3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This chapter describes the environment that would be affected by the development of the Proposed Action and the alternatives analyzed in this EIS. The baseline information summarized in this chapter was obtained from published and unpublished materials; interviews with local, state, and federal agencies; and from field and laboratory studies conducted in the project area. The affected environment for individual resources was delineated based on the area of potential direct and indirect environmental impacts for the proposed project. For resources such as soils and vegetation, the affected area was determined to be the physical location and immediate vicinity of the areas of proposed new disturbance associated with the proposed project. For other resources such as water quality, air quality, wildlife, social and economic values, and the transport of hazardous materials, the affected environment was more extensive (e.g., airshed, local communities, etc.).

This chapter also describes the anticipated direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Action and the alternatives as well as potential cumulative impacts. The analysis of potential impacts from the Proposed Action assumed the implementation of the applicant-committed environmental protection measures that would be implemented in association with the proposed project (Section 2.5, Applicant-committed Environmental Protection Measures). Monitoring and mitigation measures developed in response to anticipated impacts are recommended by the BLM for individual resources, as discussed at the end of each resource section. This chapter also identifies residual adverse impacts, which are the impacts that would remain after mitigation measures have been implemented.

The proposed project may result in cumulative effects associated with other past and present actions and RFFAs in the area (Section 2.8, Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions). For resources where project-specific impacts are identified, the cumulative effects associated with the proposed project were evaluated together with other past and present actions and RFFAs. The period of potential cumulative impact is defined as the approximate 34-year life of the project including construction, operation, and reclamation phases. The cumulative effects analysis for each resource addresses the potential cumulative effects within each resource-specific cumulative effects study area.

This chapter is organized by environmental resource. Sections 3.1 through 3.16 describe the existing conditions and potential environmental impacts associated with each resource. The short-term use of the environment relative to the long-term productivity of resources is discussed in Section 3.17. Unless otherwise noted on a resource-specific basis, short-term is defined as the 24-year construction and operational life of the project and a 10-year reclamation period; long-term impacts are defined as impacts that would continue post-reclamation (i.e., beyond 34 years). The irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources is described in Section 3.18. Energy requirements of the proposed project, including the production of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is presented in Section 3.19.

To comply with NEPA, and in accordance with the BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) (2008a) and with further guidance provided in IM No. NV-2009-030, the BLM is required to address specific elements of the human environment that are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation, or Executive Order (EO) (i.e., supplemental authorities). **Table 3.0-1** lists the supplemental authorities that must be addressed in all environmental analyses, as well as other resources deemed appropriate for evaluation by the BLM, and denotes if the Proposed Action or No Action Alternative affects those elements. Other resources of the human environment that have been considered for this EIS are listed in **Table 3.0-2**. Elements that may be affected are further described in the EIS. Rationale for those elements that would not be affected by the Proposed Action and the alternatives also are listed in **Table 3.0-2**.

Table 3.0-1 Supplemental Authorities to be Considered

Supplemental Authority[1]	Not Present[2]	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected[3]	Rationale
Air Quality			X	Section 3.10.
Area of Critical Environmental Concern	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Cultural/Historical			X	Section 3.8.
Environmental Justice			X	Section 3.15.
Farmlands Prime or Unique	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Noxious Weeds/Invasive Non-native Species			X	Section 3.4.
Native American Religious Concerns			X	Section 3.9.
Floodplains	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Riparian/Wetlands			X	Sections 3.2 and 3.4.
Threatened, Endangered Species			X	Sections 3.4 and 3.5.
Migratory Birds			X	Section 3.5.
Waste – Hazardous/Solid			X	Section 3.16.
Water Quality			X	Section 3.2.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Wilderness			X	Section 3.12.
Forests and Rangelands (Healthy Forests Restoration Act only)	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.

Table 3.0-1 Supplemental Authorities to be Considered

Supplemental Authority[1]	Not Present[2]	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected[3]	Rationale
Human Health and Safety			X	Under EO 13045, children are protected from environmental health and human safety risks. In accordance with EO 13045, the Proposed Action would not use pesticides or herbicides in locations where children would be exposed. Therefore, the Proposed Action poses no health and human safety risk as it relates to EO 13045, and health and human safety is not addressed further in this EIS.

[1] See H-1790-1 (January 2008) Appendix 1 Supplemental Authorities to be Considered (BLM 2008a).

[2] Supplemental authorities determined to be not present or present/not affected need not be carried forward for analysis or discussed further in this EIS.

[3] Supplemental authorities determined to be present/may be affected must be carried forward for analysis in this EIS.

Source: BLM 2008a.

Table 3.0-2 Other Resources of the Human Environment

Other Resources	Not Present[1]	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected	Rationale
Grazing Management			X	Section 3.6.
Land Use Authorization			X	Section 3.11.
Minerals			X	Section 3.1.
Paleontological Resources			X	Section 3.7.
Recreation			X	Section 3.12.
Social and Economic Values			X	Section 3.13.
Soils			X	Section 3.3.
Special Status Species			X	Sections 3.4 and 3.5.
Vegetation			X	Section 3.4.
Visual Resources			X	Section 3.14.
Wild Horses and Burros	X			Would not be affected. Resource not present in or near the proposed project area.
Wildlife			X	Section 3.5.

[1] Other resources determined to be not present or present/not affected need not be carried forward for analysis or discussed further in this EIS based on the rational provided.