

health risk to personnel maintaining the pipeline or to individuals in the vicinity of a rupture. No known human health risk is associated with underground fiber-optic cables.

No known active or former landfills, dumps, or underground storage tanks are within the boundaries of the study area. Based on the past land use of the area and its relatively undisturbed condition, it is unlikely that any significant quantities of potentially hazardous materials or waste are present that could pose a threat to human health.

OHV recreation activities currently occur within various portions of the study area. A risk of vehicle accidents exists, along with a potential for resulting injuries to humans. No designated OHV areas are located within the boundaries of the study area, but evidence exists throughout much of the area that OHVs do go off-road. Traffic accidents, particularly along Fort Irwin Road and State Highway 127, also pose a health and safety risk to humans. The presence of windblown dust during heavy windstorms could serve to increase the risk of traffic accidents along these two roads.

### **3.18.3 Environmental Health and Safety of Children**

Executive Order (EO) 13045 signed on April 21, 1997 mandates the investigation of environmental effects on children. This Executive Order acknowledges that children may suffer disproportionately from environmental health risks and safety risks. Therefore, each federal agency is required to make it a priority to identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children and ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health or safety risks. Accordingly, this SDEIS will abide by the EO and determine the baseline environmental conditions and effects of the proposed action on children.

Baseline conditions for various different mediums have been discussed in specific sections of this SDEIS, namely Air Quality (Section 3.7), Water Resources (Section 3.4), Soils (Section 3.3), Noise (Section 3.8), Mining (Section 3.11), and Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste (Section 3.17). For detailed descriptions, please see the above-mentioned sections, as this section only summarizes baseline conditions for the health and safety of children.

Children are exposed to the same dangers already discussed earlier in this chapter, those of extreme climate conditions, venomous reptiles and insects, and aggressive vegetation. Due to the vastness and remoteness of the area, children are susceptible to being caught in wildfires or flash floods. Man-made features are also a danger to children left unattended. They could fall into any of the numerous active or abandoned mines or water wells.

### **3.19 Environmental Justice**

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice In Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* requires that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations” (EO 12898).

Executive Order 12898 also establishes that each federal agency must ensure that public documents, notices, and hearings are readily available to the public. The Army published a NOI in the Federal Register on October 16, 2001 announcing its intention to prepare an SDEIS, to take over lead agency responsibilities for the proposed action, and to set the time and place for scoping meetings. Two meetings were held on November 29, 2001 in Barstow, California. An

interested party mailing list compiled since the beginning of the land expansion project in 1985 was updated and used to notify the public about the meetings. Three additional scoping meetings were held in January 2002 in Riverside and Los Angeles counties. Public advertisements for these meetings were placed on December 16, 2001 in the following newspapers: Desert Dispatch; Los Angeles Times; Orange County Register; Riverside Press Enterprise; San Bernardino County Sun; and San Diego Tribune.

The Army also maintains a website at <http://www.fortirwinlandexpansion.com> that is dedicated to the land expansion project. The website contains background information on the project, maps of currently considered alternatives, answers to frequently asked questions, and linked documents. The website facilitates comments on scoping and draft documents and provides announcements for upcoming meetings. The website will remain on line throughout the land expansion project.

### 3.19.1 Region of Influence

The ROI used for the environmental justice analysis is defined as the geographic region inside which the possible adverse human health or environmental effects of the NTC's proposed expansion at Fort Irwin may occur. The geographic area in which direct impacts from the proposed project are likely to result is the study area.

### 3.19.2 Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

For the purposes of this analysis minority populations are defined as follows:

**Minority populations** – persons of Hispanic or Latino origin of any race or persons of one of the following races: Black or African American; American Indian and Alaska Native; Asian; or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander.

**Low-income populations** – those persons living below the poverty level, which was established by the US Census Bureau as a total income of less than \$8,501 for one individual in 1999.

The study area has approximately 150 residents whose demographics are the same as San Bernardino County. Minority and poverty information for San Bernardino County, California was obtained from the US Census Bureau, Census 2000. In 2000 the estimated total population of the San Bernardino County was 1,709,434. Of the total population for San Bernardino County 260,590 or 15.3 percent were of minority race and 39.2 percent (669,387) were Hispanic or Latino. Blacks and African Americans comprised 9.1 percent (155,348) of the county's population, while American Indians and Alaska Natives comprised 1.2 percent (19,915). Asians comprised 4.7 percent (80,217) of the population in the county and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders comprised 0.3 percent (5,110).

In 1995, 15.8 percent or 263,412 individuals of the San Bernardino County population were considered low income and living below the poverty level.

As the demographics for the study area are the same as for San Bernardino County, the population affected by the land expansion project will not disproportionately impact any minority group. No disproportionate or significant social, economic, or health impact to the study area residents is anticipated.