

2.8 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 (c) states the following with respect to the range of alternatives in an EIR:

The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed. The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Additional information explaining the choice of alternatives may be included in the administrative record. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts.

NEPA regulations 40 CFR 1502.14 (a) states that the alternatives section of an EIS should:

[r]igorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and for alternatives which were eliminated from detailed study, briefly discuss the reasons for their having been eliminated.

This section briefly describes two alternatives (Narrow Endemic Plant Species Alternative and the Modified Reserve Configuration Alternative) that were evaluated and eliminated from further detailed study. Their reasons for being eliminated, which are the failure to meet most of the basic project objectives and their infeasibility, are also briefly discussed.

2.8.1 Narrow Endemic Plant Species Alternative

This alternative would focus on the conservation of narrow endemic plant species. The term *endemic species* refers to a species that is native to a particular geographic area. Endemic does not imply rarity or endangerment; rather, it refers to geographic distribution. A very narrowly distributed species is found only within a small geographic area (e.g., the San Jacinto Valley crownscale [*Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior*] is endemic [found only] in western Riverside County).

The term *narrow endemic species* has been used in conservation planning to refer to a species that is restricted to a relatively small geographic area and for which conservation planning decisions would have a substantial effect on the status of the species. Plant species that are the focus of this alternative are listed in Table 20. It is anticipated that under this alternative, conservation areas for narrow endemic plants would overlap similar areas identified for conservation in the Modified Reserve Configuration Alternative.