CHAPTER 5

OTHER CEQA TOPICS

5.0 OTHER CEQA TOPICS

5.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

An important consideration when analyzing the effects of a proposed project is whether it will result in short-term environmental benefits to the detriment of achieving long-term goals or maximizing productivity of these resources. Implementing the Extreme Ozone Demonstration Plan is not expected to achieve short-term goals at the expense of long-term environmental productivity or goal achievement. The purpose of the Extreme Ozone Demonstration Plan is to set forth a comprehensive control program that demonstrates the SJVAB's attainment of the federal one-hour ozone standards. By attaining federal ambient air quality standards, the Plan is expected to enhance short and long-term environmental productivity in the region.

Implementing the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan does not narrow the range of beneficial uses of the environment. Of the potential environmental impacts discussed in Chapter 3, only the cumulative impacts associated with toxic air contaminants were identified as being potentially significant. Mitigation measures were imposed that would minimize the potentially significant impacts to less than significant.

Because no short-term environmental benefits are expected at the expense of long-term environmental goals being achieved, there is no justification for delaying the proposed action. This project must be implemented now as the SJVUAPCD is required by the Federal and state Clean Air Acts to formally review and adopt relevant plans and revisions that will achieve the state and federal ambient air quality standards by the established deadlines. The SJVUAPCD is proceeding with the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan pursuant to this mandate.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA requires an EIR to discuss significant irreversible environmental changes which would result from a proposed action should it be implemented. Irreversible changes include a large commitment of nonrenewable resources, committing future generations to specific uses of the environment (e.g., converting undeveloped land to urban uses), or enduring environmental damage due to an accident.

Implementation of the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan is not anticipated to result in any significant irreversible adverse environmental changes. The Plan would place only an incremental demand on nonrenewable and limited resources, such as energy and water supplies, relative to the accelerated rate of use of these resources due to population growth and increased consumer demand. The largely irretrievable conversion of undeveloped/agricultural land to urban uses is a function of the growing population

and local land use authority, not the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan. The Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan is expected to result in long-term benefits associated with improved air quality.

Positive environmental changes are expected to result from implementation of the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan. The project would result in significantly reduced emissions of ozone precursors, thereby improving air quality and related public health. Reduced ozone air pollution would also directly improve the vitality of crops and other plants, and the related health of livestock, domestic animals and wildlife. Ozone damage to structures and materials would also be diminished.

5.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

A growth-inducing impact is defined as the "ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment." Growth-inducing impacts can generally be characterized in three ways. In the first instance, a project is located in an isolated area and brings with it sufficient urban infrastructure to result in development pressure being placed on the intervening and surrounding land. This type of induced growth leads to conversion of adjacent acreage to higher intensity uses because the adjacent land becomes more conducive to development and, therefore, more valuable because of the availability of the extended infrastructure.

A second type of growth-inducing impact is produced when a large project, relative to the surrounding community or area, affects the surrounding community by facilitating and indirectly promoting further community growth. The additional growth is not necessarily adjacent to the site or of the same land use type as the project itself. A project of sufficient magnitude can initiate a growth cycle in the community that could alter a community's size and character significantly.

A third and more subtle type of growth-inducing impact occurs when a new type of development is allowed in an area, which then subsequently establishes a precedent for additional development of a similar character (e.g., a new university is developed which leads to additional educational facilities, housing, commercial centers, etc.)

None of the above scenarios characterize the project in question. The control measures contained in the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan accommodate the projected growth for the region – they are not the cause of residential, commercial, industrial, and infrastructure development. The Plan may indirectly increase the efficiency of the region's urban form through encouraging more air quality efficient development patterns. The Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan does not change jurisdictional authority or responsibility concerning land use or property issues (Section 40716 of the California Health and Safety Code).

It should be noted that a secondary yet positive growth-inducing impact could result from implementation of the Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan. As air quality improves, the SJVAB would become a more attractive, healthful place to live, which would encourage additional migration to the region. However, it is not possible to predict whether this would occur, or the extent to which this would occur. As further analysis would be speculative, this topic is not further discussed.