If an active Least Bell's Vireo nest is found, a 500 foot buffer will be established around the nest and no work will be allowed within the buffer until the end of the nesting season or until a qualified biologist determines that the nesting cycle in that nest is complete.
Biological	Carcasses of medium to large mammals (deer, cattle, etc.) should be removed

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Protection Measure</b>
	from the action area immediately to discourage foraging by condors.
Biological	Project workers should avoid all interaction with condors and immediately report any condor sightings in the project area to Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
Biological	Project related vehicles shall exercise caution and observe a 20-mile per hour speed limit in the project area.
Biological	During project activities, all trash that may attract predators shall be properly contained, removed from the work site and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris should be removed from work areas.
Biological	All fueling and maintenance of vehicles and other equipment and staging areas shall occur at least 20 meters (65 feet) from any riparian habitat or water body. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.
Biological	The number of access routes, number and size of staging areas, and the total area of the activity shall be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project goal. Routes and boundaries shall be clearly demarcated.

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## Section 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This section identifies the potentially affected environment and the environmental consequences involved with the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, in addition to environmental trends and conditions that currently exist.

### 3.1 Water Resources

#### 3.1.1 Affected Environment

The predominant water body in the area is Lake Casitas, to the southeast (see Figure 3-1). The lake was developed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century for use as a drinking water reservoir by Casitas Municipal Water District. Since the lake's original construction, improvements have been added at the north end to provide opportunities for public recreation such as boating and fishing (see section 3.9). During certain times of year the Lake serves as a source of water for firefighting equipment such as helicopters and tanker trucks.

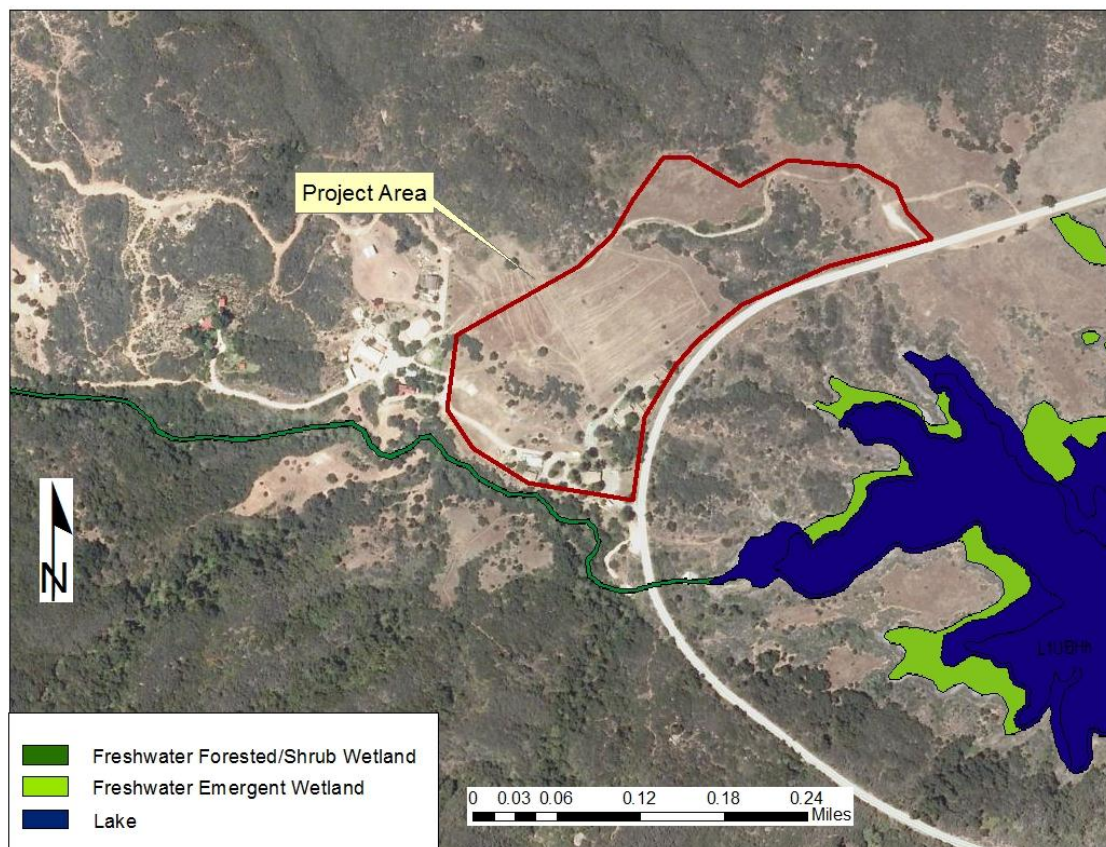


Figure 3-1 Mapped Wetlands and Waterways

Other minor waterways are also scattered throughout the area, characterized by intermittent or ephemeral flow. According to National Wetland Inventory maps, wetlands are present, mostly as lake fringe to the southeast of the fire station. A linear freshwater forested scrub/shrub feature is also located to the south of the Proposed Action area.

### **3.1.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***No Action***

Under the No Action Alternative, the septic system and leach line would remain in their current configuration. Water would continue to be drawn from Lake Casitas to fight forest fires on an as-needed basis, subject to the current facilities' capacity. Recreational and drinking water uses would be unaffected.

#### ***Proposed Action***

Relocating the sanitary line away from the intermittent stream that it currently crosses would provide an extra measure of water quality protection. The other upgrades to the fire station are not anticipated to either benefit or adversely affect current uses of the lake. Increased helicopter capacity would increase the rate at which water could be taken from the reservoir to fight fires, but the amount used is considered marginal on the scale of regional hydrology and use patterns.

#### ***Cumulative Impacts***

The Lake's primary uses are as a drinking water source and for recreation. While the fire station expansion would allow more water to be used from the Lake for firefighting purposes, the quantity needed would not meaningfully affect other uses. The cumulative effect of this action combined with others is not expected to create adverse impacts.

## **3.2 Land Use**

### **3.2.1 Affected Environment**

This part of Ventura County is rural and relatively undeveloped. Los Padres National Forest lies to the northwest of the project area, and Lake Casitas is to the southeast. A variety of recreational improvements are located at the northern end of the lake. These include campsites, picnic areas, a marina with boat ramps, biking/hiking trails, a water park and special event areas.

The project area itself is used seasonally by the Forest Service as a fire station. There is a pad for helicopters, a pad for a decontamination pool and a variety of buildings at the south end of the property. A large open area north and northeast of the buildings is used for fire training exercises.

### **3.2.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***No Action***

If no action is taken, the land use in the area would be unchanged. The septic system would remain in its current configuration and the fire station would remain at its current capacity.



### ***Proposed Action***

Under the Proposed Action, undeveloped land would be converted for use by the fire station. The following improvements would be implemented:

- Sanitary Sewer Leach Line Relocation
- Decontamination Basin Site Preparation
- Additional Helipad Preparation
- 10,000 Gallon Water Tank Installation
- Emergency Equipment Station Installation
- Road Improvements
- Fence and Gate Improvements
- Emergency Landing/Staging Area Clearing

The locations of each of these improvements are shown above in Figure 2-1. They are compatible with existing development and consistent with public expectations. No adverse impacts are anticipated.

Executive Order 11988 requires that all Federal agencies take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains, and to minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare. According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps, the project area is in Flood Hazard Zone X, meaning that the risk of flooding is low (FEMA 2010).

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

Development at Lake Casitas is governed by the RMP. The RMP ensures that the cumulative effects of separate and independent projects on the property are consistent with land use goals and public expectations.

## **3.3 Biological Resources**

### **3.3.1 Affected Environment**

#### ***Habitat in the Project Area***

The project area is located immediately northwest of Lake Casitas in Ventura County. A large portion of the project site consists of disturbed, disced, non-native grassland habitat with scattered trees and shrubs. There is an area of chaparral-coastal sage scrub habitat located in the northeastern portion of the project area, and a narrow band of oak woodland habitat that intersects the northwestern portion of the project area. There is an intermittent stream (that floods for less than 2 weeks in years of average rainfall) and oak and sycamore riparian woodland habitat that border the western edge of the project area. The Los Padres National Forest borders the northern edge of the project site and Coyote Creek is located about a ½ mile to the northeast of the project site. The Lake Casitas fire station, gravel parking area, and other associated buildings are located in the southwestern portion of the project site.

There is no designated or proposed critical habitat located in the project area.

### Special-Status Species

Reclamation requested an official species list from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on September 11, 2012 via the Sacramento field office's website, [http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/spp\\_list.htm](http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/spp_list.htm) (Document number: 120911020817). The list is for Ventura County. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was also queried for records of protected species within 10 miles of the proposed project location (CDFW 2013). The information collected above, in addition to information within Reclamation's files, was combined to create the following list (Table 3-1).

**Table 3-1 Federally Protected Species with the Potential to be Present in the Area**

Species	Status	Occurrence Potential in the Project Area
<b>Invertebrates</b>		
conservancy fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>	E, X	<b>Absent.</b> No individuals or vernal pools in the area of effect.
vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	T, X	<b>Absent.</b> No individuals, critical habitat or vernal pools in the area of effect.
valley elderberry longhorn beetle <i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	T	<b>Absent.</b> No individuals or elderberry shrubs in the area of effect.
<b>Amphibians</b>		
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	T,X	<b>Unlikely:</b> Presence of bullfrogs and predatory fish reduce the potential presence; however they may still disperse through the project area.
<b>Reptiles</b>		
Blunt-nosed Leopard Lizard <i>Gambelia sila</i>	E	<b>Absent:</b> No suitable habitat or individuals observed in or near the project area.
<b>Birds</b>		
Western snowy plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus</i>	X	<b>Absent:</b> No suitable habitat, critical habitat or individuals observed in or near the project area.
California Condor <i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	E	<b>Unlikely:</b> Some marginally suitable foraging habitat within the project area, and sightings within 7 miles, but not expected to occur here due to frequent disturbances.
Grasshopper sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	MBTA	<b>Present:</b> Suitable habitat located in and near the project area. Individuals observed during 2003-2005 surveys (Reclamation 2010).
white-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	MBTA	<b>Present:</b> Suitable habitat located in and near the project area. Breeding individuals observed during 2003-2005 surveys (Reclamation 2010).
Least Bell's vireo <i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	E, MBTA	<b>Unlikely:</b> No nesting habitat is present in the action area, but this species may forage there. Historical CNDDDB record from 1919 (CNDDDB 2013).
<b>Mammals</b>		
Giant kangaroo rat <i>Dipodomys ingens</i>	E	<b>Absent:</b> No suitable habitat or individuals observed in or near the project area.
Buena Vista Lake shrew <i>Sorex ornatus relictus</i>	E	<b>Absent:</b> No suitable habitat or individuals observed in or near the project area.

San Joaquin kit fox <i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	E	<b>Absent:</b> No suitable habitat or recorded occurrences near the project area.
<b>Plants</b>		
California jewelflower <i>Caulanthus californicus</i>	E	<b>Absent.</b> No individuals or suitable soils in the area of effect.
<p>Sources: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sacramento Database 2013, CNDDDB 2013</p> <p>Status = Listing of Federally special status species, unless otherwise indicated</p> <p>E: Listed as Endangered</p> <p>MBTA: birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act</p> <p>NMFS: Species under the jurisdiction of the National Oceanic &amp; Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service</p> <p>T: Listed as Threatened</p> <p>X: Critical Habitat designated for this species</p> <p>Definition of Occurrence Indicators</p> <p>Present: Species observed in the project area</p> <p>Possible: Species reported in area and habitat present</p> <p>Unlikely: Species recorded in vicinity of project area, but lands provide unsuitable habitat</p> <p>Absent: Species not reported from service area and/or habitat requirements not met</p>		

### **Special-Status Plants**

One special-status plant with the potential to occur near the project area is listed in Table 3-1. This plant species has not been observed within or near the project area.

### **Special-Status Wildlife**

Many of the special-status wildlife species, listed in Table 3-1, have no potential to be present in the project area due to a lack of suitable habitat. Federally protected species with the potential to occur in the project area include the California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), the least bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and the California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*).

**California Red-Legged Frog** The California red-legged frog is federally listed as a threatened species. Their diet consists mainly of invertebrates, but larger red-legged frogs also eat small amphibians and mammals. Red-legged frogs live near standing or slow moving waters of ponds, streams, marshes, stock ponds or reservoirs. They require the shelter of tall grasses, cattails, downed trees, leaf litter or small animal burrows to protect them from predators and desiccation (AFWO 2011). Although shrubs, cattails and grasses provide optimal habitat, red-legged frogs have also been found in areas with no vegetation at all. They have been known to travel up to two miles in response to changing water levels and precipitation (USFWS 2005). Primary reasons for the species decline include predation, pesticide use and habitat loss (AFWO 2011).

There are CNDDDB-recorded occurrences of California red-legged frogs within 6 miles of the project site. The nearest CNDDDB-recorded occurrences of this species were from 2001 and 2003, and occurred in year-round streams to the east of Lake Casitas (CNDDDB 2013). No California red-legged frogs were observed during focused protocol surveys conducted near the project site in 2003 and 2004 (Reclamation 2011). Although there are some temporarily flooded freshwater marsh and riparian habitats located within one mile of the project site that may provide suitable habitat for this species, it is unlikely that they will occur here due to the presence of non-native predators like largemouth bass, crayfish and bullfrogs. There is a temporarily flooded stream with riparian woodland habitat bordering the western edge of the project site that may provide suitable habitat for this species, but this area only contains water for

two weeks or less during seasons of normal rainfall, and has likely remained dry during the current drought. The project site itself contains developed areas, disturbed non-native grasslands, and chaparral-coastal sage scrub habitats that possess little habitat value for red-legged frogs. Although this species rarely leaves riparian areas, on rainy nights they have been known to disperse up to one mile from aquatic habitat without regard for topography or vegetation type (Bulger et al. 2003). Although it is unlikely, there is a potential for California red-legged frogs to disperse through the project area. With the implementation of the provided avoidance measures, Reclamation has determined there would be *No Effect* to the California red-legged frog.

**Grasshopper Sparrow** The grasshopper sparrow is protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA, 16 U.S.C § 703 et seq.). This species inhabits foothills, native or non-native grasslands, and openings in coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats. This species forages on the ground for insects, other invertebrates and small seeds. The grasshopper sparrow builds its nest out of forbs and grasses in a slight depression in the ground that is usually hidden by overhanging clumps of grass. Summer residents typically arrive between March and May and migrate south in August or September (Dobkin and Granholm 2008).

The grasshopper sparrow is known to occur near the project area. The 2011 Lake Casitas RMP identifies land in the project area as important habitat for this species (Reclamation 2011). The project area is subjected to noise disturbances from helicopter operation, which may discourage birds from nesting there. Large amounts of high quality nesting and foraging habitat for this species occur in the open space lands to the north of the project area, which may further reduce the likelihood that grasshopper sparrows will nest in the project area. Although the project area is disturbed, there is still a potential for grasshopper sparrows to nest in the non-native grassland or chaparral-coastal sage scrub habitats that occur there. If work on the project must occur during the nesting season, the absence of grasshopper sparrow nests shall be confirmed by a qualified biologist prior to the commencement of any ground disturbing activities or vegetation clearing. After areas have been cleared, they shall remain clear of vegetation to discourage future grasshopper sparrow nesting in these areas. With the incorporation of the provided avoidance measures, Reclamation has determined there would be *No Take* of grasshopper sparrows.

**White-Tailed Kite** The white-tailed kite is protected under the federal MBTA (16 U.S.C. §703 et seq.). This species is present year-round throughout its range in California. White-tailed kites usually nest in oak woodlands or trees that border marshes; however this species may build its nest near the top of any tree or shrub of moderate height, such as eucalyptus, toyon or cottonwood. White-tailed kites nest between February and August, with peak nesting occurring in the spring months. The female lays 3-6 eggs and incubates them for about 28 days. The male feeds the female and the young. The young leave the nest in about 35 to 40 days. This species diet consists of insects, amphibians and small rodents. White-tailed kites forage in agricultural fields and open areas, where they can hover and vertically descend on their prey (CDFG 1995). The white-tailed kite is known to occur near the project area. The 2011 Lake Casitas RMP identifies land in the project area as important habitat for this species. Two white-tailed kite nests were discovered within 3 miles of the project site during birds surveys conducted between 2004 and 2006 (Reclamation 2011). The project area is subjected to high-decibel noise

disturbances from helicopter operation, which may discourage birds from nesting there. Large amounts of high quality nesting and foraging habitat occur in the open space lands to the north of the project site, which may further reduce the likelihood that white-tailed kites will nest in the project area. The project area contains suitable habitat for this species, and although it is disturbed, there is still a potential for white-tailed kites to nest there. If work on the project must occur during the breeding season, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting white-tailed kites in and within 500 feet of the project area. If an active white-tailed kite nest is found during the survey, Reclamation must be contacted for further guidance prior to the commencement of any work on the project. With the implementation of the provided avoidance measures, Reclamation has determined there would be *No Take* of white-tailed kites.

**Least Bell's Vireo** The least Bell's vireo is federally listed as an endangered species. Their diet consists primarily of insects. The least Bell's vireo nests in densely vegetated riparian habitats with abundant understory vegetation and forages for food in nearby chaparral and riparian scrub habitats. They usually nest in willows, but may also nest in a variety of other shrubs, vines or trees. The least Bell's vireo is a migratory bird that stays in the area from March to late August and winters in Mexico. Primary reasons for the species decline include habitat loss and brood parasitism by the brown-headed cowbird (USFWS 1986).

There is a CNDDDB-recorded occurrence of the least bell's vireo from 1919 about 4 miles to the south of the project site. Although there are some riparian areas adjacent to the project site, these areas do not have sufficient vegetative cover to support nesting least bell's vireos (Reclamation 2011). The project site contains some chaparral-coastal sage scrub habitat that could provide foraging habitat for least Bell's vireos; however it is unlikely that they will occur here due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat in the area. With the implementation of the provided avoidance measures, Reclamation has determined there would be *No Take* of the least bell's vireo and *No Effect* to the least bell's vireo.

**California Condor** The California condor is federally listed as an endangered species. They are opportunistic feeders with a diet consisting solely of animal carcasses. California condors find their food by sight instead of smell and may travel up to 150 miles from their nests in search of food. They forage in open areas like foothill grassland and oak savannah habitats. California condors select nest sites between December and spring and generally nest in rock crevices and under rock ledges. Condors lay one egg between late January and early April, which typically hatches in about 56 days. It is uncertain what the primary reasons are for the species decline, but research suggests that lead poisoning may account for a large portion of California condor fatalities (USFWS 1996).

There are CNDDDB-recorded occurrences of California condors about 7 miles from the project site. There is no suitable nesting habitat in, or directly adjacent to the project site. Although there are some disturbed non-native grasslands in the northeastern portion of the project site that may provide suitable foraging habitat for this species, it is unlikely that California condors will occur there due to frequent human disturbances from traffic, daily fire station operations and nearby recreational activities. This species is not expected to occur in the project area. With the implementation of the provided avoidance measures, Reclamation has determined there would be *No Effect* to the California condor.

### 3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

#### **No Action**

There would be no adverse impacts to biological resources with the No Action Alternative.

#### **Proposed Action**

As described in Table 3-1, a majority of the special-status plants and animals would most likely not occur within the project area. Special-status species with the potential to occur in the project area include the California red-legged frog, grasshopper sparrow, white-tailed kite, least Bell's vireo, and the California condor. The project area contains disturbed non-native grasslands, oak woodland, and chaparral-coastal sage scrub habitats. The proposed project would cause some temporary ground disturbances, removal of vegetation and generation of noise and would occur intermittently over a period of three weeks. The project area is currently subjected to frequent disturbances from the operation of the fire station, and the proposed project would not substantially alter the baseline conditions of the area. Because the ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project could potentially impact California-red legged frogs if any are present during construction, the absence of California red-legged frogs would be confirmed prior to the initiation of construction to avoid all impacts to the species. If vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities are conducted during the bird nesting season (February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist would conduct pre-construction surveys to ensure that there are no impacts to nesting birds protected under the MBTA. With the implementation of the provided avoidance measures (Table 2-1), Reclamation has determined there would be *No Effect* to proposed or listed species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended (916 U.S.C. §1531 et seq.), and *No Take* of birds protected under the MBTA (16 U.S.C. §703 et seq.) would occur.

#### **Cumulative Impacts**

Development at Lake Casitas is governed by the RMP, which ensures that the cumulative impacts of separate and independent projects on the property are consistent with land use goals and public expectations.

The Recreation Area's bait shop concessionaire has proposed demolishing and reconstructing their pre-fabricated building, located to the east of the project area. Reclamation analyzed the effects of this action and determined that it would not affect federally listed species nor result in the take of birds protected under the MBTA. The cumulative effects of the action considered in this document combined with other actions in the area are not expected to cause adverse impacts to special-status species and migratory birds beyond the effects that have been assessed for each individual action.

### 3.4 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources is a broad term that includes prehistoric, historic, architectural, and traditional cultural properties. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 is the primary Federal legislation that outlines the Federal Government's responsibility to cultural resources. Section 106 of the NHPA requires the Federal Government to take into consideration the effects of an undertaking on cultural resources listed on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register

of Historic Places (National Register). Those resources that are on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register are referred to as historic properties.

The Section 106 process is outlined in the Federal regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. These regulations describe the process that the Federal agency (Reclamation) takes to identify cultural resources and the level of effect that the proposed undertaking will have on historic properties. In summary, Reclamation must first determine if the action is the type of action that has the potential to affect historic properties. If the action is the type of action to affect historic properties, Reclamation must identify the area of potential effects (APE), determine if historic properties are present within that APE, determine the effect that the undertaking will have on historic properties, and consult with the State Historic Preservation Office, to seek concurrence on Reclamation's findings. In addition, Reclamation is required through the Section 106 process to consult with Indian Tribes concerning the identification of sites of religious or cultural significance, and consult with individuals or groups who are entitled to be consulting parties or have requested to be consulting parties.

#### **3.4.1 Affected Environment**

The Los Padres National Forest (Forest Service) is the lead agency for NHPA Section 106 compliance for the proposed Lake Casitas Fire Station Upgrades Project. The Forest Service is implementing their *2013 Regional Programmatic Agreement among the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, California State Historic Preservation Officer, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding the Process for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Undertakings on the National Forests of the Pacific Southwest Regions* (Forest Service PA) to fulfill Section 106 requirements for this project.

Reclamation and Forest Service archaeologists conducted a records search, a cultural resources survey, and Tribal consultation in an effort to identify historic properties within the project area. No historic properties were identified within the project area. Reclamation documented these identification efforts in a report, which was submitted to the Forest Service for review. The Forest Service accepted the documentation, which met the Section 106 obligations for this undertaking under 4.2(a)(1) and 7.8(a) of the Forest Service PA and thereby concluded the Section 106 process in a letter dated December 19, 2013.

#### **3.4.2 Environmental Consequences**

##### ***No Action***

Under the no action alternative, there would be no impacts on cultural resources because the proposed improvements would not be constructed, and there would be no change in operations. Conditions related to cultural resources would remain the same as existing conditions.

##### ***Proposed Action***

The Proposed Action is the type of activity that has the potential to affect historic properties. A records search, a cultural resources survey, and Tribal consultation did not identify historic properties within the APE. Since no historic properties would be affected, Reclamation concluded that no cultural resources would be impacted as a result of implementing the Proposed

Action. The Forest Service accepted Reclamations' findings and conclusions and completed the Section 106 process for this undertaking under 4.2(a)(1) and 7.8(a) of their Forest Service PA.

***Cumulative Impacts***

The Proposed Action is of a type that has the potential to affect historic properties, but none were identified in the project area. Reclamation therefore concluded that no historic properties would be affected, and no cumulative impacts on cultural resources are expected.

## **3.5 Socioeconomic Resources**

### **3.5.1 Affected Environment**

The project is located in Ventura County, California. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the County was approximately 831,771 in 2011, and the median annual income was \$75,348 (Census Bureau 2012).

### **3.5.2 Environmental Consequences**

***No Action***

If no action is taken, the socioeconomic conditions of the area would be unchanged.

***Proposed Action***

The Proposed Action does not involve major development which would alter employment or economic conditions in the area. Improving the fire station's capacity to respond to fires would be expected to reduce loss of property and life, which is a benefit.

***Cumulative Impacts***

Improved fire response capacity is expected to be a benefit to the area. No cumulative adverse impacts are anticipated.

## **3.6 Air Quality**

Section 176 (C) of the Clean Air Act [CAA] (42 U.S.C. 7506 (C)) requires any entity of the federal government that engages in, supports, or in any way provides financial support for, licenses or permits, or approves any activity to demonstrate that the action conforms to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP) required under Section 110 (a) of the Federal CAA (42 U.S.C. 7401 [a]) before the action is otherwise approved. In this context, conformity means that such federal actions must be consistent with SIP's purpose of eliminating or reducing the severity and number of violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and achieving expeditious attainment of those standards. Each federal agency must determine that any action that is proposed by the agency and that is subject to the regulations implementing the conformity requirements would, in fact conform to the applicable SIP before the action is taken.

On November 30, 1993, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated final general conformity regulations at 40 CFR 93 Subpart B for all federal activities except those covered under transportation conformity. The general conformity regulations apply to a proposed federal action in a non-attainment or maintenance area if the total of direct and indirect emissions of the relevant criteria pollutants and precursor pollutant caused by the Proposed Action equal or



exceed certain *de minimis* amounts thus requiring the federal agency to make a determination of general conformity.

### 3.6.1 Affected Environment

The Proposed Action area lies within the South Central Coast Air Basin under the jurisdiction of the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD). The pollutants of greatest concern in Ventura County are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The air basin has reached Federal and State attainment status for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrous oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). See Table 3-2, below.

**Table 3-2 Ventura County Attainment Status**

Pollutant	California Attainment Status	National Attainment Status
O <sub>3</sub>	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
CO	Attainment	Attainment
NO <sub>2</sub>	Attainment	Attainment
SO <sub>2</sub>	Attainment	Attainment
PM <sub>10</sub>	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Source: VCAPCD 2006		

The RMP for the Recreation Area included an analysis of air quality impacts from road vehicles and boats, which is provided below in Table 3-3. Offroad vehicles are not currently allowed at the recreational area.

**Table 3-3 Future Vehicle and Boat Emissions in 2030**

	ROG	CO	NO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	SO <sub>2</sub>	CO <sub>2</sub>
Road Vehicle Emissions (ton/yr)	1.78	12.39	0.93	0.37	0.222	0.039	4028.69
Boat Emissions	2.72	3.49	0.46	0.98	N/A	0.002	107.23
Total	4.49	15.88	1.39	1.35	0.222	0.040	4135.92
General Conformity Rule De Minimis Thresholds	25	N/A	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Source: Emissions Data from Lake Casitas RMP, pp. 4-10							
Thresholds from Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (Ventura County 2003)							
ROG = Reactive Organic Gases							

### 3.6.2 Environmental Consequences

#### **No Action**

If no action were taken, there would be no additional construction and no operational changes at the fire station. Therefore there would be no change to air quality.

#### **Proposed Action**

Construction is expected to take place intermittently over approximately three weeks, with equipment operated an average of four hours per day. The equipment to be used would be a trencher, a backhoe and a dump truck. As shown in Table 3-4, estimated emissions from construction are anticipated to be below *de minimis* thresholds for air quality impacts.

**Table 3-4 Estimated Construction Emissions**

Equipment Type	ROG, lb/hr	NO <sub>x</sub> , lb/hr	PM <sub>10/2.5</sub> , lb/hr	CO, lb/hr
Trencher	0.1507	0.4749	0.0582	0.4749
Backhoe	0.0862	0.5816	0.0435	0.3824
Dump truck	0.0100	0.0614	0.0031	0.0324
Total per hour of operation	0.2469	1.1179	0.1048	0.8897
Total per day	0.9876	4.4716	0.4192	3.5588
Total for entire project	14.814	67.074	6.288	53.382
De minimis threshold (lb/yr)	50,000	50,000	N/A	N/A
Source: Emissions data calculated from OFFROAD 2007 emission factors (CARB 2007)				
Thresholds from Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (Ventura County 2003)				

Operating firefighting equipment such as trucks and aircraft produces emissions of criteria pollutants similar to other mobile sources of the same type. In addition, gusts from helicopters landing and taking off can produce dust clouds which are localized and temporary.

Emissions from fire station operations depend on the number and type of equipment in use, which is dictated by size and frequency of fires. The location, frequency and size of future fires cannot be precisely predicted; therefore, any quantification of emissions from fire response would be speculative. It is reasonable to expect, however, that with expanded facilities the emissions from equipment operation would increase.

Forest fires produce a range of air pollutants, including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides (COEHHA 2008). Left uncontrolled, they can seriously degrade air quality in the immediate area as well as downwind. The size and location of future fires cannot be known with any certainty, but it is reasonable to expect that improved firefighting capacity at the fire station would result in shorter fires with reduced emissions. This benefit is expected to far outweigh additional vehicle operational emissions from the Proposed Action.

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

Since the purpose of the project is to improve control over a source of air pollution (forest fires), the cumulative effect of the action considered with other air pollution sources is expected to be positive.

## **3.7 Global Climate**

Climate change refers to significant change in measures of climate (e.g., temperature, precipitation, or wind) lasting for decades or longer. Many environmental changes can contribute to climate change [changes in sun's intensity, changes in ocean circulation, deforestation, urbanization, burning fossil fuels, etc.] (EPA 2011a).

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often called greenhouse gases (GHG). Some GHG, such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), occur naturally and are emitted to the atmosphere through natural processes and human activities. Other GHG (e.g., fluorinated gases) are created and emitted solely through human activities. The principal GHG that enter the atmosphere because of human activities are: CO<sub>2</sub>, methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gasses (EPA 2011a).

During the past century humans have substantially added to the amount of GHG in the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, oil and gasoline to power our cars, factories, utilities and appliances. The added gases, primarily CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub>, are enhancing the natural greenhouse effect, and likely contributing to an increase in global average temperature and related climate changes. At present, there are uncertainties associated with the science of climate change (EPA 2011b).

Climate change has only recently been widely recognized as an imminent threat to the global climate, economy, and population. As a result, the national, state, and local climate change regulatory setting is complex and evolving.

In 2006, the State of California issued the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, widely known as Assembly Bill 32, which requires California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop and enforce regulations for the reporting and verification of statewide GHG emissions. CARB is further directed to set a GHG emission limit, based on 1990 levels, to be achieved by 2020.

In addition, the EPA has issued regulatory actions under the CAA as well as other statutory authorities to address climate change issues (EPA 2011c). In 2009, the EPA issued a rule (40 CFR Part 98) for mandatory reporting of GHG by large source emitters and suppliers that emit 25,000 metric tons or more of GHG [as CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents (CO<sub>2e</sub>) per year] (EPA 2009). The rule is intended to collect accurate and timely emissions data to guide future policy decisions on climate change and has undergone and is still undergoing revisions (EPA 2011c).

### **3.7.1 Affected Environment**

Global mean surface temperatures have increased nearly 1.8°F from 1890 to 2006 (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007). Models indicate that average temperature changes are likely to be greater in the northern hemisphere. Northern latitudes (above 24°North) have exhibited temperature increases of nearly 2.1°F since 1900, with nearly a 1.8°F increase since 1970 alone (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007). Without additional meteorological monitoring systems, it is difficult to determine the spatial and temporal variability and change of climatic conditions, but increasing concentrations of GHG are likely to accelerate the rate of climate change.

While there is general consensus in their trend, the magnitudes and onset-timing of impacts are uncertain and are scenario-dependent (Anderson et al. 2008).

### **3.7.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***No Action***

If no action were taken, there would be no additional construction and no operational changes at the fire station. Therefore there would be no change in GHG emission trends.

#### ***Proposed Action***

Construction is expected to take place intermittently over approximately three weeks, with equipment operated an average of four hours per day. The equipment to be used would be a

trencher, a backhoe and a dump truck. As shown in Table 3-5, estimated emissions from construction are anticipated to be below the *de minimis* threshold for GHG emissions.

**Table 3-5 Construction Emissions, CO<sub>2</sub> Equivalents**

Equipment Type	CO <sub>2</sub> , lb/hr	Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ), lb/hr	Nitrous Oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O), lb/hr	All Emissions
Trencher	58.7	0.0136	0.6995	
Backhoe	66.8	0.0078	0.5816	
Dump Truck	7.6	0.0009	0.0614	
CO <sub>2</sub> equivalence	1	21	310	
Total CO <sub>2</sub> e, lb/hr of operation	133	0.468	416	550
Total CO <sub>2</sub> e per year (short tons)	3,727	13	11,653	15,393
De minimis threshold (short tons)				27,558
Emissions data calculated from OFFROAD 2007 emission factors (CARB 2007).				

Operating firefighting equipment such as trucks and aircraft produces emissions of GHG similar to other mobile sources of the same type. Emissions from fire station operations depend on the number and type of equipment in use, which is dictated by size and frequency of fires. The location, frequency and size of future fires cannot be precisely predicted; therefore any quantification of emissions from fire response would be speculative. It is reasonable to expect, however, that with expanded facilities the emissions from equipment operation would increase.

Forest fires produce a range of air pollutants, including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen (COEHHA 2008). The size and location of future fires cannot be known with any certainty, but it is reasonable to expect that improved firefighting capacity at the fire station would result in shorter fires with reduced emissions. This benefit is expected to far outweigh additional vehicle operational emissions from the Proposed Action.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

Since the purpose of the project is to improve control over a source of GHG emissions (forest fires), the cumulative effect of the action considered with other sources with respect to global climate change is expected to be positive.

## **3.8 Noise**

### **3.8.1 Affected Environment**

The character of the project area is rural and relatively undeveloped. Sources of noise are typical for this type of recreational property, ranging from human activities such as boating and flying remote-controlled airplanes to natural sounds such as birds and frogs. In addition, fire operations create short-term and temporary increases in noise at various times during the fire season.

### **3.8.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### **No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, the noise environment would be unchanged.

***Proposed Action***

Under the Proposed Action, noise from recreational activities would be unchanged, and noise from natural sources should be similar to current levels. Expansion of the fire station would be expected to result in greater noise during fire control operations, since more vehicles could operate from the facility.

Federal Aviation Administration studies of aviation noise have shown that public tolerance of noise from emergency service aircraft is very high (Federal Aviation Administration 2004). While noise from these types of vehicles is an inconvenience, the public recognizes the noise as an acceptable consequence of providing a vital community service. The Proposed Action is not expected to change this public acceptance.

***Cumulative Impacts***

The Recreation Area's bait shop concessionaire has proposed demolishing and reconstructing their prefabricated building, which was originally placed on the property in 1969. Reclamation prepared a Categorical Exclusion Checklist (12-063) for that action, which is separate and independent from the proposed fire station improvements. The two actions are not located in the same area, and they are not anticipated to have cumulative noise impacts beyond the impacts of each individual project.

### **3.9 Recreation**

Recreational use of the property is governed by the RMP, which was developed through consultation with resource agency stakeholders and the public. The goal of the RMP is to ensure that improvements and recreation on the property remain consistent with the original purpose of the project and do not interfere with lake operations. In accordance with the RMP, Lake Casitas offers a variety of recreational opportunities, including:

- Boating
- Fishing
- Camping
- Picnicking
- Hiking
- Biking
- Horse Riding
- Radio Controlled Plane Operation

In addition, organized educational and special events take place regularly at the Lake, including:

- Nature Walks
- Bird Watching
- Wildlife Tours
- Water Tours
- Kids Fishing Day
- Center for Earth Concerns
- Renaissance Festivals

- Ojai Wine Festival
- Pirate Faire

Body contact uses such as swimming and water skiing are not allowed since the reservoir is used for drinking water. Annual usage data for the Recreation Area are presented in Table 3-6.

**Table 3-6 Annual Usage Data for the Lake Casitas Recreation Area**

Year	Visitors	Vehicles	Boats
1997	762,710	190,461	40,499
1998	729,449	192,810	36,181
1999	767,449	192,810	36,181
2000	721,931	180,482	31,262
2001	704,728	176,185	28,558
2002	737,428	184,267	29,073
2003	727,766	181,851	28,561
2004	691,148	171,763	24,117
2005	766,876	191,719	26,533
2006	773,925	192,518	26,680
Source: Carol Isles, Lake Casitas Recreation Area Administrator/Record-keeper; as presented in the RMP			

### ***No Action***

If no action were taken, current recreational opportunities at the lake would continue to be available. Users of the recreational area would experience temporary and short-term inconveniences associated with occasional operations at the fire station. These could include emergency vehicle traffic on shared roadways, noise from vehicles and sirens, and/or restrictions on use of the property during emergencies. These inconveniences are generally seen by the public as a necessary and acceptable part of emergency response services.

### ***Proposed Action***

Under the Proposed Action, recreational facilities on the property would not be modified. The fire station would remain in its current location, with increased firefighting capacity. This could increase the intensity of short-term, temporary inconveniences such as noise, emergency vehicle traffic and restrictions on recreation. However, with greater capacity, the Forest Service should be able to extinguish fires more quickly and reduce the duration of these inconveniences.

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

The Recreation Area's bait shop concessionaire has proposed demolishing and reconstructing their prefabricated building, which was originally placed on the property in 1969. Reclamation prepared a Categorical Exclusion Checklist for that action (CEC 12-063), which is separate and independent from the proposed fire station improvements. The two actions are not anticipated to have cumulative impacts on recreation beyond the impacts of each individual project.

## **3.10 Resources Eliminated from Further Analysis**

Reclamation analyzed the affected environment of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative and has determined that there is no potential for direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to the following resources:

**Indian Sacred Sites**

No sacred sites were identified during the cultural resource inventory investigation. Therefore, there will be no impact to sacred sites as a result of this project and no management of access for ceremonial events and no additional avoidance constraints.

**Indian Trust Assets**

No impact to ITA would occur under the No Action Alternative as conditions would remain the same as existing conditions. Reclamation determined on August 21, 2012 that the Proposed Action would also not impact ITA. See Appendix A.

**Environmental Justice**

The Proposed Action does not propose any features that would result in adverse human health or environmental effects, have any physical effects on minority or low-income populations, and/or alter socioeconomic conditions of populations that reside or work in the vicinity of the Proposed Action.

## **Section 4 Consultation and Coordination**

### **4.1 Public Review Period**

Reclamation intends to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft Finding of No Significant Impact and Draft EA between February 10 and March 12, 2014.

### **4.2 Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.)**

Section 7 of the ESA requires Federal agencies, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and/or Commerce, to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species.

There is a low potential for the endangered California red-legged frog to occur within the project area; however with the implementation of the provided avoidance measures (Table 2-1), the Proposed Action would have No Effect on the species. Consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is not required because the Proposed Action would have No Effect to listed species.

### **4.3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.)**

The MBTA implements various treaties and conventions between the United States and Canada, Japan, Mexico and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Unless permitted by regulations, the Act provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture or kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer to or sell, barter, purchase, deliver or cause to be shipped, exported, imported, transported, carried or received any migratory bird, part, nest, egg or product, manufactured or not. Subject to limitations in the Act, the Secretary of the Interior may adopt regulations determining the extent to which, if at all, hunting, taking, capturing, killing, possessing, selling, purchasing, shipping, transporting or exporting of any migratory bird, part, nest or egg will be allowed, having regard for temperature zones, distribution, abundance, economic value, breeding habits and migratory flight patterns.

Migratory birds may nest or forage in the project area; however pre-construction surveys would be conducted during the nesting season and avoidance measures would be implemented to ensure that no migratory birds are impacted by the Proposed Action.



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## Section 6 Acronyms and Abbreviations

Act	Reclamation Development Act
APE	Area of Potential Effect
CAA	Clean Air Act
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
COEHHA	California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CVP	Central Valley Project
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Forest Service PA	Forest Service Programmatic Agreement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
GHG	Greenhouse gases
ITA	Indian Trust Asset
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
National Register	National Register of Historic Places
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PM <sub>10</sub>	Particulate matter between 2.5 and 10 microns in diameter
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SWP	State Water Project
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
VCAPCD	Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

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## **Appendix A    Forest Service Fire Station Agreement and Location**

## **Appendix B    Indian Trust Assets Determination**

## **Appendix C     Cultural Resources Determination**