

## 3.8 Land Use and Planning

This section evaluates land use issues related to construction and operation of the proposed project including project consistency with local and regional plans and policies and compatibility of the proposed improvements with agricultural uses. This evaluation is based on review of adopted local land use plans and policies, reconnaissance visits, and aerial photographs.

### 3.8.1 Setting

#### Regional Setting

Riverside County encompasses 7,400 square miles of Southern California. Over 200 miles across, it is bounded on the east by the Colorado River and to the west by Orange County. The county is bisected by the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains. The western portion of the county is experiencing rapid urbanization. Key areas of development include the City of Riverside, the March Air Reserve Base, Moreno Valley, Perris, Lake Elsinore, Hemet, and Temecula.

#### Local Setting

##### *Existing Land Use Environment*

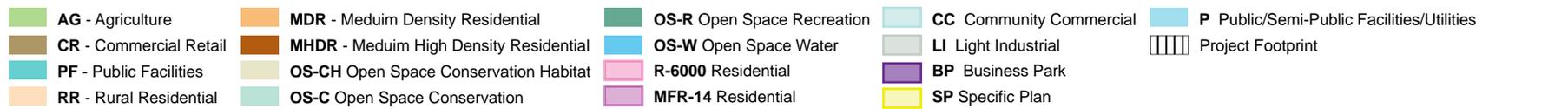
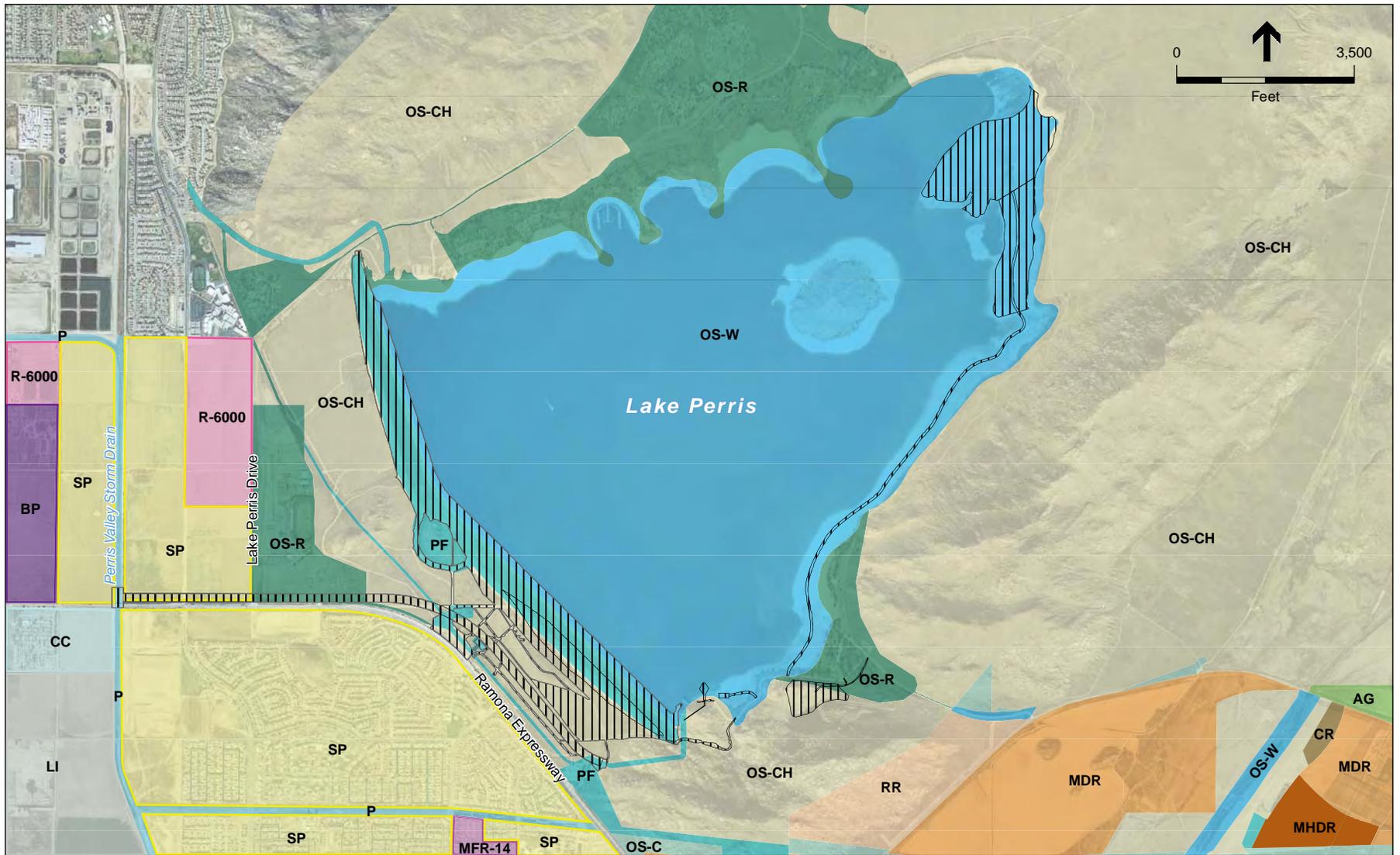
The proposed project is located in and around Lake Perris, in an unincorporated area of Riverside County, and in the City of Perris. Lake Perris and the area immediately around the lake are owned by DWR and comprise the Lake Perris SRA. The Lake Perris SRA is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. DWR owns and operates the SWP facilities on site including the dam and outlet facilities. The CDFG owns the areas below the dam and manages them for habitat conservation value. The Perris Fairgrounds operate on a parcel of land at the corner of Ramona Expressway and Lake Perris Road.

##### *Riverside County*

##### **General Plan Land Use Designations**

General Plan land use designations in the project vicinity are illustrated in **Figure 3.8-1**. The figure references the Riverside County General Plan and the City of Perris General Plan land use designations. Land use in and around Lake Perris is largely governed by the Riverside County General Plan and is part of the County of Riverside Reche Canyon/Badlands Area Plan (County of Riverside, 2003). Lake Perris is surrounded by lands designated as Public Facilities (PF), Open Space-Conservation Habitat (OS-CH), and Open Space-Recreation (OS-R). The Land Use Element of the General Plan for the County of Riverside defines these land use categories as follows:

**Open Space – Conservation Habitat (OS-CH)** – The Open Space-Conservation Habitat land use designation applies to public and private lands conserved and managed in accordance with adopted MSHCPs. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted for the purpose of preserving or enjoying open space. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design would be determined on a case by case basis.



SOURCE: GlobeXplorer, 2007; DWR, 2007; Riverside County, 2007.

DWR - Perris Dam Remediation Program . 206008.02

**Figure 3.8-1**  
Land Use

**Open Space – Water (OS-W)** – Open Space-Water designated areas include bodies of water and major floodplains and natural drainage corridors. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted for flood control or recreational purposes. The extraction of mineral resources subject to an approved surface mining permit may be permissible, provided that the proposed project can be undertaken in a manner that does not result in increased flooding hazards and that is consistent with maintenance of long-term habitat and riparian values.

**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)** – The Open Space-Recreation land use designation allows for active and passive recreational uses such as parks, trails, camp grounds, athletic fields, golf courses, and off-road vehicle parks. Ancillary structures may be permitted for recreational opportunities. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design would be determined on a case by case basis.

**Public Facilities (PF)** – The Public Facilities area plan land use designation provides for the development of various public, quasi-public, and private uses with similar characteristics, such as governmental facilities, utility facilities including public and private electric generating stations and corridors, landfills, airports, educational facilities, and maintenance yards. Privately held uses with public facility characteristics are not required to be designated as Public Facilities, but are eligible to be so designated based on site-specific reviews of the characteristics of the use in question. Due to the varied nature of this category, building intensity and design criteria for uses shall generally comply with those standards and policies most similar to the intended use. Airports, utility facilities, other than electric generating stations, and landfills generally have low Floor Area Ratios (FAR). Building intensities for civic uses such as County administrative buildings and schools, however, are comparable to other employment generating land use designations. The maximum intensity allowed for civic uses within the Public Facilities designation is 0.60 FAR. Actual FAR would vary for other uses and the appropriate FAR would, therefore, be determined in the zoning ordinance.

**Open Space – Conservation (OS-C)** – The Open Space-Conservation land use designation is applied to land designated for preservation of non-MSHCP habitat lands, protection from natural hazards, and preservation of science and other natural resources. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted provided that they further the intent of this designation and do not substantially alter the character of the area. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design would be determined on a case by case basis.

**Rural Residential (RR)** – The Rural Residential land use designation allows one single family residence per five acres, as well as limited animal-keeping and agricultural activities. For multi-lot developments, the minimum lot size per residential unit is 2.5 acres, though the overall density of the development must not exceed 0.2 dwelling units per acre. Limited recreational uses, compatible resource development (not including the commercial extraction of mineral resources) and associated uses, and governmental uses are also allowed within this designation.

**Low Density Residential (LDR)** – The Low Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Rural Community Foundation Component, equestrian and other animal-keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Agriculture is

permitted in this designation. The density range is from two dwelling units per acre to one dwelling unit per acre.

The areas surrounding the Lake Perris SRA are dominated by open space uses. The area designated as OS-R along the north shore of the lake includes park facilities such as campgrounds, offices, the Regional Indian Museum, parking lots, a marina, group picnic areas, a horse camp, and a bike trail. The area designated as OS-R along the south shore of the lake consists of Bernasconi Beach and picnic areas as well as areas designated for camping and rock-climbing. Perris Dam is designated as a PF and Lake Perris itself is designated as OS-W (County of Riverside – Land Use Map 2005).

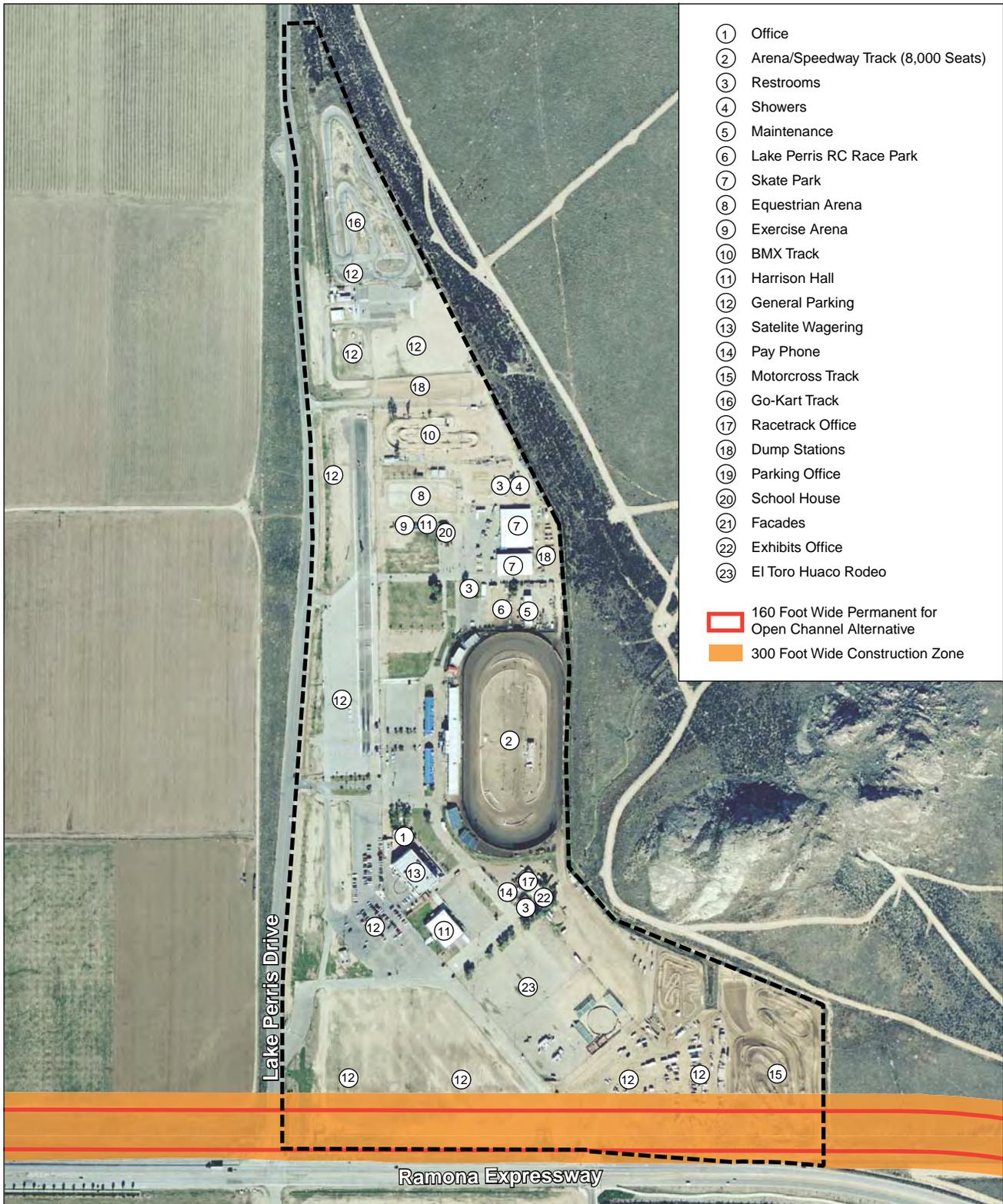
The area between the dam and the expressway is currently OS-CH. The land adjacent to the project site and north of the Expressway consists of several parcels designated as PF, OS-C, RR, and LDR.

The Perris Fairgrounds are located west of the Lake Perris SRA and north of Ramona Expressway in unincorporated Riverside County and encompass 108 acres of land designated as OS-R. According to the Fairgrounds, nearly one million people visit the Fairgrounds annually. The site is home to the Southern California Fair. The Fairgrounds are operated and managed by the 46<sup>th</sup> District Agricultural Association (DAA), a state agency that receives fiscal and policy oversight from both the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Division of Fairs and Expositions. Within the Fairgrounds, the Starwest Motocross Park, the El Toro Huaco Rodeo, and a general parking are closest to Ramona Expressway and the proposed project area. Starwest Motocross has been on the Fairgrounds since 1991 and supports 250,000 visitors annually. Additionally, the Perris Fairgrounds house an 8,000 seat speedway track; a hall that can be reserved for meetings, conferences, and weddings; Apex Go-Kart track; Lake Perris BMX track; a skate park; an equestrian arena; satellite wagering facilities; and office facilities. **Figure 3.8-2** provides a map of the Perris Fairgrounds. Facilities are regularly rented for a variety of events, including both long term contracts and interim contracts for circuses, tent sales, consumer shows, concerts, rodeos, RV rallies, receptions and car shows.

### Zoning

The zoning classification for Lake Perris, the surrounding areas in unincorporated Riverside County, and the Perris Fairgrounds is W-2: Controlled Development Areas. According to Riverside County's Zoning Ordinance, Article XV, Section d, commercial fairgrounds and exhibitions are permitted provided a conditional permit has been granted. Article IV, Section e allows for "structures and installations necessary to the conservation and development of water such as dams, pipelines, water conduits, tanks, reservoirs, wells and the necessary pumping and water production facilities."

The Riverside County General Plan was adopted on October 7, 2003. At that time, the Consistency Zoning Program was outlined, the goal of which is to bring zoning designations into consistency with the General Plan (County of Riverside Concepts) in a reasonable period of time as required by California law.



SOURCE: ESA, 2007.

DWR - Perris Dam Remediation Program . 206008.02

**Figure 3.8-2**  
Perris Fairgrounds

Consistency is determined on a scale of one to four where one is consistent, two is generally consistent, three is generally inconsistent, and four is inconsistent. Within the project area, the OS-W land use designation and the W-2 zoning designation are rated four or inconsistent, the OS-CH land use designation and the W-2 zoning designation are rated three or generally inconsistent, and the OS-R land use designation and the W-2 zoning designation are rated two or generally consistent.

### ***City of Perris***

The area west of Lake Perris Drive is within the City of Perris and is characterized by vacant land and some residential development. The Land Use Element of the City of Perris General Plan outlines ten area plans within the city. The area through which the proposed emergency outlet extension would go is part of the City of Perris Planning Area 1: North Industrial/ Commercial. The land use designation in this area is primarily Specific Plan with the exception of the northeast area that is designated as R-6000 (see Figure 3.8-2). The R-6000 designation provides for low-density, single family dwellings at densities up to seven units per acre (minimum 6,000 square foot lots).

The specific plan for this area has not been completed and therefore the zoning designation takes precedence over land use. The parcel designated as R-6000 is zoned R7-Residential, which is consistent with the land use designation. The remaining parcels north of Ramona Expressway and east of Perris Valley Storm Drain are zoned as either R-4, which provides for low-density single family dwellings at densities of up to four dwelling units per acre; OS - Open Space; or CN - Commercial Neighborhood (Perris Zoning Map, 2005). The area zoned as open space is a narrow parcel of land approximately 280 feet wide immediately north of Ramona Expressway. The City of Perris Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 19.47.020, lists “Sewer Treatment plants, reservoirs, and flood control channels” among permissible uses in open space zones. As such, neither of the emergency outlet extension alternatives would conflict with the applicable zoning designations for the project area.

The area south of Ramona Expressway also is part of the City of Perris. This area is characterized primarily by residential development. When the dam was built, there was little development in this area east of the storm drain. However, both the land use designation and zoning ordinance from the Specific Plan have enabled this residential development to take place.

### ***March Air Reserve Base***

The former March Air Reserve Base, located immediately southeast of the Reche Canyon/ Badlands Area, was established in 1918 for military purposes and was functional as such until 1993. In 1996, the 6,500 acre airport was converted to an Active Duty Reserve Base and is now governed by the Joint Powers Authority (JPA), a group comprised of four members including the County of Riverside and the Cities of Perris, Moreno Valley, and Riverside. The airport serves as an important source of potential commerce for the area and the JPA has plans to turn part of the airport into an active inland port (Riverside Reche Canyon, 2003). The influence policy area, specifically the Airport Influence Policy Area/Safety Zone Area III, includes the western portions

of Lake Perris as well as the proposed outlet extension running from the dam to the Perris Valley Storm Drain. The City of Perris' General Plan specifically suggests that Perris' Planning Area 1 focus infrastructure and development around potential cargo operations from the airport as a means to bring jobs, disposable income, retail uses, and therefore sales tax revenue to the City of Perris (Perris Land Use, 2005).

### ***Existing Agricultural Environment***

Agricultural resources in the project area and adjacent lands, as determined by the California Department of Conservation, are shown in **Figure 3.8-3**. Specifically, there are two sites within the vicinity of the project area that have been designated as agricultural land by the state, though not by the Riverside County General Plan. On the southeastern edge of Lake Perris, this land is OS-R and has been designated Farmland of Local Importance (Department of Conservation, 2004). Though this area would not necessarily be directly affected by the proposed project, it could be located within the boundaries of the construction area, which would be delineated by fencing, and thus could be affected by construction activity.

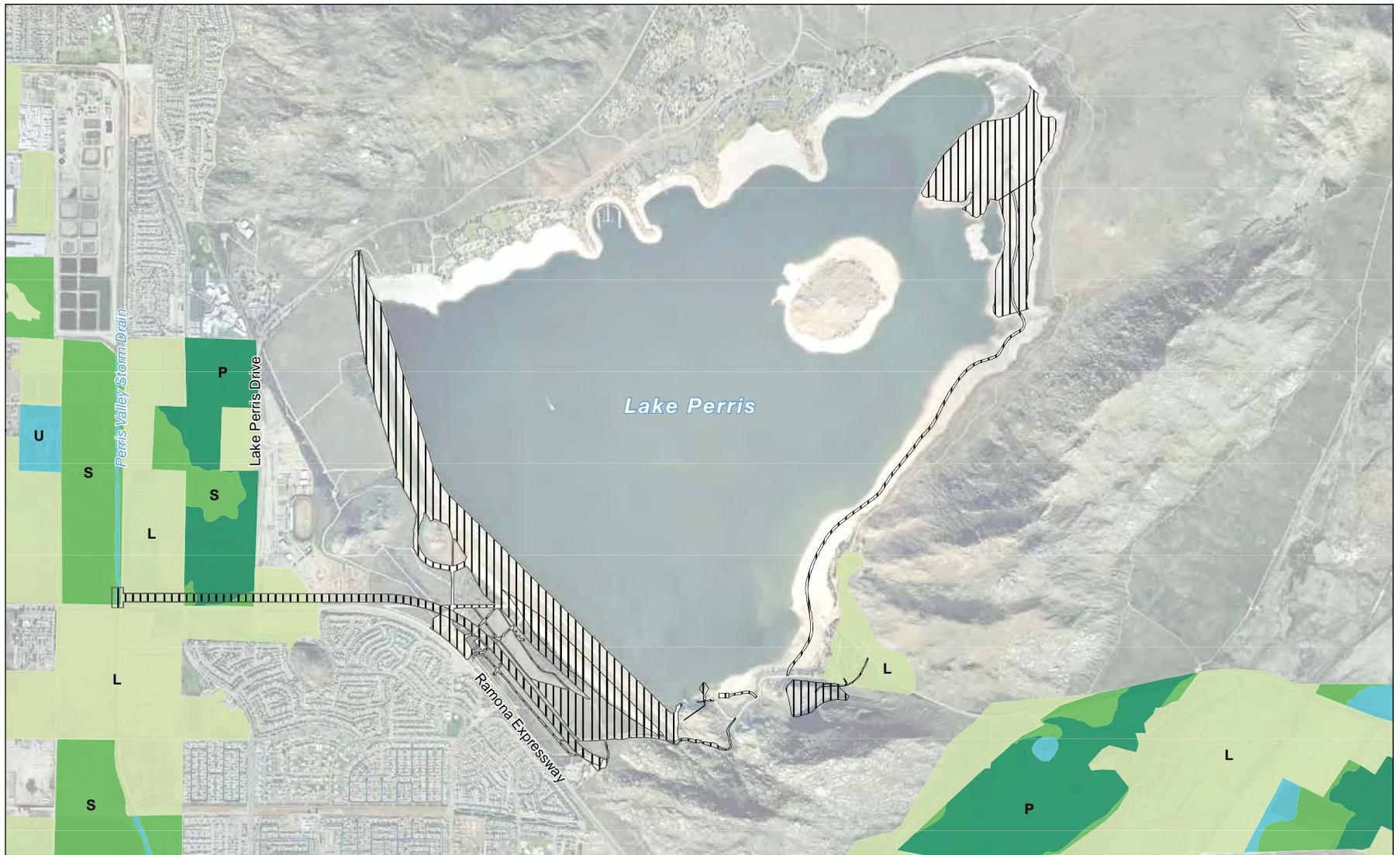
The second site is located east of the dam in the City of Perris and the southeastern portion of the Perris Fairgrounds. The southeastern portion of the Perris Fairgrounds, which is currently a parking lot, has been designated as Farmland of Local Importance (Department of Conservation, 2004). The adjacent land in the City of Perris, situated between the Fairgrounds and the Perris Valley Storm Drain, is designated as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. These lands are largely vacant at present, except in the northeast corner where residential development has begun. The proposed emergency outlet extension would run through the vacant land adjacent to the northern side of Ramona Expressway. There are no Williamson Act contracts in the project area or in adjacent lands (See Section 3.8.2, Regulatory Framework below for a description of the Williamson Act).

## **3.8.2 Regulatory Framework**

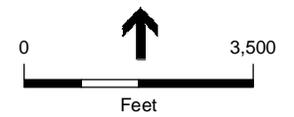
### **Federal**

#### ***Federal Aviation Administration***

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation with regulatory responsibility for civil aviation. The FAA is responsible for establishing policies and regulations to ensure the safety of the traveling public. The FAA oversees publicly-owned airports that are open to the public or airports that receive federal funding (Rodriguez, 2006). FAA Advisory Circular 150/5200-33B addresses hazardous wildlife attractants on or near airports (FAA, 2007). This Advisory Circular is intended to provide guidance on siting certain land uses that have the potential to attract potentially hazardous wildlife to a public-use airport or its vicinity. The FAA Advisory Circular recommends against "land use practices that attract or sustain populations of hazardous wildlife within the vicinity of airports or cause movement of hazardous wildlife onto, into, or across the approach or departure airspace, aircraft movement area, loading ramps, or aircraft parking area of airports." The



- L - Farmland of Local Importance
- P - Prime Farmland
- S - Farmland of Statewide Importance
- U - Unique Farmland
- Project Footprint



SOURCE: GlobeXplorer, 2007; DWR, 2007; Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 1984-2006.

DWR - Perris Dam Remediation Program . 206008.02

**Figure 3.8-3**  
Farmland

Advisory Circular recommends a separation distance of 5,000 feet between airports using piston-powered aircraft and any project or change in land use that could attract hazardous wildlife, such as open-air water storage facilities. For airports using turbine-powered aircraft, the FAA recommends a separation distance of 10,000 feet between an airport and a potential hazardous wildlife attractant. For projects that are located outside the 5,000/10,000-foot criteria but within five statute miles of the airport's air operations area,<sup>1</sup> the FAA may review development plans, proposed land-use changes, operational changes, or wetland mitigation plans to determine whether such changes in land use would create potential wildlife hazards to aircraft operations.

March Air Reserve Base is located within 4.8 miles of the proposed project. ESA spoke to Douglas Adams, Community Planner for March Air Reserve Base, to discuss the proposed project and to determine whether the proposed project would have the potential to increase wildlife hazards for flights operating out of March Air Reserve Base. Mr. Adams stated that flight tracks associated with operations at March Air Reserve Base do not pass near the Perris Lake Reservoir due to the presence of high terrain. (Adams, 2007).

## **State**

### ***Caltrans Division of Aeronautics***

The State Aeronautics Act, Public Utilities Code (PUC) section 21001 et. seq., is the foundation for the Caltrans aviation policies. The Division of Aeronautics issues permits for and annually inspects public-use airports. Aviation system planning provides for the integration of aviation into transportation system planning on a regional, statewide, and national basis. The Division of Aeronautics administers noise regulation and land use planning laws that foster compatible land use around airports and encourages environmental mitigation measures to lessen noise, air pollution, and other impacts caused by aviation. The Division of Aeronautics also provides grants and loans for safety, maintenance and capital improvement projects at airports (Caltrans, 2006).

### ***California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program***

The California Department of Conservation, under the Division of Land Resource Protection, has established the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The FMMP monitors the conversion of the state's farmland to and from agricultural use. The map series identifies eight classifications and uses a minimum mapping unit size of ten acres. The FMMP also produces a biannual report on the amount of land converted from agricultural to non-agricultural use. The FMMP maintains an inventory of state agricultural land and updates its "Important Farmland Series Maps" every two years (Department of Conservation, 2007a). Important farmlands are divided into the following five categories based on their suitability for agriculture.

- 1. Prime Farmland.** Prime Farmland is land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. This

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<sup>1</sup> Any area of an airport used or intended to be used for landing, takeoff, or surface maneuvering of aircraft. An air operations area includes such paved areas or unpaved areas that are used or intended to be used for the unobstructed movement of aircraft in addition to its associated runway, taxiways, or apron.

land has produced irrigated crops at some time within the four years prior to the mapping date.

2. **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland of Statewide Importance is land that meets the criteria for Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings such as greater slopes or lesser soil moisture capacity.
3. **Unique Farmland.** Unique Farmland has even lesser quality soils and produces the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but also includes non-irrigated orchards and vineyards.
4. **Farmland of Local Importance.** Farmland of Local Importance is land that is important to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
5. **Grazing Land.** Grazing Land is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.

### ***Williamson Act***

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, is designed to preserve agricultural and open space lands by discouraging their premature and unnecessary conversion to urban uses (Department of Conservation, 2007b). The Act creates an arrangement whereby private landowner's contract with counties and cities to voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open-space uses. In return, Williamson Act contracts offer tax incentives by ensuring that land would be assessed for its agricultural productivity rather than its highest and best use. Contracts run for a period of ten years; however, some jurisdictions exercise the option of making them long term, up to twenty years. Contracts are automatically renewed unless the landowner files for non-renewal or petitions for cancellation. Williamson Act contracts can be divided into the following categories: Prime Agricultural Land, Non-Prime Agricultural Land, Open Space Easement, Built Up Land, and Agricultural Land in Non-Renewal.

## **County**

### ***Riverside County General Plan***

The County of Riverside General Plan recognizes 19 geographic planning areas within the county. The proposed project is located within the Reche Canyon/ Badlands Area Plan as well as the incorporated City of Perris.

The Land Use Element, the Multipurpose Open Space Element, and the Reche Canyon/ Badlands Area Plan govern the land use and agricultural resources of the county and the proposed project area. The Land Use Element presents goals and policies that guide future geographic patterns of development in the county. The Multipurpose Open Space Element outlines the county's intentions for protecting and preserving natural resources, agriculture, open space, and recreational opportunities (Riverside Multipurpose, 2003). The Reche Canyon/Badlands Area Plan contains specific policies that guide the physical development of this particular part of Riverside County to be used in conjunction with the County of Riverside General Plan and Vision Statement. Some goals and policies for land use and open space in the County of Riverside General Plan that are relevant to the proposed project are as follows:

## General Plan Land Use Element

### *Infrastructure, Public Facilities & Service Provisions*

**Policy LU 5.4.** Ensure that development and conservation land uses do not infringe upon existing public utility corridors, including fee owned rights-of-way and permanent easements, whose true land use is that of “public facilities.” This policy will ensure that the “public facilities” designation governs over what otherwise may be inferred by the large scale general plan maps.

### *Open Space, Habitat & Natural Resource Preservation*

**Policy LU 8.1.** Provide for permanent preservation of open space lands that contain important natural resources, hazards, water features, watercourses, and scenic and recreational values.

### *Airports*

**Policy LU 14.9.** All development proposals within an Airport Influence Area will be submitted to the affected airport.

### *Open Space Area Plan Land Use Designations*

**Policy LU 18.2.** Cooperate with the CDFG, USFWS, and any other appropriate agencies in establishing programs for the voluntary protection, and where feasible, voluntary restoration of significant environmental habitats.

### *Open Space – Recreation*

**Policy LU 19.1.** The County shall develop and maintain a regional park system that provides recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Riverside County.

**Policy LU 19.2.** Provide for a balanced distribution of recreational amenities in Open Space, Rural, and Community Development General Plan land uses.

### *Public Facilities*

**Policy LU 25.1.** Accommodate the development of public facilities in areas appropriately designated by the General Plan and area plan land use maps.

**Policy LU 25.6.** Ensure that development and conservation land uses do not infringe upon existing public utility corridors, including fee owned rights-of-way and permanent easements, whose true land use is that of Public Facilities. This policy will ensure that the “public facilities” designation governs over what otherwise may be inferred by the large-scale general plan maps.

## General Plan Open Space Element

### *Open Space, Parks and Recreation*

**Policy OS 20.1.** Preserve and maintain open space that protects County environmental resources and maximizes public health and safety in areas where significant environmental hazards and resources exist.

**Policy OS 20.2.** Prevent unnecessary extension of public facilities, services, and utilities, for urban uses, into Open Space-Conservation designated areas.

*Reche Canyon Badlands Area Plan*

**Policy RCBAP 13.1.** Protect visual and biological resources in the Reche Canyon/ Badlands area through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Multipurpose Open Space Element.

**Policy RCBAP 16.1.** Conserve habitat that captures the diversity of the Riverside Lowlands bioregion within the Reche Canyon/ Badlands area. The Reche Canyon/ Badlands region includes substantial areas of remaining natural habitat within the Riverside Lowlands, including a portion of the San Jacinto River, the Badlands, Reche Canyon area, and the Mystic Lake/ San Jacinto Wildlife Area.

***Local***

**City of Perris General Plan**

The Land Use Element and Conservation Element of the City of Perris General Plan govern the land use and agricultural resources of the city. The Land Use Element presents goals and policies that guide future geographic patterns of development in the city. The Conservation Element describes the management and conservation practices for natural resources and open space in the city.

### **3.8.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### **Significance Criteria**

This section addresses potential impacts of the proposed project to land use and agricultural uses in the project area. The impact significance criteria are based on guidance provided by Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* regarding significant environmental effects. For this Draft EIR, the proposed project would have a significant impact if it would:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Conflict with existing or designated land uses in the area or land use policies;
- Conflict with any habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan;
- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; and
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

#### **Division of Community**

The dam remediation and outlet tower would not physically divide a community. The underground emergency outlet extension alternative would run parallel to the Ramona

Expressway and would be installed under roadways that would avoid physically dividing the community. The open channel emergency outlet extension alternative would also parallel the Ramona Expressway, and is consistent with all applicable the zoning designations from the Specific Plan for the project area (refer to Impact 3.8-1 below for more information). Though the open channel emergency outlet extension would be aboveground, it would be developed on land that was anticipated by the Specific Plan for such uses and would not divide an established community.

## Existing Land Use and Land Use Plans

### **Impact 3.8-1: Construction of the proposed project would impact existing land uses.**

Construction activities would require closing the eastern portion of the lake shoreline, including the Bernasconi picnic area and rock climbing area, to the public. During this period, recreation activities would be limited. Since the access restrictions are temporary in nature, the impact to land use is considered less than significant.

The vacant land affected in the City of Perris by the emergency outlet extension is zoned within a Specific Plan area. The city has acknowledged that the area would be developed in the near future for residential uses. The Specific Plan area acknowledges that the corridor north of Ramona Expressway is reserved as a water conveyance channel. Therefore the proposed emergency outlet extension is compatible with the Specific Plan.

A segment of the Perris Fairgrounds would be graded and excavated to accommodate the outlet channel. Construction of the underground emergency outlet channel alternative would temporarily demolish a 300-foot wide corridor along the southern border of the Fairgrounds affecting approximately 15 square acres. The channel would result in an approximately 160-foot wide corridor that temporarily affects land uses. Similarly, construction of the open channel emergency outlet channel alternative would temporarily demolish a 300-foot wide corridor along the southern border of the Fairgrounds, resulting in a permanent 160-foot wide easement. The open channel would permanently reduce the acreage at the Fairgrounds now used for the Starwest Motocross Park. The temporary and permanent impact area is currently comprised of the Fairgrounds' largest general parking lot, a portion of the Starwest Motocross Park, and the entranceway to the Fairgrounds from Ramona Expressway. No permanent buildings exist within this construction corridor. The general parking lot is unpaved and is used for events at any of the facilities within the Fairgrounds. The El Toro Huaco Rodeo facility is adjacent to the location of the proposed outlet channel but would not be affected. Figure 3.8-2 identifies the Fairgrounds and construction impact zone.

Construction of the underground emergency outlet extension alternative on the Perris Fairgrounds would temporarily affect land use. Construction of the open channel emergency outlet extension alternative would permanently affect land use. Approximately eight acres of the parking lot (room

for approximately 750 parking spaces<sup>2</sup>) would be temporarily displaced for the underground outlet channel alternative, and permanently displaced for the open channel alternative. Three acres of the 6.5-acre motocross facility (approximately 45 percent) would be temporarily removed from service by the underground outlet channel alternative, and permanently removed by the open channel alternative. An additional four acres consisting of the Fairgrounds entranceway, some additional unpaved general parking, and an area for ancillary motocross uses also would be temporarily displaced by the underground outlet channel alternative and permanently displaced by the open channel alternative. The Fairgrounds are fully developed as shown in Figure 3.8-2. With installation of the underground emergency outlet extension alternative, the Fairgrounds could be restored to its original land uses. With installation of the open channel outlet extension alternative, the Fairgrounds would not be restored to its original condition, and certain facilities would be lost permanently (see Figure 3.8-2).

The Fairgrounds encompasses approximately 108 acres and attracts nearly one million annual visitors. The facility provides an important function to the local community. The underground emergency outlet alternative would disrupt and require the temporary closure of the Starwest Motocross facility. Although this disruption would modify the facility, most of the Fairgrounds would remain unaffected, as shown on Figure 3.8-2. Under this alternative, the function of the Perris Fairgrounds to provide recreational facilities to the public would remain viable. Mitigation Measure 3.8-1b commits DWR to minimizing the impact zone of the channel through the Fairgrounds. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.8-1a through 3.8-1c, impacts to the Fairgrounds resulting from construction and operation of the underground emergency outlet extension alternative would be considered less than significant.

The open channel emergency outlet extension alternative would result in the permanent loss of portions of the Starwest Motocross facility and of the existing parking lot. As such, this alternative would represent a permanent conversion of existing land uses, and the permanent loss of recreational activities and parking spaces. Therefore, even with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.8-1b and 3.8-1c (Mitigation Measure 3.8-1a would not apply), construction of the open channel emergency outlet extension alternative through the Fairgrounds would result in a significant and unavoidable impact.

### **Mitigation Measures**

**Mitigation Measure 3.8-1a:** If the underground emergency outlet extension alternative is selected, DWR shall restore the motocross facility and parking area to their pre-construction condition.

**Mitigation Measure 3.8-1b:** DWR shall reduce the construction zone of the emergency outlet extension to the minimum width necessary to accommodate the channel.

**Mitigation Measure 3.8-1c:** DWR shall coordinate with the Perris Fairgrounds to minimize construction during major events.

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<sup>2</sup> Riverside County zoning code Section 18.12 requires that parking space be a minimum of 9 feet by 18 feet with a 28 foot aisle between rows.

**Significance after Mitigation:** Significant and unavoidable for the open channel alternative;  
Less than significant for the underground alternative.

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## Habitat Conservation Plans

**Impact 3.8-2: Construction and operation of the proposed project could conflict with an existing habitat conservation plan.**

The new stability berm, the haul road over Bernsconi Hills, and the emergency outlet extension would eliminate land managed for habitat conservation values by CDFG. The open space areas within the Lake Perris SRA are managed for their recreational and habitat values. The new facilities required to stabilize the integrity of the dam and provide for emergency drawdown capabilities would ultimately support the continued operations of the Lake Perris SRA as well as enhance public safety. The property is managed for habitat conservation by Riverside County's MSHCP. Modifying the use of the land would require compensation pursuant to the guidelines provided in the MSHCP. Section 3.3, Biological Resources, of this EIR establishes values for these project impact areas and establishes a mitigation strategy to comply with the MSHCP policies. These impacts are discussed in Section 3.3, Biological Resources, along with other impacts to wildlife, habitat, and riparian areas. Compliance with compensation guidelines outlined in the MSHCP and approval of those measures by the County of Riverside would result in the project being in compliance with the MSHCP.

### Mitigation Measures

Implement **Mitigation Measures Biology** 3.3-1a through 3.3-1c, 3.3-3a, 3.3-6a through 3.3-6e, 3.3-7a, 3.3-9a, and 3.3-11.

**Significance after Mitigation:** Less than Significant.

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## Important Farmland

**Impact 3.8-3: Project implementation would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.**

Construction of the emergency outlet extension would cross land within the City of Perris designated as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance by the California Department of Conservation (see Figure 3.8-3). The City of Perris does not consider this land to be agricultural land. In 1991, the City of Perris General Plan Land Use Element eliminated the agricultural land use designation and re-designated all agricultural lands for other uses. The EIR for the 1991 General Plan identified conversion of agricultural land as a significant cumulative impact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted. The City of Perris' General Plan 2030 (adopted in April, 2005) therefore had no impact on conversion of agricultural land

since the conversion had already been acknowledged in the previous plan. Accordingly, both the open channel and underground emergency outlet extension alternatives would have no impact on agricultural resources.

Land identified as Farmland of Local Importance by the California Department of Conservation within the footprint of the Perris Fairgrounds is designated as OS-R in the Riverside County General Plan. The area of the Fairgrounds that would be affected by the project and that is designated as agricultural land on FMMP maps is currently a parking lot and a motocross facility. Implementation of the proposed project would not convert agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

**Significance:** Less than Significant.

***Mitigation Measures Summary Table***

Table 3.8-1 presents the impacts and mitigation summary for Land Use and Planning.

**TABLE 3.8-1  
 LAND USE AND PLANNING IMPACTS AND MITIGATION SUMMARY**

<b>Proposed Project Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Significance After Mitigation</b>
<b>Existing Land Usage:</b> Construction of the proposed project could impact existing land uses	3.8-1a through 3.8-1c	Significant and Unavoidable for the open channel emergency outlet extension alternative; Less than Significant for the underground emergency outlet extension alternative.
<b>Habitat Conservation Plan:</b> Construction and operation of the proposed project could conflict with an existing habitat conservation plan.	Biology 3.3-1a through 3.3-1c, 3.3-3a, 3.3-6a through 3.3-6e, 3.3-7a, 3.3-9a, and 3.3-11.	Less than Significant
<b>Agricultural Lands:</b> Project implementation would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.	None required	--