

CHAPTER 5.4 Recreational and Cultural Resources

The Tukwila to Renton Project will not adversely affect any recreational or cultural resources. The project will have direct uses and temporary occupancy of some of the Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources in the study area. WSDOT has identified measures to minimize these effects. These include providing signing and temporary detours for trails, restoring a trailhead, replacing lost parking, and implementing mitigation measures in concert with the City of Renton's master plan for the Tri-Park complex.

Citizens appreciate recreational resources because they help to improve the quality of life within our communities. Public spaces that are enjoyable, accessible, and diverse in their social and recreational functions enrich minds, bodies, and spirits.

Likewise, archaeological and historic resources provide an important link to the past while establishing meaningful connections to lives today. They serve as memories and symbols of a community's accomplishments and represent the distinctive architecture, landscape, and engineering design of our region.

How did WSDOT identify and evaluate recreational and cultural resources in the study area?

Parks and other recreational areas were evaluated within 0.25 miles of the Tukwila to Renton Project. The precedent for studying this distance on each side of the freeway was generally agreed upon in the *I-405 Corridor Program Final Preliminary Section 4(f) Evaluation*. Additional research beyond the preliminary evaluation included site investigations at each potential Section 4(f) resource and coordination with the cities of Tukwila and Renton; King County; the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO); and the National Park Service (NPS). This coordination has been documented in the *Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation* for this project (see Appendix O).

Effects to these recreational resources were evaluated based on guidance in the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper issued March 1, 2005; Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 771.135 (Section 4(f)); and the WSDOT Environmental Procedures Manual published in March 2006.



Duwamish-Green River Trail passing under I-405

Please refer to the Tukwila to Renton Project Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation in Appendix O and the Cultural, Historic, and Archaeological Technical Memorandum in Appendix F for a complete discussion of the recreational and cultural resources analyses.

Historic resources in the project area that predate 1965 were also evaluated. The year 1965 was selected to cover all cultural resources that would be 50 or more years old by the time the first parts of the project are built, assumed to be 2015.

Archaeological investigations were conducted by reviewing previous reports and by conducting field investigations. The I-405 Team determined the location of areas near the project with the highest likelihood of pre-European cultural activity. The I-405 Team then compared these areas to the project footprint to determine where potential disturbance of cultural artifacts might occur when the project is constructed. Testing for artifacts was done in these areas, where practical, by digging holes in multiple locations to see if artifacts could be found.

Some portions of the area of potential effect (APE) were not currently available for archaeological study due to funding and access issues. In unfunded areas, testing cannot be conducted where buildings currently stand or if an area is currently paved. WSDOT tested for archaeological resources on the funded portion near Talbot Road for the SR 515 half-diamond interchange. The remaining archaeological studies will be completed when funding and access are secured under the terms of a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement developed for the project under 36 CFR 800.14. This Programmatic Agreement⁴ is included in Appendix C of this EA.

What is Section 4(f) and what constitutes a use of a Section 4(f) resource?

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303) prohibits the FHWA from approving a transportation project that uses land from a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or land of an historic site of national, state, or local significance, unless:

1. There is no feasible and prudent alternative.
2. The project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property.

A feasible and prudent alternative must be selected if it avoids using this land. Measures that minimize the harm to the

⁴ *The Programmatic Agreement is currently a draft and is being circulated for signatures. The final signed agreement will be included in the Finding of No Significant Impact.*

resource must be identified and incorporated if use of the Section 4(f) resource is unavoidable.

A Section 4(f) evaluation must be prepared if any resources protected by Section 4(f) are used by a project. "Use" of Section 4(f) resources as defined by the Act⁵ occurs when:

1. Land is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility. The physical and permanent procurement of a protected resource for use by a transportation project is known as an actual or direct use.
2. The land is subject to temporary occupancy and adverse changes, such as contour alterations or removal of mature trees and other vegetation as may result during project construction. Temporary occupancy during construction will not always constitute a use of Section 4(f) land. Short-term, temporary occupancy or effect (e.g., for a construction easement) does not constitute a use under Section 4(f) as long as all of the following conditions are met:
 - Occupancy is temporary (i.e., shorter than the construction period for the entire project) and ownership does not change;
 - Changes are minimal;
 - No permanent adverse physical effects result and there is no interference with the activities or purposes of the resources on either a temporary or permanent basis;
 - The land being used will be restored to a condition which is at least as good as that prior to the project; and
 - Documented agreement(s) exist between relevant jurisdictions regarding temporary use of the resource.
3. There is a constructive use of land. A constructive use occurs when:
 - Noise from the project substantially interferes with the use and enjoyment of the resource, such as enjoyment of a historic site where a quiet setting is a generally recognized feature or attribute of the site's significance, or enjoyment of any park where serenity and quiet are significant attributes; or

What is a constructive use?

A constructive use is a type of indirect use in which a transportation project's proximity effects (as opposed to direct effects) are so severe that the protected activities, features, or attributes that qualify a resource for protection under Section 4(f) are substantially impaired. Examples include excessive noise level increases, diminished aesthetic features, ecological intrusions, and other indirect effects to the resource's environment or utility. In all instances, a "substantial impairment" of the resource is necessary for a constructive use to occur.

When does noise become a constructive use?

The noise increase must not only be detectable to the human ear (i.e., an increase greater than 2 to 3 decibels) and exceed the FHWA noise abatement criterion as contained in Table 1 of 23 CFR Part 772, but it must be severe enough to truly impair enjoyment of the Section 4(f) resource.

⁵ 23 CFR 771.135(p) (1) and (2) is where DOT specifically describes 4(f) "use."

How does proximity contribute to a constructive use?

An example might be the location of a roadway that obstructs or eliminates a view or substantially detracts from the setting of a park or historic site that derives its value in substantial part due to its setting.

- The proximity of the proposed project substantially impairs aesthetic features or attributes of the resource, where these features or attributes are considered important contributing elements to the value of the resource; or
- The project restricts access and would result in a substantial decrease in the usability of the resource; or
- Vibration emanating from the project substantially impairs the use of the resource.

What is a Section 6(f) resource?

Section 6(f) resources are defined as public outdoor recreational lands purchased or developed with financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). In 1965, Congress passed the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCFA) that provides grants paying up to half the cost to acquire and develop outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Section 6(f) of the LWCFA addresses transportation projects and prohibits converting property acquired or developed with these grants to a non-recreational purpose without approval of the NPS. Exhibit 5-17 identifies the two Section 6(f) resources near the proposed Tukwila to Renton Project, which are also Section 4(f) resources.

Exhibit 5-17: Section 6(f) Resources and RCFB Investment Properties

Resource	Section 6(f) Resource	RCFB Investment Property
Duwamish-Green River Trail/ Christiansen Greenbelt	X	X
Cedar River Trail – South Loop	X	X
Cedar River Trail		X

What is a Recreation and Conservation Funding Board investment property?

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) investment properties are defined as public outdoor recreational lands purchased or developed with financial assistance from the State. Within the study area, three RCFB investment properties were identified as shown in Exhibit 5-17. The RCO must approve uses of RCFB properties protected under Section 4(f) if these properties benefitted from state and federal grant programs.

What recreational resources are located in the study area?

There are 23 publicly-owned parks and recreation areas and no waterfowl or wildlife refuges near the proposed Tukwila to Renton Project right-of-way. Exhibit 5-18 lists these resources from east to west (northbound) and compares each resource with Section 4(f) criteria. Of these, 19 are protected Section 4(f) properties. Exhibits 5-19 and 5-20 show these properties.

Exhibit 5-18: Park, Trail, and Recreation Areas Compared Against Section 4(f) Criteria

Property/Jurisdiction	Publicly Owned	Open to the Public	Major Purpose is Recreation	Significant as a Park	Section 4(f) Protected Property
Crystal Springs Park (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ikawa Park (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tukwila Park (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duwamish-Green River Trail/Christensen Greenbelt (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fort Dent Park (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interurban Trail (<i>Tukwila</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Springbrook Trail (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake Street Open Space (<i>Renton</i> ¹)	Yes	No	No	No	No
Panther Creek Wetlands Open Space (<i>Renton</i>) ¹	Yes	No	No	No	No
Gateway Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Piazza Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burnett Linear Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cedar River Trail-South Loop (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tonkins Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Renton Hill Park (<i>Renton</i>) ^{2, 3}	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Veterans Memorial Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jones Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cedar River Natural Area (<i>Renton</i>) ¹	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Narco Property (<i>Renton</i>) ⁴	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cedar River Trail (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cedar River Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liberty Park (<i>Renton</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1 The City of Renton Parks Department and the City of Renton *2003 Park, Recreation, and Implementation Open Space Plan* show these are currently undeveloped and only receive incidental or occasional recreation, therefore they are not significant under Section 4(f).

2 Consultation with the City of Renton Parks Department concluded that this park is not identified in the City of Renton *2003 Park, Recreation, and Implementation Open Space Plan* and is not considered significant within the recreational and park objectives of the City.

3 Renton Hill Park is also known as Freeway Park.

4 While the Narco Property has not been developed, the City of Renton has completed long-range master planning that integrates the property and future recreation facilities with Cedar River Park, Liberty Park, and the Cedar River Trail.

Exhibit 5-19: Potential Section 4(f) Resources Identified in the Study Area

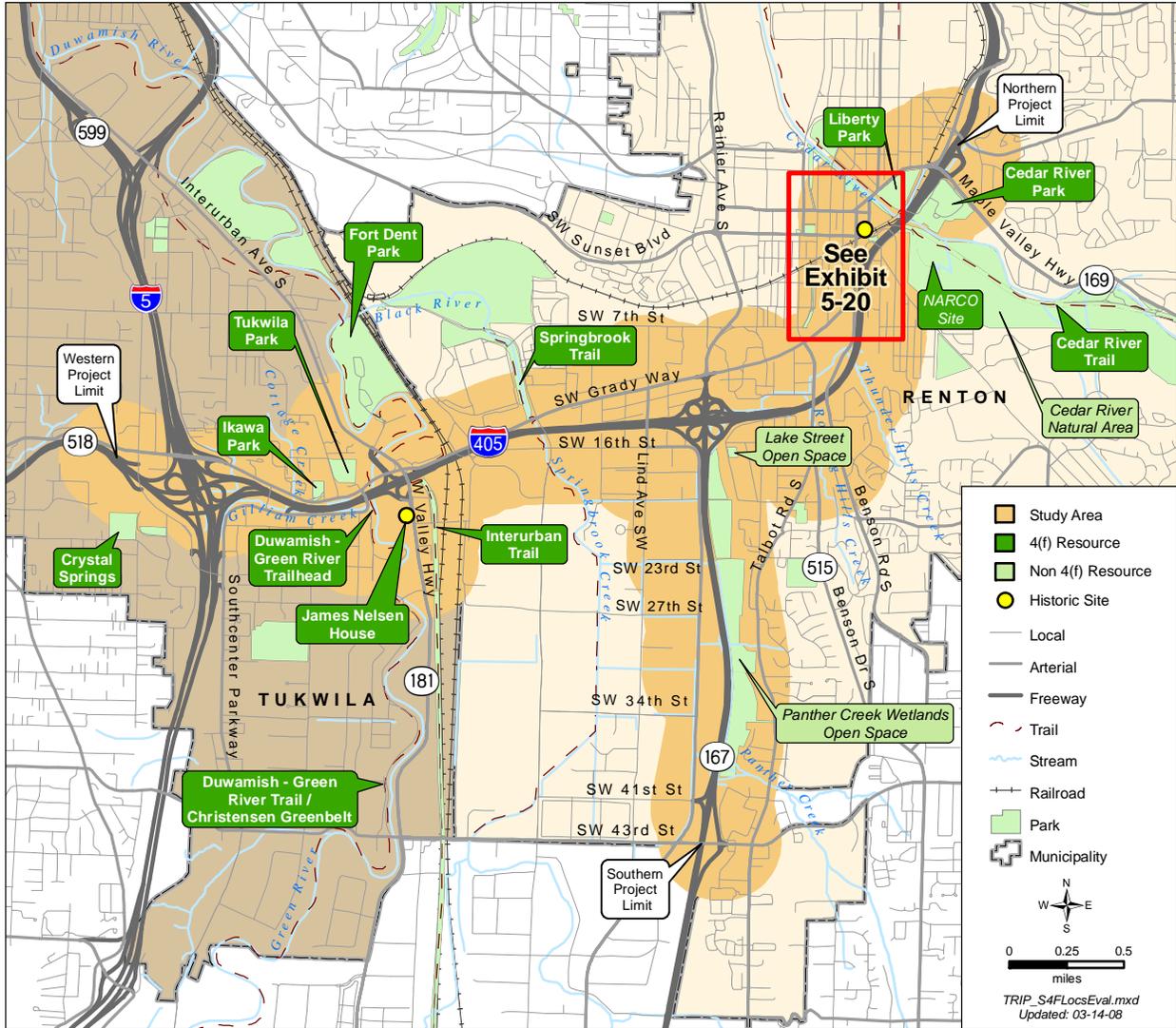


Exhibit 5-20: Inset, Potential Section 4(f) Resources Identified in the Study Area



What historic and cultural resources are located in the study area?

Historic properties found within the project area are presented in Exhibit 5-21 along with their status as historic properties and whether or not they are protected under Section 4(f).

Exhibit 5-21: Historic Properties Compared Against Section 4(f) Criteria

Property(Jurisdiction)	Listed on National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)	NRHP Status	Section 4(f) Protected Property
James Nelsen House (Private Trust) ¹	No	Eligible	Yes
Renton History Museum (Renton) ¹	No	Eligible	Yes

1. Property listed on the Washington Heritage Register.

How will construction activities affect recreational and cultural resources?

During development of the project, the I-405 Team strove to find reasonable options that avoid effects to the community and the environment while improving driving conditions for motorists on I-405. The development of a viable project necessitated finding an optimal balance between meeting the project purpose and need and minimizing project effects. FHWA and WSDOT also considered avoidance alternatives to eliminate effects to Section 4(f) resources.

Recreational Resources

The Tukwila to Renton Project would have a Section 4 (f) use at the following five resources:

- Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead
- Cedar River Park
- Liberty Park
- Cedar River Trail
- Narco Property

The project is also expected to have a Section 6(f) use at the Duwamish-Green River Trail/Christensen Greenbelt. The Section 4(f) and 6(f) uses are detailed below starting at the west end of the project and moving east (northbound):

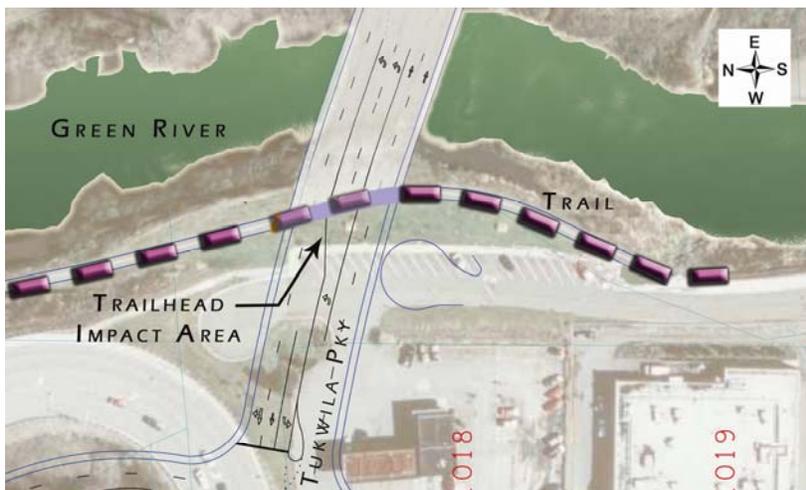
- **Duwamish-Green River Trail/Christensen Greenbelt.** While no land will be permanently incorporated into the transportation facility, the trail will experience a temporary occupancy so that the trail's slope can be revised to ensure adequate clearance for the trail beneath the bridges. The trail will be lowered by up to eight feet to maintain a minimum 10-foot vertical clearance between the new Tukwila Parkway Bridge and the trail. This occupancy does not constitute a "use" because the closure will be temporary and over a shorter duration than the construction of the full project. The trail will be restored following construction. The City of Tukwila has concurred with this finding as documented in Appendix B.

The project will not have a direct use under Section 4(f) because the bridges will span the trail and the piers for the bridges will not be located within the 14-foot-wide trail

property. However, due to the new bridge spanning above the trail, air rights will be effected, which are considered a Section 6(f) conversion impact. The RCO will review the Section 6(f) conversion request for this permanent direct use effect. The RCO, a state agency, administers federal and state funding to acquire, develop, and restore real properties for public outdoor recreation.

- **Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead.** Approximately 4,500 square feet of land will be permanently incorporated into the transportation facility as a result of the construction of the Tukwila Parkway extension as shown in Exhibit 5-22. This loss of land will also displace 13 parking stalls.

Exhibit 5-22: Impact Area at Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead



- **Tri-Park complex.** The City of Renton proposes to combine Cedar River Park, Liberty Park, and the Narco Property into one large integrated park complex, Tri-Park. These properties plus the Cedar River Trail share common borders. As a precursor to planning the I-405 improvements in Renton, the City of Renton recreational facilities at Liberty and Cedar River Parks, Cedar River Trail, and the Narco property and an improved (widened) I-405 could co-exist in a physically constrained area. The resulting charrette concept integrated Liberty Park, Cedar River Park, and the Narco property into one large park complex. The design scheme assumed redeveloping both existing parks, realigning the trail, developing the Narco site with sports fields, and acquiring an additional property to the east to develop ball fields. This is known



Baseline view of Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead



Proposed view of Duwamish-Green River Trail Trailhead

What is a design charrette?

A charrette consists of an intense period of design activity. It is a collaborative session in which a group of stakeholders and technical experts draft a solution to a design problem. A charrette typically promotes joint ownership of solutions and attempts to defuse traditional confrontational attitudes between stakeholders.

as the City of Renton's Tri-Park Master Plan. More information about the Tri-Park Master Plan can be obtained by contacting the City of Renton.

WSDOT will permanently acquire 35,752 square feet of land at Cedar River Park to construct the northbound off-ramp from I-405 to SR 169. WSDOT will not acquire any land from Liberty Park, Cedar River Trail, and the Narco property.

While the proposed direct uses can be measured and expressed in a quantifiable area, both WSDOT and the City of Renton concur that the Tukwila to Renton Project will impose other, even though less quantifiable, adverse uses to the recreation environments at Liberty Park, Cedar River Park, Cedar River Trail, and the Narco property. These uses will include:

- Reconstructing the pedestrian bridge for the Cedar River Trail over the Cedar River.
- Replacing one of the Cedar River Park accesses with a new secondary access.
- Reconfiguring the service access and parking on west side of the Community Center at Cedar River Park.
- Removing and replacing landscaping at the northwest corner of Cedar River Park.
- Relocating the SR 169 entrance to Cedar River Park further south along SR 169.
- Eliminating major access to Liberty Park by removing the Houser Way Bridge.
- Modifying the existing access road under I-405 to the Narco property.

The project was also evaluated to determine whether any constructive use would occur. Noise, visual quality, and air quality studies were completed for the Tukwila to Renton Project EA. These studies found that the project would not have constructive uses at any of the recreational properties within the study area. See the *Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation* in Appendix O for more information on these findings.

Cultural Resources

The Tukwila to Renton Project will have no direct or indirect effects on the two NRHP-eligible historic structures within the project's APE (James Nelsen House and Renton History Museum). Approximately 27,350 square feet land will be permanently acquired from the James Nelsen House property when Tukwila Parkway is extended to SR 181. However, this property does not meet the criteria for protection under Section 4(f). Only the James Nelsen House itself is covered under Section 4(f) as a historic structure. Features in the area where the encroachment will occur consist of former pasture and ornamental landscaping that separates the James Nelsen House structure from a commercial parking lot and SR 181. These features do not contribute to what makes the structure historically significant. Although construction will produce noise and vibration in the vicinity of the Nelsen House, and the project will introduce a freeway access ramp directly adjacent to the property, the Nelsen House is already surrounded by freeway features and urban development. Therefore, noise and vibration will be similar to existing levels and the property's setting will change little.

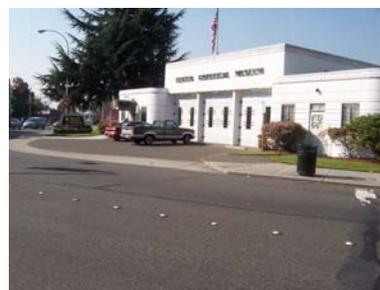
Increased traffic due to closing Houser Way could potentially increase noise or vibration near the Renton History Museum. However, the building has already experienced a change in setting from its original construction, and this project will not further alter the setting. The Main Avenue design option to replace local access would increase noise and vibration minimally because this building is separated from Main Avenue by the Veterans Memorial Park.

Direct and indirect effects to currently unknown archaeological sites in the currently unfunded and inaccessible area of the APE will be determined under provisions of the I-405 Programmatic Agreement (see Appendix C).

The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) has concurred with these findings (see Appendix B).



James Nelsen House



Renton History Museum

How will the completed project affect the recreational and cultural resources?

Recreational Resources

There will not be a constructive use of any park in the study area as a result of the Tukwila to Renton Project.

The design charrette that resulted in the City of Renton's Tri-Park Master Plan identified anticipated effects to these Tri-Park recreational facilities. The Tri-Park Master Plan and agreement with the City includes mitigation for effects from the Tukwila to Renton Project.

Cultural Resources

This project will have no adverse effects on historic and archaeological resources.

What would happen to the recreational and cultural resources if WSDOT did not build this project?

Recreational Resources

Under the No Build Alternative, the use of recreational resources would be avoided. However, the No Build Alternative is not considered to be a feasible and prudent alternative as it would neither reduce congestion nor increase roadway capacity on I-405.

The No Build Alternative will have an adverse effect on the City of Renton Tri-Park Master Plan. The implementation of the City Master Plan improvements at Cedar River Park, Liberty Park, Cedar River Trail, and at the Narco property is contingent on WSDOT proceeding with the Tukwila to Renton Project. The No Build Alternative will cause the city to re-evaluate the master plan for recreation facilities at these locations.

Cultural Resources

Historic and archaeological resources in the area would remain unaffected if this project is not built.