

### **2.3.6 INVASIVE SPECIES**

#### REGULATORY SETTING

##### **Federal**

On February 3, 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13112 requiring federal agencies to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States. The order defines invasive species as “any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.” Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance issued August 10, 1999 directs the use of the state’s noxious weed list to define the invasive plants that must be considered as part of the NEPA analysis for a proposed project.

##### **Local**

Neither the City of Elk Grove General Plan, nor the City of Sacramento General Plan have policies or action items that relate to invasive species issues, as they relate to the proposed project.

#### AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Biological Study Area consists of a mix of rural and urban uses. The study area itself consists of rural residential, agriculture, and urbanized. All of these areas have been modified from their former natural condition and are currently subject to routine disturbance from on-going agricultural activities and nearby urban uses. Only remnants of natural features and vegetation occur within the study area. **Figure 2.3.1-1** depicts an aerial view of the land uses within the project area. As seen in this figure, the limits of the study are depicted with the current land use activities that occur there.

##### **Physical Conditions**

The study area is predominantly flat and has been altered from its natural state. The only significant topographical features within the study area include the modified Whitehouse Creek channel, a seasonal wetland that has been modified into a detention basin, and three vernal pools that have been altered by past agricultural activity. These features are mapped in **Figure 2.3.1-1**, and discussed in more detail below.

Hydrologic features within the project area include Whitehouse Creek, seasonal wetlands, and vernal pools, and also several roadside ditches. The Whitehouse Creek channel has been modified and realigned due to past development in the area. The portion of Whitehouse Creek that passes through the project area now channels only high flow volumes that are diverted from the detention basin to the east of the project area. This structure allows low flow volumes to flow directly into Laguna Creek to the south via an earthen/concrete-lined channel. No, invasive species were identified in the project area during surveys conducted by Foothill & Associates over the past three years.

## 2.3 BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

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### IMPACTS

#### No Build Alternative

Under the No Build alternative, because the project would not be implemented, impacts involving invasive species resulting from the implementation of the project would not occur.

#### Build Alternatives (2A and 3A)

##### Permanent Impacts

Under Executive Order 13112 (E.O.), federal agencies cannot authorize, fund, or carry out actions that they believe are likely to cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States or elsewhere unless all reasonable measures to minimize risk of harm have been analyzed and considered. Complying with the E.O. means that federal-aid and Federal Lands Highway Program funds cannot be used for construction, revegetation, or landscaping activities that purposely include the use of known invasive plant species. Until an approved national list of invasive plants is defined by the National Invasive Species Council, “known invasive plants” are defined as those listed on the official noxious weed list of the state in which the activity occurs. The FHWA recommends use of federal-aid funds for new and expanded invasive species control efforts under each state Department of Transportation’s roadside vegetation management program. No invasive species were identified in the surveys completed by Foothill Associates for the last three years. The surveys identified native and non-native grasslands.

The proposed project would not introduce any invasive or exotic species on- or off-site of the project area. The City of Elk Grove will use native seed mix for landscaping and erosion control within areas disturbed by the project.

### CEQA FINDINGS

Impacts involving invasive species may be considered significant if the project would:

- Introduce or result in the proliferation of invasive species in the project area.

No invasive species have been identified at the project site and none would be introduced by the project. Therefore the project would have a **less than significant impact**.