



INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

CITY OF HOLLISTER

SAN BENITO RIVER GREENWAY

DECEMBER 2008

Lead Agency:

City of Hollister
Engineering Department
375 Fifth Street
Hollister, CA 95024



Prepared By:

Analytical Environmental Services
1801 7th Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, Ca 95811



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SECTION 1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF STUDY

This document examines the potential environmental effects associated with construction and operation of the proposed San Benito River Greenway (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project would result in the development of a recreational trail and two associated parking lots within the City of Hollister along the San Benito River between Bridge Road and Apricot Lane. The proposed trail would accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian uses. This Initial Study has been prepared for the City of Hollister (Lead Agency) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 (as amended), codified in California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 *et seq.*, and the State CEQA *Guidelines* in the Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3.

This Initial Study identifies potentially significant impacts and where applicable, presents mitigation measures that would reduce all identified environmental impacts to less-than-significant levels. Therefore, as discussed in **Section 4.0**, this Initial Study would support a Mitigated Negative Declaration as defined under CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15070.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the Proposed Project, involving at least one impact requiring mitigation to bring it to a less-than-significant level. Impacts to these resources are evaluated using the checklist included in **Section 3.0**. The Proposed Project was determined to have a less-than-significant impact or no impact even without mitigation on unchecked resource areas.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Population |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utility and Service Systems |

1.3 EVALUATION TERMINOLOGY

The following terminology is used to describe the levels of significance for impacts identified for each resource area discussed in **Section 3.0**.

- A conclusion of ***no impact*** is used when it is determined the Proposed Project would not adversely impact the resource area under evaluation.
- A conclusion of ***less than significant impact*** is used when it is determined the Proposed Project's adverse impacts to a resource area would not exceed established thresholds of significance.
- A conclusion of ***less than significant impact with mitigation*** is used when it is determined that mitigation measures would be required to reduce the Proposed Project's adverse impacts below established thresholds of significance.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This document is organized into the following sections:

Section 1.0 – Introduction: Describes the purpose, contents, and organization of the document.

Section 2.0 – Project Description: Includes a detailed description of the Proposed Project.

Section 3.0 – Environmental Impact Analysis: Contains the Environmental Checklist from CEQA *Guidelines* Appendix G with a discussion of potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Project. Mitigation measures, if necessary, are noted following each impact discussion.

Section 4.0 – Significance Determination: Identifies the determination of whether impacts associated with development of the Proposed Project are significant, and what, if any, additional environmental documentation may be required.

Section 5.0 – List of Preparers

Section 6.0 – References

Appendices – Contains technical reports, permits, and other information to supplement **Section 2.0** and **Section 3.0**.

SECTION 2.0

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

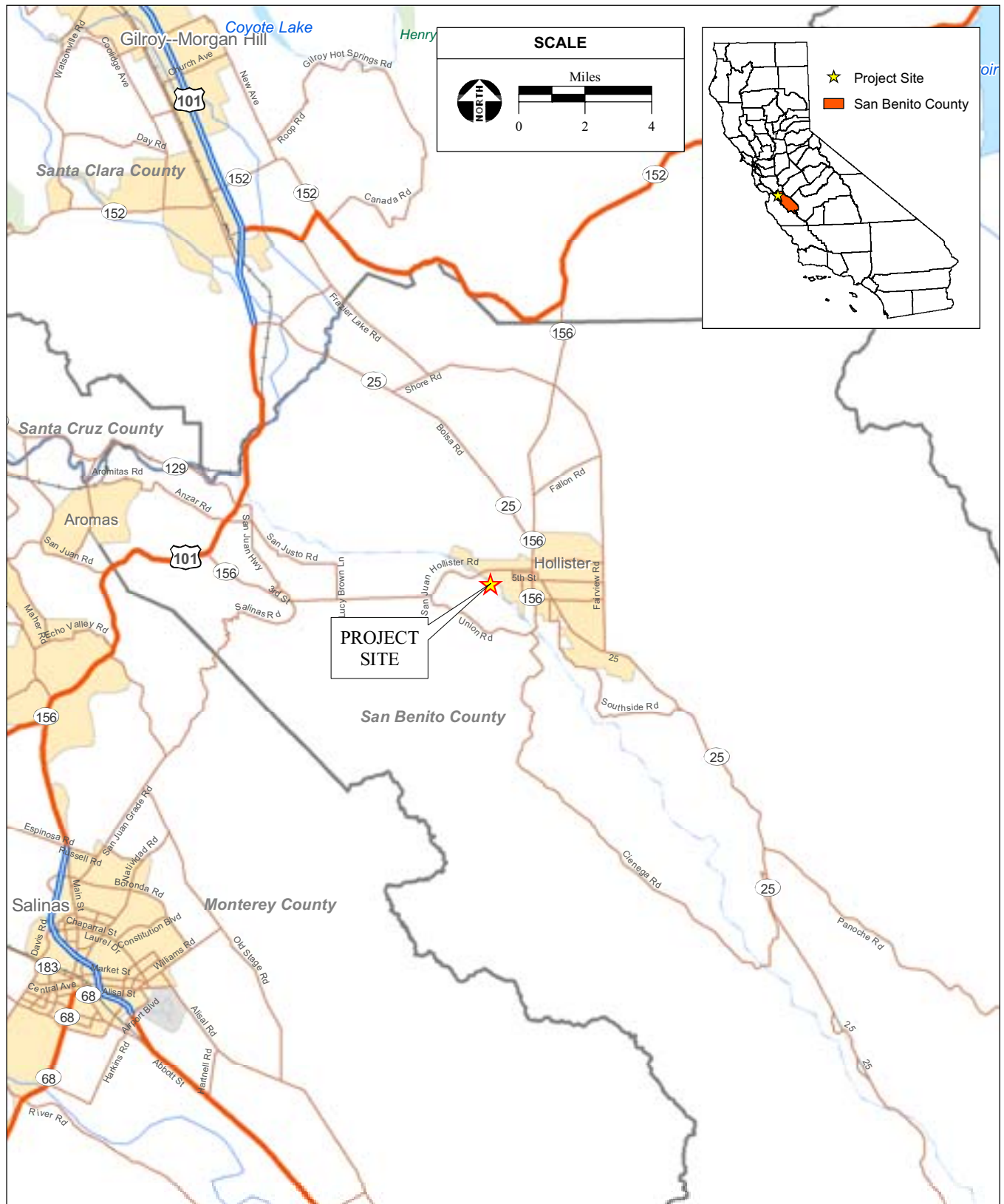
The City of Hollister (City) proposes to construct improvements to an existing unpaved unauthorized trail that has been established by trespass along the San Benito River between Bridge Road and Apricot Lane, along the southern edge of the City's Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP). The Proposed Project would improve public access to the existing unauthorized trail and would enhance recreational uses in the project area. This section provides a description of the Proposed Project that serves as the basis for assessment of potential environmental consequences associated with development of the Proposed Project in **Section 3.0**.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The Proposed Project would be located in the City of Hollister, San Benito County, California (**Figure 2-1** and **Figure 2-2**). The project area is located in the western portion of the City of Hollister at the West Gateway entrance, just north of the city limits. The majority of the proposed trail alignment is located on or at the base of the IWTP levee, immediately south of the City's IWTP. This levee is owned and maintained by the City of Hollister as part of the IWTP. The proposed northern parking area is located at the southern corner of the intersection of Bridge Road and Bridgevale Road, just north of the San Juan Hollister Bridge and adjacent to an unused pump station formerly utilized by the City to divert wastewater from the Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant (DWTP) to the IWTP. The proposed southern parking area is located at the western end of Apricot Lane, east of the IWTP ponds and an inactive sand mining operation. Residential development is located north of the proposed parking area on Bridge Road and east of the proposed parking area on Apricot Lane. Agricultural fields and the future site of Riverside Park are located west of the project area on the opposite bank of the San Benito River.

2.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

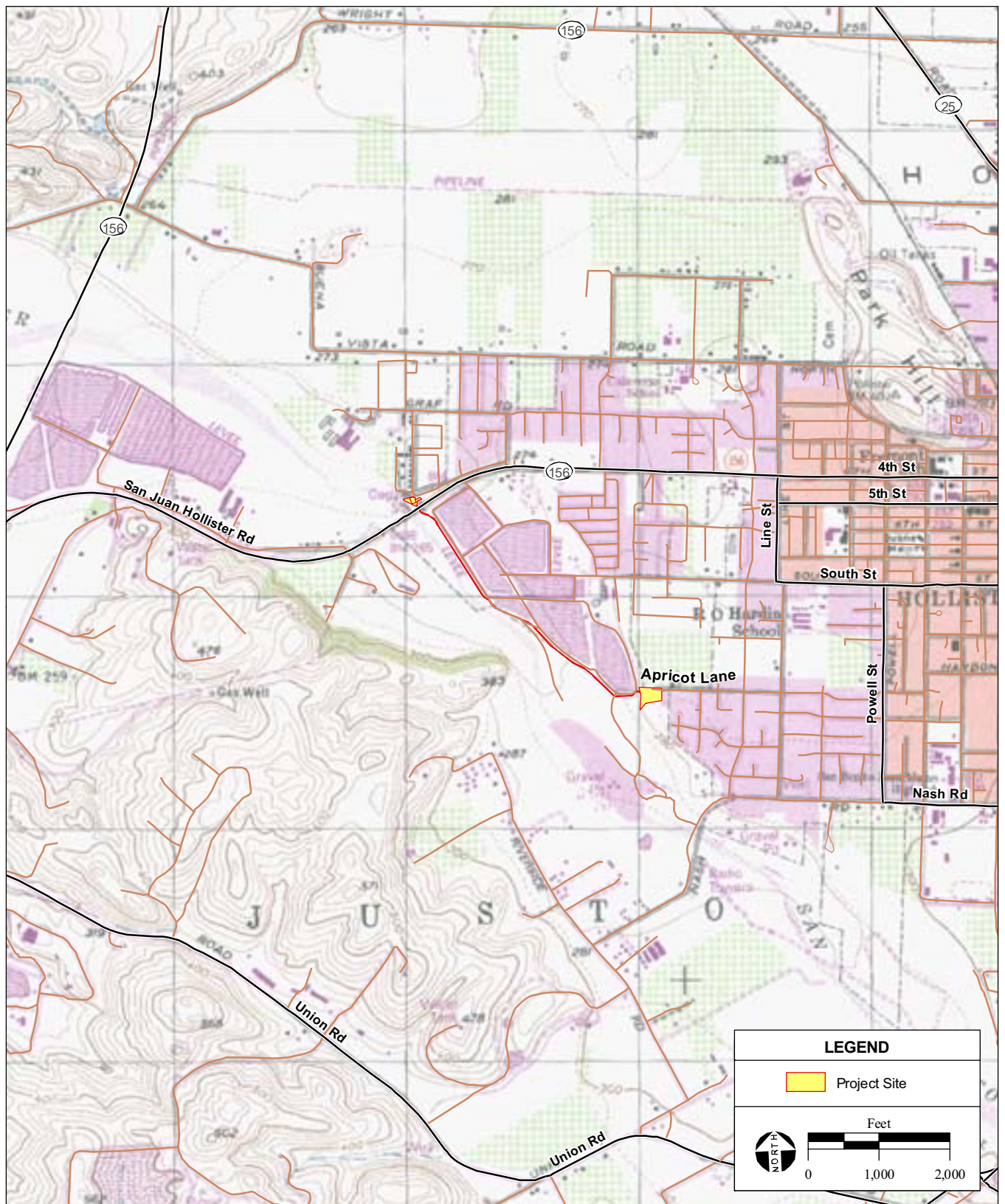
The City's General Plan (2005) identifies the use of stream corridors and flood zones for linear parks or greenways. The City's Park Facility Master Plan (2002) states that the San Benito River and drainage corridor tributaries within the City limits could be utilized for trails, open space, and linear parks. The Park Facility Master Plan identifies a river parkway trail on the west side of the City near the San Benito River. The Proposed Project would be the first segment of this trail. The Proposed Project would be consistent with both the City's General Plan (2005) and Park Facility Master Plan (2002).



SOURCE: ESRI Data, 2006; AES, 2008

San Benito River Greenway Project Initial Study / 208536 ■

Figure 2-1
Regional Location Map



SOURCE: "Hollister, CA" USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle, T12S R5E , Unsectioned Areas of Hollister Valley, Mt. Diablo Baseline & Meridian; AES, 2008

San Benito River Greenway Project Initial Study / 208536 ■

Figure 2-2
Site & Vicinity Map

2.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Proposed Project is designed to meet the following objectives:

- To maximize the availability of recreational opportunities in underserved neighborhoods as recommended in the City of Hollister Park Facility Master Plan.
- To increase the amount of land dedicated to park uses to keep pace with anticipated population growth as identified in the City of Hollister General Plan.

2.5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following discussion provides a description of the Proposed Project components shown in **Figure 2-3**. Proposed improvements consist of two parking areas (at Bridge Road and at Apricot Lane), realignment of the perimeter fence at the IWTP, and pavement overlay on an existing dirt trail. The paved trail would be approximately 10 feet wide and would extend at or along the base of the IWTP perimeter levee between the two parking areas. The total length of the paved trail would be approximately 4,000 feet. Informational signs, a visitor's kiosk and drinking water fountains may be provided at one or both of the parking areas.

2.5.1 PROJECT COMPONENTS

Parking Areas

Bridge Road

The Bridge Road parking area would encompass approximately 0.32 acres and consists of the vehicle ingress/egress point from Bridge Road and approximately 7 parking stalls, including one Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant parking stall with an 8-foot parking access aisle. This parking area would be accessed from Bridge Road at its intersection with Bridgevale Road and would provide a connection with the existing trail beneath the San Juan Hollister Road overpass. This parking area would also include informational signs and a visitor's kiosk, minor native landscaping, and may include a drinking fountain.

Apricot Lane

The Apricot Lane parking area would encompass approximately 1.5 acres and consists of an ingress/egress point from Apricot Lane with approximately 11 parking stalls, including one ADA compliant parking stall with an 8-foot parking access aisle. This parking area would include informational signs and a visitor's kiosk and may include a drinking fountain. A landscaped picnic area would be developed for passive public recreation use south of the parking area (**Figure 2-3**).



SOURCE: City of Hollister, 2008; USGS Aerial Photograph, 2003; AES, 2008

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Figure 2-3
Site Plan

Pedestrian/Bike/Equestrian Trail

The proposed paved trail would generally follow the alignment of an unauthorized trail that has been established by trespass along the western edge of the IWTP. The paved trail would be approximately 10 feet wide with an approximate 30 foot wide limit of work for landscaping improvements. Native trees would be planted along the paved trail for shade and habitat enhancement. From the Bridge Road parking area, the paved trail would pass under the existing bridge where the perimeter fence would be adjusted to remain near the road on the levee. Approximately 1,000 feet southeast of the Bridge Road parking area, the trail would transition to the top of the levee and would follow an existing unpaved maintenance road located within the IWTP boundaries. At the transition of the trail to the top of the levee, the IWTP perimeter fence would be relocated north of the trail alignment to prevent pedestrian access to the IWTP property, and to allow open views of the San Benito River riparian corridor. The proposed trail would also include the installation of a recycled water line for irrigation purposes.

2.5.2 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Grading and Ground Disturbance

Ground disturbing activities associated with the development of the paved trail would occur primarily within previously disturbed areas comprising the unauthorized trail that has been established by trespass and maintenance roads. Grading for the proposed Bridge Road parking area would occur within an undeveloped parcel adjacent to existing housing. While grading for the Apricot Lane parking area would occur in an area previously used for agricultural purposes. The total area of disturbance would consist of 4.57 acres, including landscaped areas along the trail corridor and parking areas. No construction activities would occur within the riparian corridor or within the San Benito River channel. The proposed parking areas would be developed in previously disturbed areas.

Staging Areas

Staging areas for the storage of construction equipment and materials would be located in previously disturbed areas at the Bridge Road and Apricot Lane parking sites.

Construction Schedule

Construction of the Proposed Project is scheduled to begin in mid-February of 2009 and is anticipated to last approximately 30 calendar days. All construction activities will take place between 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Work hours may be extended if approved by the City and adequate notification is provided to residents.

2.6 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS, PERMITS, AND APPROVALS

Implementation of the Proposed Project would require the following regulatory approvals:

- The City of Hollister would adopt this IS/MND under the requirements of CEQA.
- The City of Hollister would adopt of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan that incorporates the mitigation measures identified in this document.

SECTION 3.0

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS (CHECKLIST)

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS (CHECKLIST)

3.1 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) *Guidelines* Section 15063, an initial study should provide the lead agency with sufficient information to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) or negative declaration (ND) for a proposed project. The CEQA *Guidelines* state that an initial study may identify environmental impacts by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that conclusions are briefly explained and supported by relevant evidence. If it is determined that a particular physical impact to the environment could occur, then the checklist must indicate whether the impact is Potentially Significant, Less Than Significant with Mitigation, or Less Than Significant. Findings of No Impact for issues that can be demonstrated not to apply to a proposed project do not require further discussion.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

<u>AESTHETICS</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock croppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

The Proposed Project is located at the western edge of the City of Hollister near the West Gateway Special Planning Area on the edge of a developed urban area consisting of agricultural, residential, industrial, and light commercial uses. The project site is bordered by the City's IWTP to the east and the San Benito River riparian area to the west. Residential neighborhoods are located adjacent to the proposed parking areas and dominate the project area to the north and east in these locations. The proposed parking areas and segments of the paved pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian trail would be visible from Bridge Road, San Juan Road, and Apricot Lane. The project site is not located along a designated State Scenic Highway. The west entrance to Hollister is blighted but the City's General Plan includes policies and programs to improve the west entrance as a gateway corridor.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A, B, and C

The Proposed Project would consist of minor improvements to an unauthorized trail that has been established by trespass and the construction of two parking areas with limited amenities. Minimal landscaping and native trees would be planted along the paved trail. The existing visual character would remain largely unchanged. Open views of the San Benito riparian corridor and adjacent hills are visible from the proposed trail alignment to the west. The Proposed Project would not alter these views. There are no scenic resources i.e., trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a state scenic highway that would be impacted by the project. The Proposed Project would result in a ***less than significant impact*** to visual resources.

Question D

The Proposed Project could involve the installation of street lighting within the proposed parking areas. Street lamps are currently located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed parking areas. The lighting for the parking areas will comply with the requirements of the City's Zoning Ordinance (Section 17.48.020 Design requirements for parking lots and areas) which states that "Any lighting used to illuminate any off-street parking lot or parking area shall be so arranged as to reflect the light away from the adjoining premises in any R [residential] district which will meet the standards established by the site and architectural review committee." The Proposed Project would therefore not introduce new sources of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. **No impacts** would occur.

<u>AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the Project:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

The City has dedicated an estimated 562 acres within the City limits (5.8 percent) as Agriculture (City of Hollister, 2005). The City's General Plan designates lands as Prime Farmland when they are found to have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for crop production, and have the soil quality, growing season and moisture supply needed to produce sustained yields of crops when treated and managed (City of Hollister, 2005). The City's General Plan designates lands as Farmland of Statewide Importance that contain soils that have a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops for soils that can be used for agricultural purposes (City of Hollister, 2005). Land must have been used for the cultivation of irrigated crops within the past ten years in order to be designated as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The City's General Plan designates the majority of the project site as Open Space and Public. No parcels are designated in the as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance within the project area vicinity.

The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) designates most of the project site as Urban and Built-Up Land (California Department of Conservation, 2007). The proposed Apricot Lane parking area is designated by the FMMP as Grazing Land which is defined as land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A-C

As discussed above, the proposed trail corridor and parking areas are not designated in the City's General Plan or by the FMMP as Prime farmland, Unique farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The proposed Apricot Lane parking area is designated by the FMMP as Grazing Land; however, the parcel is not currently used for grazing purposes. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not directly, nor indirectly, convert active farmland into non-agricultural uses, nor would it conflict with zoning for agricultural use or with Williamson Act contracts. **No impacts** to agricultural resources would occur.

<u>AIR QUALITY</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where applicable, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

The project area is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which includes Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties. The project site is located within the portion of the Basin that is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD).

Winds originating in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin often transport pollutants into the NCCAB. The transport of pollutants can often cause exceedances of air quality standard in the NCCAB. The regional temperature averages in the low 70s (Fahrenheit) for highs and the middle 40s for lows. Precipitation averages approximately 12.31 inches per year (1949 to 2006) (Western Regional Climate Center, 2008).

Local Air Quality Conditions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified six criteria air pollutants (CAPs) that are both common and detrimental to human health. These CAPs are used as indicators of regional and local air quality. The six CAPs include: ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). The area monitored by the MBUAPCD, including the project site, is in non-attainment for O₃ (8-hour and 1-hour standard) and PM₁₀ according to the

California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) (**Table 3-1**). All other pollutants are considered in attainment (or unclassified) under the CAAQS and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

TABLE 3-1. MBUAPCD ATTAINMENT STATUS

Pollutant	State Status	Federal Status
Ozone (O ₃) - 1- hour	Non-attainment	—
Ozone (O ₃) - 8- hour	Unclassified/Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	Non-attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Unclassified/Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Lead (Pb)	Attainment	—
Source: CARB, 2008		

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are generally defined as land uses that house people who are susceptible to experience adverse impacts from air pollution emissions and, as such, should be given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. Sensitive receptors include facilities that house or attract children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Sensitive receptors in the vicinity of project site include residential housing located north and east of the proposed parking areas.

The R.O. Hardin Elementary School, located at 881 Line Road and the Early Childhood Education Center, located at 1011 Line Street are the closest schools to the project site at over 1,700 feet away. Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital located at 911 Sunset Drive is the closest medical facility to the project site at 1.8 miles southeast.

CEQA Thresholds

The MBUAPCD provides project-level CEQA thresholds in the district's 2004 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines. A potentially significant impact would occur if the disturbed area is greater than 8.1 acres when minimal earthmoving activity occurs or if the Proposed Project PM₁₀ emissions exceed 82 pounds per day. The MBUAPCD has set emission thresholds for ROG and NOx at 137 pounds per day and for PM₁₀ at 82 pounds per day.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A, B, and C

Construction

Construction of the Proposed Project would result in minor emissions of CAPs associated with equipment operation. Construction related emission of ozone precursors (NO_x and VOC) have been addressed in the emission inventories of federal- and California-required air plans (MBUAPCD, 2008). Construction activities would consist of minimal grading and earth moving activities. Emission of PM₁₀ would not be considered significant under the MBUAQMD CEQA guidelines because the area of disturbance is less than 8.1 acres. As shown in **Table 3-2**, PM₁₀ emissions would be less than MBUAPCD threshold of 82 pounds per day. Mitigation measures listed below would further reduce PM₁₀, ROG and NO_x emissions. Impacts to air quality associated with construction activities would be considered **less than significant**.

Table 3-2. MITIGATED (UNMITIGATED) CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Year 2009	ROG	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5	CO2
	pounds per day						
Construction Emissions	6.51(6.51)	45.25(53.19)	29.29(29.29)	0.00(0.00)	18.84(48.29)	4.08(9.53)	4,706(4,706)
MBUAPCD CEQA Threshold	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	82	N/A	N/A
Exceeds Threshold	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
Source: URBEMIS 9.2.4, 2007 (Appendix A)							

Diesel Particulate Matter

In 1998 California identified diesel particulate matter (DPM) as a toxic air contaminate due to its potentially adverse health effects. DPM would be emitted from diesel construction equipment used during the construction of the paved trail. Use of diesel equipment during construction could result in a potentially significant impact by exposing near-by residents and construction workers to potentially hazardous levels of DPM. Impacts due to DPM can be reduced to a less than significant level with the use of equipment that complies with 2004 model year standards or by using a non-diesel fuel. **Mitigation Measure AQ-1** requires incorporation of measures to reduce DPM emissions to a less than significant level.

Summary

With the implementation of BMPs listed under **Mitigation Measure AQ-1** below, construction related emissions would be considered less than significant.

Operation

According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) trip generation rate numbers, park operational activities are expected to generate up to 2.28 vehicle trips per day per acre of land use (Institute of

Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation 7th* edition, 2003 [412]). The total project area was determined to be 4.57 acres based on a 30-foot-wide landscaped trail corridor and 1.81 acres of parking area. It is estimated that the new trips would originate within approximately 11.8 miles of the project site (URBEMIS default value, refer to **Appendix A**). Thus, up to an estimated 122.95 miles per day traveled could occur during operation of the project. As shown in **Table 3-3**, operational emissions would not exceed MBUAPCD CEQA thresholds; therefore, air quality impacts associated with operation of the Proposed Project would be considered ***less than significant***.

Table 3-3. UNMITIGATED OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Operation	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}	CO ₂
	pounds per day						
Emissions	0.19	0.25	1.90	0.00	0.21	0.04	116.27
MBUAPCD CEQA Threshold	137	137	550	150	82	N/A	N/A
Exceeds Threshold	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	N/A
Source: URBEMIS 9.2.4, 2007 (Appendix A)							

Question D

Construction

Several residences border the proposed parking areas located at both ends of the proposed pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian trail and would be considered sensitive receptors. The closest school facilities that would be considered sensitive receptors are the Early Childhood Education facility and the R.O. Hardin Elementary School located approximately 1,700 feet east of the project site.

Construction of the Proposed Project would be temporary and intermittent, and the location of construction would move along the project corridor, which would allow pollutants to disperse. There would not be any substantial buildup of pollution concentrations due to construction activities; therefore, a ***less than significant impact*** would occur.

Operation

As shown in **Table 3-3**, operational emissions would not exceed MBUAPCD CEQA thresholds and operation of the Proposed Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. A ***less than significant impact*** would occur.

Question E

The operation of the Proposed Project would not emit odors. Construction odors are generally limited to fuel exhaust emissions from heavy equipment and are generally not detected beyond the project boundary. The project would be required to comply with MBUAPCD Nuisance Rule 402 which states that "No person shall discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public; or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the

public; or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property” (MBUAPCD, 2002). **No impact** would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

AQ-1 The following best management practices would be specified on construction plans and implemented during construction to reduce construction-related emissions:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily. Frequency should be based on type of operation, soil, and wind exposure.
- Watering shall be used to control dust general during loading materials onto trucks.
- Prohibit all grading activities during periods when winds are over 15 miles per hour.
- Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand or loose materials or maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
- Cover all trucks hauling demolition debris from the site.
- Plant vegetative ground cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible.
- Cover inactive storage piles.
- Sweep streets if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site.
- Post a visible sign, which specifies the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints.
- Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands) within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days).
- A publicly visible sign shall be posted at the intersections of San Juan/Graf Road, San Juan Road/Miller Road and Apricot Lane/Westside Boulevard that advises the public with dust complaints to contact the City of Hollister Code Enforcement Department (831) 636-4356 the phone number of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (831) 647-9411.
- The construction plans for site grading shall specify that diesel earthmoving and/or excavation equipment shall be of a model year 2004 or newer or retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalyst filters or fueled during construction with B99 bio diesel fuel.

<u>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native residents or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

METHODOLOGY

A list of special-status species that may potentially occur in the vicinity of the study area was compiled based on:

- A review of pertinent literature and aerial photographs;
- A U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) list of federally listed special-status species with the potential to occur on or to be affected by projects on the "Hollister, California" 7.5-minute U.S. Geological (USGS) topographic quadrangle (quad) (USFWS, 2008) (**Appendix B**);

- A California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) query of special-status species known to occur on the “Hollister, California” 7.5 minute USGS topographic quad and the eight surrounding quads (CDFG, 2003) (**Appendix B**);
- A CNDDDB map of known occurrences of special-status species documented within five miles of the study area (**Figure 3-1**); and
- A California Native Plant Society (CNPS) query of special-status species known to occur on the “Hollister, California” 7.5 minute USGS topographic quad and the eight surrounding quads (CNPS, 2008).

AES conducted a reconnaissance level survey of the survey area to capture baseline conditions on November 12, 2008. The survey area encompasses a 500 foot buffer around the project site. The project site includes the trail alignment, the Bridge Road parking area (Site A), and the Apricot Road parking area (Site B). The survey consisted of evaluating habitat types, documenting potential habitat for federal and state listed special-status species with the potential to occur within the survey area, and conducting an informal delineation. The field survey consisted of walking transects in order to view and evaluate all areas within the project site. A topographic map was used to map biological habitats during the fieldwork.

Habitat types were classified based on Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (Holland, 1986), and modified to reflect the current conditions on the project site. The nomenclature described in the habitat types was based on the Jepson Manual-Higher Plants of California (Hickman 1993).

During the November 12, 2008 field assessment, AES biologists observed that a portion of the proposed project site along the levee had been recently disturbed by brush removal and grading to facilitate construction survey assessments. No additional shrub removal is anticipated for the proposed project.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Habitat Types

The proposed project is located within the Inner South Coast Range region, which is immediately west of the San Joaquin Valley (Hickman, 1993).




Habitat types observed during the surveys are summarized in **Table 3-4** and illustrated in **Figure 3-2**. Representative photographs of habitat types are illustrated in **Figures 3-3**. Habitat types, wildlife, and trees observed in the vicinity of the study area are described in detail below.

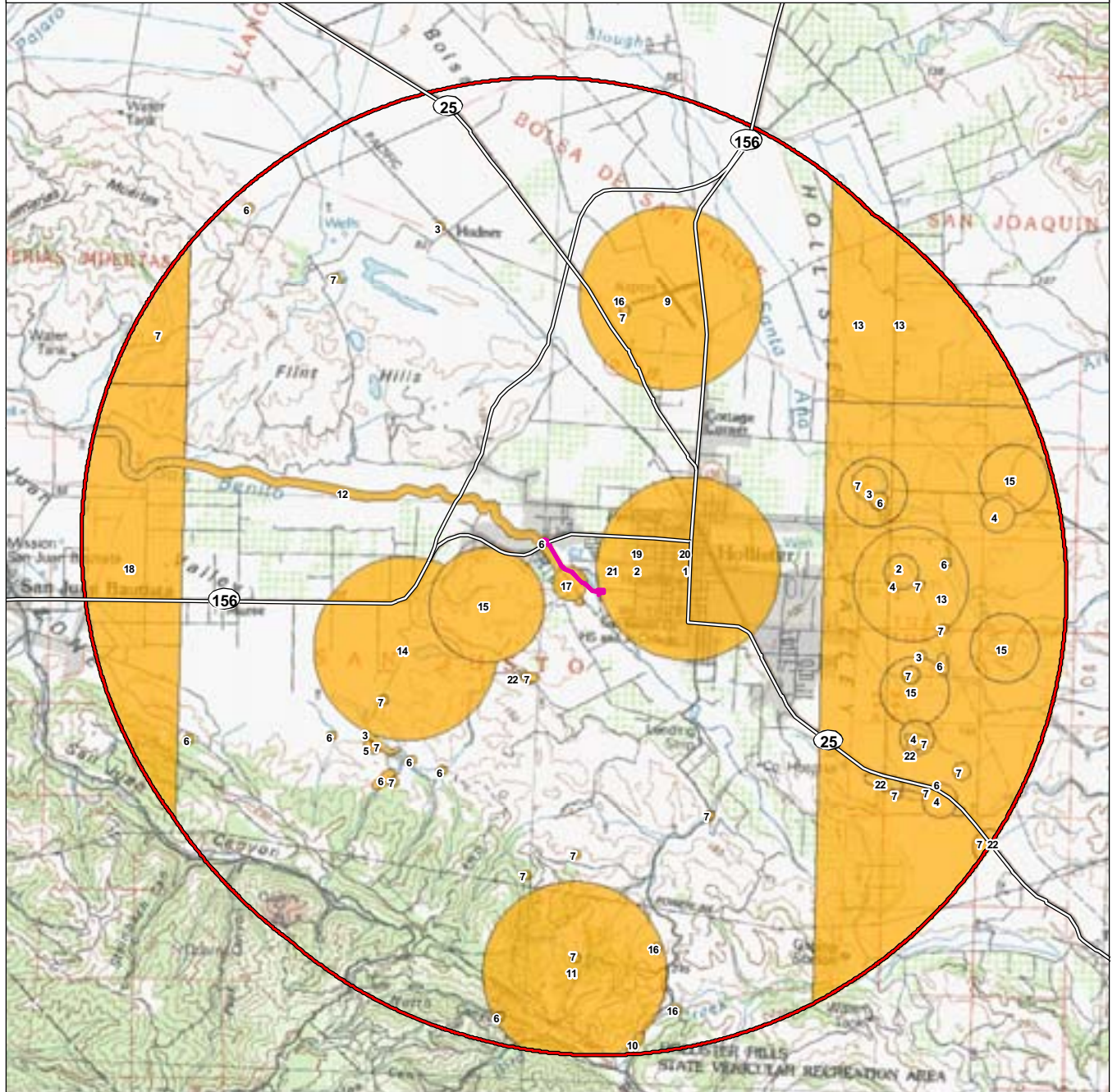
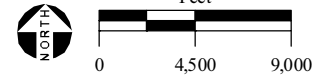
TABLE 3-4. PROJECT SITE HABITAT TYPES

Habitat Type	Acreage
Annual Grassland	0.56
Ruderal/Disturbed	4.02
Total	4.57

Source: AES, 2008.

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES DATA

 Project Site	5 - California linderiella	12 - Pinnacles optioservus riffle beetle	19 - western mastiff bat
 5-Mile Radius	6 - California red-legged frog	13 - prairie falcon	20 - western pond turtle
 Special Status Species Area	7 - California tiger salamander	14 - round-leaved filaree	21 - western red bat
1 - alkali milk-vetch	8 - Coast Range newt	15 - San Joaquin kit fox	22 - western spadefoot
2 - American badger	9 - hairless popcom-flower	16 - San Joaquin spearscale	
3 - burrowing owl	10 - Indian Valley bush-mallow	17 - San Joaquin whipsnake	
4 - California horned lark	11 - Pinnacles buckwheat	18 - southwestern pond turtle	



SOURCE: "Monterey, CA" USGS 100K Topographic Quadrangle, Mt. Diablo Baseline & Meridian; California Natural Diversity Database, 2008; AES, 2008

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Figure 3-1
CNDDDB 5-Mile Radius Map



Figure 3-2
Habitat Map



PHOTO 1: Bridge Road parking area looking northwest towards annual grassland habitat along the perimeter.



PHOTO 2: Ponds on the IWTP looking north adjacent to the project site.



PHOTO 3: View facing west under San Juan Hollister Bridge containing bat roosts.



PHOTO 4: San Juan Hollister Bridge looking west towards the San Benito River channel.



PHOTO 5: Apricot Lane parking area looking north towards debris piles and litter from demolished building.



PHOTO 6: Apricot Lane parking area looking south towards eucalyptus groves that line the perimeter.

Annual Grassland

Annual grassland habitat occurs on the west side of Site A and on the west side of Site B. Site B appeared to have been recently tilled prior to the November 2008 survey. This habitat type is dominated by annual grass species such as wild oat (*Avena* species), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), wand buckwheat (*Eriogonum roseum*), and cultivated wheat (*Triticum aestivum*). It also contains other herbaceous species including, black mustard (*Brassica nigra*). This community corresponds to the Non-Native Grassland (42200) in the Holland system (Holland, 1986), and California annual grassland series in Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf's *A Manual of California Vegetation* (1995).

Ruderal/Disturbed

Ruderal/disturbed includes areas where weedy species have outcompeted native vegetative cover. Ruderal/disturbed areas within the project site include dirt roads/paths along the proposed trail connecting Site A to Site B, litter, cement slabs and associated infrastructure on Site A and on Site B a demolished residential building with associated debris piles and litter. Dominant vegetation observed in this habitat include yellow starthistle, black mustard, bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), and sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*). Ruderal/disturbed is not a classified community in the *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (Holland, 1986).

Wildlife

Animals observed during surveys included red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) and canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*). For a complete list of wildlife species observed within the study area refer to **Appendix C**.

Trees

There are no trees present within the project footprint. Trees occur outside of the project site in the study area. The proposed project design would not result in the removal of trees.

Special-Status Species

For the purposes of this IS/MND, special-status has been defined to include those species that are:

- Listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (or formally proposed for, or candidates for, listing);
- Listed as endangered or threatened under the California Endangered Species Act (or proposed for listing);
- Designated as endangered or rare, pursuant to California Fish and Game Code (§1901);
- Designated as fully protected, pursuant to California Fish and Game Code (§3511, §4700, or §5050);
- Designated as species of concern by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), or as species of special concern to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG); or
- Plants or animals that meet the definitions of rare or endangered under CEQA.

Although some local or regional agencies may consider plant species that CNPS believes require additional information (List 3) and plant species that have been placed on a watch list (List 4), they are not further discussed in this document. Several species resulted from the database queries that have no special-status as defined above. These species include California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), California linderiella (*Linderiella occidentalis*) and Pinnacles optioservus riffle beetle (*Optioservus canus*). These species are not further discussed in this document.

The potential for each of the regionally occurring special-status species to occur on the study area was subsequently evaluated based on the results of the field survey, review of applicable literature, and review of previous reported occurrences, including a map of reported occurrences of special-status species within five miles of the study area (**Figure 3-1**). The distribution and habitat types for each special-status species and the potential for each species to occur on the study area are included in **Appendix B**. Special-status species that have no potential to occur on the study area are not discussed further in this report.

The project site provides suitable habitat for three special-status plants and ten special-status wildlife including: one special-status amphibian, two special-status reptiles, three special-status birds, and five special-status mammals.

Special-Status Plants

San Joaquin Spearscale (*Atriplex joaquiniana*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – None

Other – CNPS 1B

San Joaquin spearscale is often found in drier portions of alkaline soils in the Santa Clara and San Joaquin valleys. This includes the dry, interior valleys of the south Coast Ranges. It is an annual herb that grows well in chenopod scrub, meadows, seeps, playas, and grasslands. The blooming period for this species occurs from April through October (CNPS, 2008).

There are three CNDDDB records for San Joaquin spearscale within five miles of the study area. The nearest known occurrence of this species is from 1938 and is located approximately 1.9 miles northeast of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 20). The CDFG (2003) does not provide information for this record. The second closest known occurrence is from 1995 is approximately 4.1 miles southeast of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 34). Approximately 400 individuals were observed within an alkali seep surrounded by non-native grassland. The third known occurrence is from 1995 and is approximately 4.5 miles southeast of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 48). Approximately 150 plants were observed on the banks of a deeply incised channel flowing through non-native grassland in silty alkaline clay.

San Joaquin spearscale has potential to occur within the annual grassland within Site B of the proposed project site. San Joaquin spearscale was not observed during the November 2008 survey, but the survey of the study area was conducted outside the evident and identifiable period for this species.

Round-Leaved Filaree (*Erodium macrophyllum*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – None

Other – CNPS 1B

Round-leaved filaree is an herbaceous annual in the Geraniaceae family. It typically grows in valley and foothill grasslands in open habitat on friable clay soils. The majority of the known occurrences in San Benito County occur in annual grassland habitat, some of which are grazed. This species is rarely known to occur in dryland grain crop fields. The blooming period of this species is from March through May (CNPS, 2008).

There is one record for round-leaved filaree within five miles of the project site. The record is from 1999 and is approximately 0.9 miles west of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 43). The only information that the record provides is that the occurrence is at the San Justo Reservoir and that fieldwork is needed. Round-leaved filaree has potential to occur within the annual grassland on clay soil within Site B of the project site. Round-leaved filaree was not observed during the November 2008 survey, but the survey of the study area was conducted outside the evident and identifiable period for this species.

Special-Status Wildlife**Amphibians****California Red-Legged Frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*)**

Federal Status – Threatened

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

California red-legged frog (CRLF) occurs inland from Baja California, Mexico, north to the vicinity of Redding, and coastally, at least to Point Reyes, California (Jennings and Hayes, 1994). CRLF is primarily an aquatic species, though it may use some upland habitat during the non-breeding season. Aquatic habitat consists of low-gradient freshwater bodies, including ponds, marshes, lagoons, seeps, springs, and backwaters within streams and creeks. While CRLF can occur in either ephemeral or perennial streams or ponds, populations generally cannot be maintained in ephemeral streams in which surface water disappears before metamorphosis (July to September) during most years. Adults seek out waters with dense shoreline vegetation such as willows (*Salix* sp.) and cattails. During the non-breeding season, frogs may use upland habitat that provides shade, moisture, and cooler temperatures. Such habitats include spaces under boulders or rocks, and industrial (e.g. watering troughs) or organic (e.g. moist leaf litter) debris, small mammal burrows or incised stream channels. CRLF may use upland habitats up to approximately 300 feet from suitable aquatic habitat (USFWS, 2000).

CRLF typically lay eggs between December and early April. Eggs are attached to vegetation in shallow water. Tadpoles develop into terrestrial frogs between July and September. Breeding ponds must retain water until this time. CRLF may remain active throughout the year along the coast. In drier inland areas they aestivate in upland habitat from late summer to early winter (USFWS, 2002; USFWS, 2007).

The USFWS designated eight recovery units in the “Recovery Plan for the California Red-legged Frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*)” (USFWS, 2002). The project site is located within the “Diablo Range and Salinas Valley” Recovery Unit Boundary. Within this Recovery Unit Boundary are designated Core Recovery Areas, which are the focus of recovery actions. One of the criteria for de-listing this species is protecting or managing all suitable CRLF habitat within these Core Recovery Areas. The project site does not lie within a Core Recovery Area. The USFWS has also designated critical habitat for this species. One site 3.75 miles south of the City of Hollister is designated critical habitat for CRLF (USFWS, 2007). The proposed project site does not lie within a designated critical habitat area.

There are 12 CNDDDB records for CRLF within five miles of the study area. The nearest record is from 2001 and is approximately 20 meters downstream of the San Juan Hollister Bridge adjacent to the northwest side of the project site (CNDDDB occurrence number 465). One juvenile was observed in a pooled area within the San Benito River. The area of the documented occurrence (465) was surveyed and neither standing water nor this species were observed during the November 2008 survey.

The project site does not provide potential aquatic breeding habitat for CRLF. Potential breeding habitat for this species occurs within a pool north of the bridge in the adjacent dry riverine (San Benito River) habitat, but not within the proposed project site. Potential breeding habitat is unlikely to occur within the rest of the San Benito River because it does not hold water for a long enough period of time for CRLF to metamorphose (July to September) from tadpoles to terrestrial frogs. Potential upland habitat occurs up to 200 feet of the pool within the riparian scrub to the west outside of the project site. CRLF were not observed during the November 2008 survey of the project site.

Reptiles

Western Pond Turtle (*Clemmys* [=*Emmys*] *marmorata*) and subspecies

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

The western pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*) occurs in wet habitats throughout California. Suitable habitat consists of any permanent or nearly permanent water body or stream with suitable refuges, basking sites, and nesting sites. Refuge sites can be submerged logs or rocks or mats of floating vegetation. Basking sites can be partially submerged rocks or logs, as well as shallow-sloping banks with little or no cover. This species constructs nests in sandy banks if present, or at least 10 centimeters deep in soils up to 100 meters away from aquatic habitat. The nests must have a relatively high humidity in order for the hatchlings to avoid desiccation. This species eats a variety of organisms, including aquatic plants, beetles, fish, and frogs. (CDFG, 2008)

The northwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata marmorata*) is one of two subspecies of the western pond turtle. This subspecies occurs from Washington State south to the Central Valley of California. It is found in Pacific-slope drainages to an elevation of approximately 4,700 feet, and has the same habitat requirements as the species. This subspecies generally leaves the aquatic site only to reproduce and to hibernate. Hibernation typically takes place from October or November to March or April. Egg-laying typically occurs in May and June (CDFG, 2008; Stebbins, 2003).

There are three CNDDDB occurrences for western pond turtle within five miles of the project site. The nearest known occurrence is from an unknown date within Site B of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 31). The CDFG (2003) does not provide any additional information on this record. The second nearest occurrence is from 2001 and abuts the north side of the study area (CNDDDB occurrence number 188). One adult was observed in a pooled area within the San Benito River approximately 20 meters downstream of the San Juan Hollister Bridge.

The project site provides upland habitat for the western pond turtle within the annual grassland. The project site does not provide breeding habitat for this species. The wastewater ponds at the IWTP adjacent to the project site provide breeding habitat for this species. This species was not observed during the field survey.

San Joaquin Whipsnake (*Masticophis flagellum ruddocki*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

The San Joaquin whipsnake, also known as the San Joaquin coachwhip, is a large, smooth-scaled, large-eyed, slender snake. Its range stretches from Colusa County in the Sacramento Valley to Kern County in the San Joaquin Valley, with an isolated population occurring in the Sutter Buttes. This species is diurnal and maintains a high activity level when on the surface. Similar to other *M. flagellum* subspecies, it voluntarily maintains a higher active body temperature than most other snakes. They are usually active during mid-morning and late in the afternoon during the months of March through October (CDFG, 2008). This species occurs in areas of open terrain and is most abundant in grassland, desert, scrub, chaparral and pasture habitats. In the western San Joaquin Valley, it occurs in valley grassland and saltbush scrub associations and is known to climb bushes such as *Atriplex* for viewing prey and potential predators. The whipsnake will utilize rodent burrows, bushes, trees and rock piles for refuge and oviposition (CDFG, 2008). They hibernate in the ground within soil and/or sand substrate (CDFG, 2008).

There is CNDDDB occurrence for San Joaquin whipsnake within five miles of the project site. The known occurrence is from 1996 and is mapped as a polygon that surrounds the center of the project site (CNDDDB occurrence number 1). One adult was observed within degraded riparian scrub on the surface briefly before entering a burrow. The project provides potential habitat for San Joaquin whipsnake in ground squirrel burrows present within the annual grassland habitat. Ground squirrel burrows were observed during the November 2008 survey of the project site. The burrows within the ruderal/disturbed habitat provide habitat for refuge and oviposition for the San Joaquin whipsnake. The San Joaquin whipsnake was not observed during the November 2008 survey of the project site.

Birds

Tricolored Blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

This species is largely found in the Central and San Joaquin Valley and in coastal counties south of Sonoma County. Populations have also been documented from the Peninsular Range near San Diego county and extreme northern California. It eats insects and seeds (particularly from grain crops). Suitable foraging habitat consists of grassland, flooded fields, and the edges of ponds where emergent vegetation is present (e.g. cattails or tules). This species usually nests in large flocks (at least 50 breeding pairs) in dense vegetation near fresh water or by emergent wetlands. Nesting occurs from April to July and is typically associated with cattails, tules, willows, blackberry, and wild rose (CDFG, 2008).

There are no documented occurrences of this species within five miles of the project site. The project site does not contain breeding habitat for this species. Potential habitat for this species occurs within vegetation along the perimeter of the adjacent wastewater ponds outside of the project site to the northeast. This species was not observed during the field survey and does not have potential to breed within the project site.

Western Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

Western burrowing owls occur in suitable habitat throughout California, except in northwestern coastal forests and on high mountains. Suitable habitat consists of open grasslands, pasture, prairie, plains, and savanna. This species can occasionally occur in more urban environments and open areas such as vacant lots near human developments or airports. Nesting and roosting occurs in burrows dug by mammals (such as ground squirrels), but may also occur in pipes, culverts, and nest boxes if no suitable burrows occur in the vicinity. This species spends large amounts of time on the ground or on low perches such as fence posts or dirt mounds in search of prey. While the burrowing owl is primarily diurnal, it does take refuge in its burrow during the day if the ambient temperature is too high. This species is known to hunt during both the day and night. The nesting season for this species is generally from February to August (CDFG, 2008).

There are four CNDDDB occurrences for western burrowing owl within five miles of the project site. The known occurrence is from 2006 and approximately 2.7 miles southwest of the project site (CNDDDB occurrence number 1030). One western burrowing owl was observed using a ground squirrel burrow in ungrazed annual grassland with ruderal patches. The project site provides potential nesting and wintering habitat for western burrowing owls within ground squirrel burrows within the annual grassland habitat. This species was not observed during the November survey of the project site.

Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)

Federal Status – Endangered

State Status – Endangered

Other – None

The least Bell's vireo breeds in dense, low, shrubby vegetation within second-growth forest and woodland, scrub oak, coastal chaparral, and mesquite brushland habitats. This insectivorous bird is often found near water and in riparian areas associated with willows, cottonwoods, coyote bush and blackberry shrubs. The known breeding range of this subspecies includes southwest California and northwest Baja California. The least Bell's vireo arrive in their breeding range as early as March to begin courting and shortly after begin building their nests. A successful brood is produced within 37 days and the next brood is begun immediately after the previous brood has fledged. In California, up to four broods per season can be produced (Brown, 1993).

There are no documented occurrences of this species within five miles of the project site. The project site does not provide nesting habitat for this least Bell's vireo. Potential nesting habitat for this species occurs within the adjacent riparian scrub habitat but not within the proposed project site. This species was not observed during the field survey and does not have the potential to nest within the project site.

Mammals

Pallid Bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

Pallid bat occurs from British Columbia to Texas south to Baja California and central Mexico. In California, pallid bats occur throughout the state except in the high Sierra Nevada Range from Shasta County to Kern County. This species is highly social and will makes local movements to hibernation sites. The pallid bat is most commonly found in low desert shrublands, juniper woodlands and grasslands, and occasionally in cottonwood-riparian zones. This species has three different roosts: the day roost is usually in a warm horizontal opening such as in attics, rock cracks and crevices, and caves; the night roost is usually in the open, near foliage or on buildings; and the hibernation roost, which is often in rock crevices (CDFG, 2008).

There are no documented occurrences of this species within five miles of the project site. Potential roosting habitat for this species occurs along the San Juan Hollister Bridge that crosses over the project site. During the November 2008 field survey, a species of bat was observed under the San Juan Hollister Bridge, a few feet from Site A, directly above the San Benito River channel. Numerous bats were observed roosting under wooden plank structures, which appeared to be built specifically for the bats. The pallid bat has the potential to roost in the vicinity of the project site.

Western Red Bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Special Concern

Other – None

The western red bat is found throughout California, west of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade crest and deserts, from Shasta County south to Mexico. This species roosts in forests and woodlands from sea level to mixed conifer forests. Roosts are commonly solitary in trees near streams, fields, or urban areas. Edges or habitat mosaics with water are the most suitable habitats. This species is migratory. In California, the western red bat will migrate short distances between summer and winter ranges and can be found in unusual habitats during this time. Hibernation takes place during the coolest months when temperatures drop below 68 °F. Young are born from late May through early July (CDFG, 2008).

There is one CNDDDB occurrence within five miles of the project site. This record is documented only as being located in the City of Hollister so the precise distance from the project site is not known. The project site does not provide suitable roosting habitat for western red bat. Potential roosting habitat for this species occurs within the trees along the dry riverine (San Benito River) habitat, but not within the proposed project site. Western red bat is unlikely to roost within the project site.

Western Mastiff Bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Special Concern

Other – None

The western mastiff bat is found in open semi-arid and arid habitats, which include conifer, deciduous woodland, coastal scrub, grassland, palm oases, chaparral, and desert scrub. It is also found in urban areas. This species is not migratory, but moves among alternate day time roosts. Its known range extends east from the coast of California to the Colorado Desert and from Monterey County south through the southeastern San Joaquin Valley. Roosting takes place in crevices within rock outcrops, high buildings, trees, and tunnels. Roosting sites require vertical faces in order to drop-off into flight. The western mastiff bat either roosts alone or in small groups, typically less than a hundred bats. Young are born from April to August and occasionally into September (CDFG, 2008).

There is one CNDDDB occurrence within five miles of the project site. The occurrence is from 1998 and is mapped overlapping the south side of the project site (CNDDDB occurrence number 242). The only information provided in the record is that bat(s) were observed in the City of Hollister. The project site provides potential roosting habitat for western mastiff bat beneath the San Juan Hollister Bridge. During the field survey, a species of bat was observed under the San Juan Hollister Bridge, a few feet from Site A, directly above the San Benito River channel. Numerous bats were roosting under wooden plank structures, which appeared to be built specifically for the bats. This species has the potential to roost in the vicinity of the project site.

American Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)

Federal Status – None

State Status – Species of Concern

Other – None

The American badger has a flat body with short legs and a triangular face with a long, pointed, tipped-up nose. It has long brown or black fur with white stripes on its cheeks and one stripe running from its nose to the back of its head. This species occurs with low frequency throughout a large range including most of California. The American badger forages for small rodents, reptiles, invertebrates, and birds in dry, open habitats such as grassland or open woodland. Suitable burrowing habitat requires dry, often sandy soil. Breeding occurs in summer and early fall, with young being born from March to April (CDFG, 2008). In San Benito County, this species is known to occur in dryland grain crop fields, pasture, and annual grassland habitats.

There are two CNDDDB occurrences for the American badger within five miles of the project site. The nearest occurrence is from an unknown date and abuts the east side of the project (CNDDDB occurrence number 121). The precise date of this observation is not known. Another documented occurrence was observed approximately 3.5 miles east of the project site in 1993 (CNDDDB occurrence number 186). The CDFG (2003) does not provide information on this record. Potential habitat for American badger occurs within the annual grassland habitat within the proposed project site and within the adjacent riparian scrub outside of the proposed project site. This species was not observed during the November 2008 survey of the project site.

San Joaquin Kit Fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*)

Federal Status – Endangered

State Status – Threatened

Other – None

The federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox occurs in grasslands or other open areas within shrublands and/or scrub habitats. The kit fox is the smallest canid species in North America. The San Joaquin kit fox has an average body length of 20 inches, an average tail length of 12 inches and stands about nine to 12 inches at the shoulder. Historically, San Joaquin kit fox occurred in several San Joaquin Valley native plant communities. In the southernmost portion of the range, these communities included Valley Sink Scrub, Valley Saltbush Scrub, Upper Sonoran Subshrub Scrub, and Annual Grassland. Currently, this species occurs in grassland and other open habitats from Contra Costa to San Joaquin Valley. Suitable foraging habitat includes any open habitat such as grassland, woodland, or open scrub. Suitable burrowing habitat includes open, flat areas with loose (generally sandy or loamy) soils.

This species was listed as endangered by the USFWS on March 11, 1967 (32 Federal Register §4001), and its Recovery Plan was finalized in 1998 (USFWS, 1998). A petition to de-list the San Joaquin kit fox was found insubstantial by the USFWS in 1992 (57 Federal Register §28167 and §21869). This species was listed as threatened by the CDFG in 1971, and a review of the species in 1999 found it to be in decline. In San Benito County, this species is known to occur in oak woodlands, annual grassland, pasture, and dryland grain crop habitats.

There are three CNDDDB occurrences for San Joaquin kit fox within five miles of the project site. The nearest occurrence is from May 1992 and occurs less than 2,000 feet from the proposed project site (CNDDDB occurrence number 605). The other two documented records from the 1970's, occur more than three miles away to the east of the proposed project site. Potential den and foraging habitat for San Joaquin kit fox occurs within the annual grassland habitat within the proposed project site. Potential foraging habitat also occurs within surrounding riparian scrub and dry riverine (San Benito River) habitats outside of the proposed project site. This species was not observed during the November 2008 survey of the proposed project site.

Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.

Section 301 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Amendments of 1972 ("Clean Water Act" (CWA)) prohibits the discharge of pollutants, including dredged or fill material, into waters of the U.S. without a Section 404 permit from USACE (33 U.S.C. 1344). Permits, licenses, variances, or similar authorization may also be required by other federal, state, and local statutes. Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 prohibits the obstruction or alteration of navigable waters of the U.S. without a permit from the USACE (33 U.S.C. 403). State Water Quality Certification may be required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board before other permits are issued. If a proposed project will result in the alteration of a California lake or streambed, CDFG requires notification prior to commencement, and may require a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.

Waters of the U.S. are defined as:

- All waters which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;
- All interstate waters including interstate wetlands; or
- All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use degradation of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters (40 CFR 230.3).

Wetlands are defined as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (40 CFR 230.41). Wetlands that meet these criteria during only a portion of the growing season are classified as seasonal wetlands.

The informal wetland delineation consisted of mapping potential wetlands and other waters of the US within the project site. The project site was assessed for water features including wetlands, vernal pools, and streams. There are no wetland features present within the project site. No potentially jurisdictional wetland features or waters of the U.S. would be impacted by the proposed project.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Question A

San Joaquin Spearscale

Grading and construction activities within annual grassland habitat located within the southern proposed parking area, Site B, could result in direct loss of the species. Approximately 0.011 264 acres of annual grassland habitat area would be directly impacted through paving for the parking areas and trail alignment. An additional 0.253 acres of annual grassland habitat area could be impacted by landscaping associated with proposed project. Due to the proposed project time constraints, seasonally targeted floristic surveys are infeasible and therefore it cannot be determined if this species is present within the proposed project site. Mitigation Measure BR-1 identified below would compensate for potential impacts to San Joaquin spearscale through habitat enhancement and native re-vegetation. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Round-Leaved Filaree

Grading and construction activities within annual grassland habitat located within the southern proposed parking area, Site B, could result in direct loss of round-leaved filaree. Mitigation Measure BR-2 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to round-leaved filaree by conducting a focused botanical survey within the evident and identifiable bloom season and by transplanting any individuals detected within the project site. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Western Burrowing Owl

Burrowing owls or their nests were not observed on the project site during biological surveys for the proposed project. However, the project site does provide suitable habitat for this species. Potential disruption of burrowing owls from construction activities could result in the abandonment or loss of active nests through burrow destruction. Mitigation Measure BR-3 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to burrowing owls through the avoidance of any active burrowing owl nests, the safe exclusion of burrowing owls from any burrows to be destroyed prior to construction of the proposed project, and the passive relocation of nesting birds and purchase of additional burrowing habitat should occupied burrows be discovered on the project site. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

California Red-Legged Frog

Because the vicinity of the project site provides potential upland habitat for CRLF, grading and construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in significant impacts should CRLF pass through the project site or seek shelter in the staging areas. Mitigation Measure BR-4 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to CRLF by conducting a pre-construction survey and a crew sensitivity training and by having a biologist monitor present during grading activities. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Western Pond Turtle

Western pond turtles were not observed on the project site during biological surveys for the proposed project; however, suitable habitat and known occurrences occur adjacent to the proposed project site within the San Benito River and IWTP ponds. Grading and construction activities and associated noise

could result in the direct disturbance of western pond turtle and associated upland habitat. Mitigation Measure BR-5 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to western pond turtle by conducting a pre-construction survey, an onsite species sensitivity training, and establishing a buffer around the San Benito River and IWTP ponds. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

San Joaquin Whipsnake

Grading and construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in the removal of potential den habitat for San Joaquin whipsnake. Construction activities in annual grassland habitat within the proposed project site could cause potential disruption of whipsnakes and result in the disturbance or direct loss of the species. Mitigation Measure BR-6 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to whipsnakes through avoidance of any active dens, an onsite species sensitivity training, and construction monitoring. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Pallid Bat

Suitable roosting habitat occurs under the bridge located along San Juan Hollister Road, just west of the IWTP and adjacent to the project site. Noise disturbance from construction activities associated with the proposed project could have the potential to impact the pallid bat. After implementation of Mitigation Measure BR-7, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Western Mastiff Bat

Suitable roosting habitat occurs under the bridge located along San Juan Hollister Road, just west of the IWTP and adjacent to the project site. Noise disturbance from construction activities associated with the proposed project could have the potential to impact the western mastiff bat. After implementation of Mitigation Measure BR-7, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

American Badger

American badgers or dens were not observed on the project site during biological surveys for the proposed project; however, the project site does provide suitable habitat for this species. Grading and construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in the removal of potential den habitat for American badgers. Construction activities within annual grassland habitat could cause potential disruption or destruction of dens. Mitigation Measure BR-8 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to badgers through the avoidance of any active dens and the safe exclusion of badgers from any burrows to be destroyed prior to construction of the proposed project. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

San Joaquin Kit Fox

San Joaquin kit fox or dens were not observed on the project site during the biological survey for the proposed project; however, the vicinity of the project site provides potential den and foraging habitat for San Joaquin kit fox. Construction activities (e.g. grading) could cause potential disturbance or destruction of dens or direct impacts to the species. Mitigation Measure BR-9 identified below would reduce the potential for impacts to San Joaquin kit fox by conducting a pre-construction survey and establishing

avoidance and minimization measures for construction activities along with an onsite species sensitivity training. After mitigation, impacts would be considered ***less than significant***.

Summary

Implementation of **Mitigation Measures BR-1** through **BR-9** below would adequately mitigate for impacts to special-status plant, bird, reptile, and mammal species resulting in a ***less than significant impact***.

Question B

The proposed project would not have a substantial effect on any sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans and policies, or regulations by the CDFG or USFWS during project construction or project operation. ***No impact*** would occur.

Question C

The proposed project would not directly modify any wetlands or any other waters of the U.S. as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. ***No impact*** would occur.

Question D

The proposed project would not interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish, or wildlife species. The proposed project also would not interfere with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. ***No impact*** would occur.

Question E

The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. ***No impact*** would occur.

Question F

The proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. ***No impact*** would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BR-1 Grading and construction activities within annual grassland habitat within Site B shall be avoided to the extent feasible. To mitigate for areas that cannot be avoided, a native species re-vegetation program will be established within areas of the project site, or Riverside Park, that provide suitable habitat. The City shall locate a viable seed bank or other source for San Joaquin spearscale to obtain plants which shall be incorporated into the native species re-vegetation program. Potential areas for the native species re-vegetation program include annual grassland habitat consisting of alkaline soils (i.e. Site B). To ensure that any impacts to San Joaquin

spearscale habitats are entirely mitigated, the total acreage of impacted nonnative grassland shall equal the total acreage of restored (i.e. planted) native grassland.

- BR-2**
- a. A qualified botanist shall conduct a focused botanical survey for round-leaved filaree early March within the annual grassland habitat of Site B. Construction activities shall not commence within the annual grassland habitat areas of Site B until the focused botanical surveys have been conducted. Staging areas shall not be placed in the annual grassland areas until the focused botanical surveys have been conducted. Should round-leaved filaree not be detected, no additional mitigation would be required.
 - b. Should round-leaved filaree be detected, high visibility fencing shall be placed at a 5 foot buffer around the plants to avoid impacts associated with construction activities. The CDFG shall be notified and provided an opportunity to transplant the round-leaved filaree plants within 10 days of notification.
- BR-3**
- a. A qualified biologist should conduct a pre-construction survey less than 30 days prior to construction within the project site in accordance with the CDFG burrowing owl survey protocol (CDFG, 1995). If no burrowing owls or signs of their presence are detected in the vicinity of the project site during the pre-construction survey, a letter report documenting survey methods and findings shall be submitted to the City of Hollister and CDFG, and no further mitigation is required.
 - b. If unoccupied burrows are detected during the non-breeding season (September through January 31), the applicant may collapse the unoccupied burrows, or otherwise obstruct their entrances to prevent owls from entering and nesting in the burrows.
 - c. If occupied burrowing owl burrows are detected, impacts on burrows shall be avoided by providing a buffer of 160 feet during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31) or 250 feet during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31). The size of the buffer area may be adjusted if a qualified biologist or the CDFG determine the burrowing owl would not likely be affected by the proposed project. Project activities shall not commence within the buffer area until a qualified biologist confirms that the burrow is no longer occupied. If the burrow is occupied by a nesting pair, a minimum of 7.5 acres of foraging habitat contiguous to the burrow shall be maintained per pair until the breeding season is finished.
 - d. If impacts to occupied burrows are unavoidable, onsite passive relocation techniques approved by the CDFG shall be used to encourage burrowing owls to move to alternative burrows outside of the project site. No occupied burrows shall be disturbed during the nesting season unless a qualified biologist verifies through non-invasive methods that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent survival. Mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs shall follow the guidelines provided in the California Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines (Burrowing Owl Consortium, 1995). The mitigation for foraging habitat for relocated pairs ranges from 7.5 to 19.5 acres per pair.

- BR-4**
- a. A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey within 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities. The USFWS will be notified should CRLF be observed within the project site.
 - b. A "Species Sensitivity Training" program will be established for CRLF prior to commencement of construction activities. This program will be designed to educate construction personnel about the mitigation measures required for the execution of the project. All construction personnel will attend the sensitivity training that will provide instruction on CRLF identification, status and detailed protocol of the actions that should be taken in the event that a CRLF is encountered onsite during construction activities.
 - c. Construction crew shall be trained during the "Species Sensitivity Training" to check beneath the staging equipment each morning prior to commencement of daily construction activities. Should CRLF occur within the staging areas, construction activities shall be halted until the CRLF vacates the project site.
 - d. A qualified biologist shall be present during grading activities. Should CRLF be observed within the project site, the USFWS shall be notified and construction shall be halted until either the CRLF exits the site or until a biologist with a USFWS Recovery Permit for CRLF relocates the CRLF.
 - e. For segments of the pipeline corridor and parking areas that occur within 100 feet of the IWTP ponds and the San Benito River, exclusionary fencing will be established to prevent CRLF from entering construction areas. The fencing shall be marked by highly visibility signs indicating that human activity is prohibited within these areas.
- BR-5**
- a. A qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey for western pond turtle less than 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities. Any western pond turtle observed will be moved by a qualified biologist to a suitable location outside of the construction area.
 - b. A "Species Sensitivity Training" program will be established for western pond turtle. This program will be designed to educate construction personnel about the mitigation measures required for the execution of the project. All construction personnel will attend the sensitivity training that will provide instruction on western pond turtle identification, status and detailed protocol of the actions that should be taken in the event that a western pond turtle is encountered onsite during construction activities.
 - c. For segments of the pipeline corridor and parking areas that occur within 100 feet of the IWTP ponds and the San Benito River, exclusionary fencing will be established to prevent western pond turtle from entering construction areas. The fencing shall be marked by highly visibility signs indicating that human activity is prohibited within these areas.
 - d. If western pond turtles are observed in the construction area, CDFG will be notified and construction will be halted until a qualified biologist can relocate the western pond turtle.

- BR-6**
- a. If construction activities are to occur between March to October, then a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction San Joaquin whipsnake surveys for active dens (within mammal burrows) before any construction activities occur in or adjacent to suitable den habitat. The surveys shall be conducted within 14 days prior to initiation of construction activities. Should San Joaquin whipsnake be observed within the project site, the biologist shall note the location on a map and resurvey the site prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that any snakes have vacated the area. Should the San Joaquin whipsnake still be present, then a 50 foot buffer around the location shall be established and construction activities shall be prohibited within the buffer zone until the snake has vacated the project site.
 - b. Prior to construction within the proposed project site, a "Species Sensitivity Training" program will be established for the San Joaquin whipsnake. This program will be designed to educate construction personnel about the mitigation measures required for the execution of the project. All construction personnel will attend the sensitivity training that will provide instruction on whipsnake identification, status and detailed protocol of the actions that should be taken in the event that a whipsnake is encountered onsite during construction.
 - c. A qualified biologist shall be present during grading activities. Should San Joaquin whipsnake be observed within the project site, CDFG shall be notified and construction shall be halted until either the whipsnake exits the site or until a permitted biologist relocates the whipsnake.
- BR-7**
- a. A qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for special-status western mastiff bat and pallid bat in the vicinity of the bridge no more than 14 days prior to commencement of construction activities. If no active roosts or evidence of western mastiff or pallid bat presence are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.
 - b. Should western mastiff or pallid bat species bat species or their active roosts be detected beneath the bridge during the pre-construction survey, the staging area should be situated at least 100 feet from the bridge. Construction activities should be carried out in a short timeframe within 100 feet of the bridge. A qualified biologist shall be present while construction activities are occurring within 100 feet of the bridge.
- BR-8**
- a. A qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction American badger surveys for active dens within 30 days prior to commencement of construction activities. If no active dens are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation is required.
 - b. If active dens are detected within the survey area, then CDFG shall be consulted for recommendations on avoidance and minimization measures. Measures may include avoidance buffer zones, or that passive relocation techniques be employed to remove the animal(s) from the site and transfer them to an off-site location.
- BR-9**
- A qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction San Joaquin kit fox surveys for active dens within 30 days prior to commencement of construction activities. A letter report documenting

survey methods and findings shall be submitted USFWS for evaluation. If San Joaquin kit fox and/or dens are not detected within the project site, then no further mitigation is required.

Even if San Joaquin kit fox dens are not detected, this species has the potential to forage within or around the proposed project area. Therefore, the following measures shall be implemented to avoid and reduce potential impacts to foraging kit fox.

- a. Prior to commencement of construction activities, a "Species Sensitivity Training" program will be established for San Joaquin kit fox. This program will be designed to educate construction personnel about the mitigation measures required for the execution of the project. All construction personnel will attend the sensitivity training that will provide instruction on San Joaquin kit fox identification, status and detailed protocol of the actions that should be taken in the event that a San Joaquin kit fox is encountered onsite during construction activities.
- b. Require a maximum 25 mph speed limit at the project site during construction activities.
- c. Stop all construction activities at dusk.
- d. Remove food-related trash from the project site each day.
- e. Pesticides, herbicides, or other chemicals are often used during construction. These applications must be used according to local, state, and federal regulations to prevent secondary poisoning from kit foxes.
- f. If a kit fox is discovered at any time in the project area, all construction activities must stop immediately and the USFWS and CDFG must be contacted. The appropriate state and federal permits must be obtained before the construction activities can proceed.

<u>CULTURAL RESOURCES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Human occupation of central San Benito County dates back at least several thousand years (Levy 1978; Moratto 1984). Extensive settlements supporting a large population occurred throughout the region during the late prehistoric period, particularly in the Gilroy and San Juan Bautista area. Archaeological resources documented in San Benito County include shell mounds (located immediately adjacent to the inland rivers and sloughs associated with the Monterey Bay), village sites, resource specific processing centers, and cemeteries. Smaller ephemeral campsites and limited-activity areas such as bedrock milling stations and lithic scatters are also known to exist in the region. Summaries of the archaeological background of the region are presented in Heizer (1953) and Moratto (1984).

The project area is located within the traditional territory of the Costanoan-Mutsun (Levy, 1978). The term Costanoan is a linguistic one, designating a family of eight languages. "Mutsun" was spoken among the tribelets of the Pajaro River drainage and was also the name of a village located in the hills between the Salinas and Pajaro Rivers, probably in the La Natividad land grant (Levy, 1978). Primary ethnographic sources for the Mutsun include: Hart (1955) Kroeber (1925 and 1932), Levy (1978), and Powers (1976).

Historic-period cultural resources known to exist in central San Benito County include refuse scatters, standing and ruined buildings (houses, barns, commercial buildings, etc.), and infrastructure (roads, bridges, ditches, reservoirs, etc.). Summaries of San Benito County history can be found in Gudde (1998) and Hoover et al. (1990).

ANALYSIS METHODS

Records Search

Prior to the field survey, a records search was conducted by staff at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System, on April 17, 2007. The NWIC, housed

at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, California, is an affiliate of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation as the official state repository of archaeological and historic records and reports for a sixteen-county area that includes San Benito County. This records search was conducted for the *Cultural Resources Study of the Proposed Hollister Municipal Airport Reclaimed Water Irrigation System Project* (AES, 2008) and included the Proposed Project's area of potential effect (APE).

The records search and literature review were done to: (1) determine whether known cultural resources had been recorded within or adjacent to the study area and to determine if the parcel was subject to surveys in the past; (2) assess the likelihood of unrecorded cultural resources based on archaeological, ethnographic, and historical documents and literature; and (3) to review the distribution of nearby archaeological sites in relation to their environmental setting.

Included in the review were the *California Inventory of Historical Resources* (California Office of Historic Preservation, 1976), the California Office of Historic Preservation's *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California* (1988), *California Historical Landmarks* (1990), *California Points of Historical Interest* (1992), and the *Historic Properties Directory Listing for San Benito County* (2007). The *Historic Properties Directory* includes the *National Register of Historic Places*, the *California Register of Historical Resources*, and the most recent listings (through February, 2007) of the *California Historical Landmarks* and *California Points of Historical Interest*.

The records search found that no prehistoric or historic cultural resources have been recorded within the project site or within a one-half mile radius. The closest recorded cultural resource, a historic-period rammed earth residence (P-304), is located approximately 1 mile north of the project site. The records search also found that areas adjacent to the APE for the Proposed Project have been previously surveyed for cultural resources. Several studies have been conducted of San Juan Hollister Road including a Caltrans survey (Spanne, 1979) and a proposed gas line replacement project (Shapiro, 1991). No prehistoric or historic sites were recorded as a result of these surveys.

Given the environmental setting of other archaeological resources documented in the region, it was anticipated that prehistoric sites might be encountered along alluvial fans and benches associated with the San Benito River. Historic resources would likely consist of buildings and structures relating to early twentieth-century agricultural development of the area.

Native American Consultation

On November 11, 2008, the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was sent a request for a review of the Sacred Lands file for information on Native American cultural resources on the project site. On November 13, 2008, the NAHC responded stating they had no information on Native American cultural resources within or adjacent to the project site. A list of individuals and groups with whom to consult was provided. Letters were sent out to these individuals and groups on November 14, 2008. Relevant correspondence is included in **Appendix D**. To date no responses have been received.

Field Survey

An M.A.-level archaeologist conducted a cultural resources field survey of the project area on November 12, 2008. All accessible portions of the API were examined. This included the trail alignment, the Apricot

Lane parking area, the Bridge Street parking area, and the unused wastewater retention pond. Surface visibility was considered generally good as the trail alignment had recently been cleared of brush and vegetation. No historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources were identified as a result of the records search and field survey of the API.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A-D

No cultural or paleontological resources were identified within the APE during the November 12, 2008, site survey. Given the overall low sensitivity for paleontological, archaeological, and historical resources in the immediate area, there is a remote possibility that unidentified buried deposits are present within the project area. Prehistoric archaeological deposits may include large quantities of shell and/or faunal bones, flaked-stone artifacts such as obsidian and chert projectile points, tools, and waste flakes; grinding and mashing implements (e.g. slabs and handstones, mortars and pestles); and darkened midden soils. Subsurface historic period deposits may consist of fragments of glass, ceramic, and metal objects; milled and split lumber; and structure and feature remains such as building foundations and discrete trash deposits (e.g. wells, privy pits, dumps). With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure CR-1**, impacts are considered to be *less than significant*.

MITIGATION MEASURES

CR-1 In the event of the unanticipated discovery of buried or concealed historical resources or fossilized remains, project activities shall cease in the area of the find, and a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist shall be consulted to determine the extent and significance of the resource and to develop any necessary mitigation measures. If human remains are inadvertently discovered, work shall cease immediately and the San Benito County Coroner shall be notified in accordance with California law. A professional archaeologist/or paleontologist shall subsequently be hired to assist in the development of appropriate mitigation measures.

<u>GEOLOGY & SOILS</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known Fault?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Topography

The project site is located on level terrain adjacent to the San Benito River, with elevations of 250 feet above mean sea level (amsl) rising slightly from north to south to approximately 280 feet amsl at the proposed parking lot near Apricot lane. There are no steep slopes or gradients located along or adjacent to the project site.

Soils

Soils Surveys

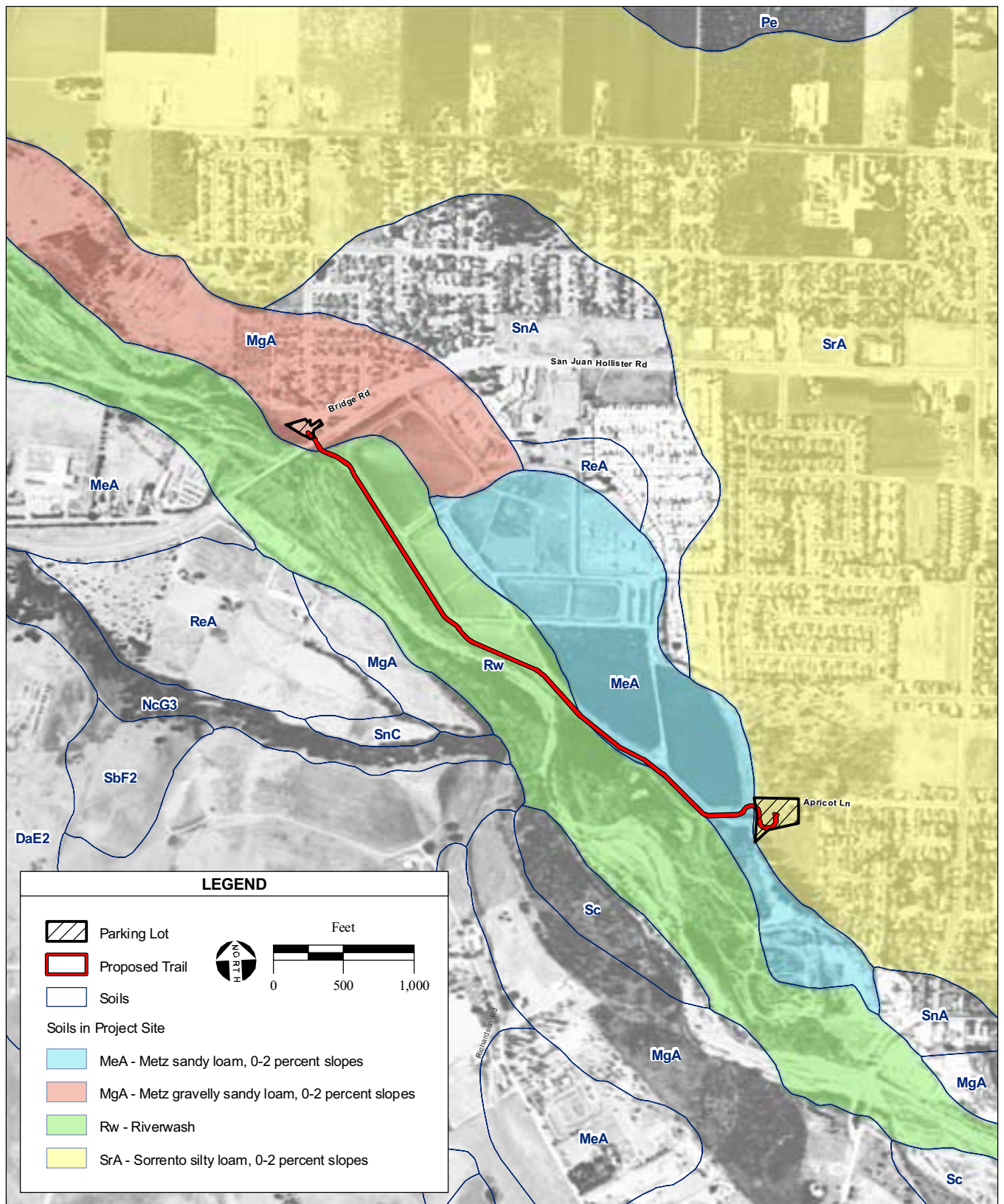
A soil survey for the project site is available online through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Shown in **Figure 3-4**, this survey identifies soil units within the project footprint and provides a summary of major physical characteristics for each unit. A summary of the soil characteristics for the major map units found on the project site is provided in **Table 3-5**.

TABLE 3-5. PROJECT SITE SOILS

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Soil Properties
MeA	Metz sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	These soils are not considered expansive soils and range from mildly to moderately susceptible to sheet and rill erosion.
MgA	Metz gravelly sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	These soils are located with the San Benito River floodplain and are occasionally subjected to long durations of flood events. These soils are not classified as expansive soils as neither contains clay. MgA soils are mildly susceptible to sheet and rill erosion.
Rw	Riverwash	These soils are not considered expansive soils and range from mildly to moderately susceptible to sheet and rill erosion.
SrA	Sorrento silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	SrA soils are classified as Hydrologic Group B, which are soils that have a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet and are well drained. SrA soils are considered moderately expansive and are considered to have a low to moderate potential for sheet and rill erosion.
Source: NRCS, 2008.		

Expansive Soils

The potential for soils to demonstrate expansive properties is primarily dependent upon clay content. Clay particles can swell by absorbing large amounts of water relative to their volume, such as during periods of heavy rains, and the ground can rise several inches (JCP, 2001). Conversely, when these particles dry out, they shrink. As shown in **Table 3-5**, a majority of the soil map units located on the project site (79 percent) do not contain clays and are not considered expansive. Soil map unit SrA covers approximately 21 percent (1.6 acres) of the project site is considered moderately expansive.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 4/23/07;
USGS Aerial Photograph, 2003; AES, 2008

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Figure 3-4
Soils Map

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion involves the removal of the soil materials from the ground surface and the transportation of soil materials resulting in deposition in a remote location. Mechanisms of soil erosion include natural phenomena such as stormwater runoff and wind, as well as human activities, such as changes in drainage patterns and removal of vegetation. Factors that influence soil erosion include physical properties of the soil, topography (slope), annual precipitation, and peak rainfall intensity. As shown in **Table 3-5**, soil map units located on the project site have low to moderate potentials for sheet and rill erosion.

Seismicity

Active Faults

According to the Alquist-Priolo Act, active faults are defined as those that have shown seismic activity within the past 11,000 years, which are classified as Holocene faults by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) (CGS, 2007). The USGS definition, adopted by the California Geological Survey (CGS), defines active faults as faults showing signs of activity up to the beginning of the Quaternary age (1.6 million years ago). The project site is approximately 1 mile east of the Historic section of the Class A Calaveras fault zone, southern Calaveras section. Class A faults have a slip rate of greater than 5 millimeters per year (mm/yr) and Historic faults have shown seismic activity within the past 150 years. The San Andreas Fault Zone (Santa Cruz Mountains section) is located approximately 4 miles west of the project site. The Sargent Fault Zone, Southeastern Section is located approximately 2.5 miles north of the project site. The Sargent Fault associations are classified as Holocene, Class A faults with a slip rate of 1 to 5 mm/yr. The Quein Sabe Fault Zone is located approximately 6 miles northeast of the project site. The Quein Sabe Fault associations are classified as a Holocene active strike-slip fault with a slip rate between 0.2 and 1.0 mm/yr.

Surface Rupture

Surface ruptures occur when movement along both sides of faults, which are located deep underground, produces enough energy to cause a fracture on the surface. The Alquist-Priolo Act limits development on lands within a potential fault rupture zone. The project site is not within a potential fault rupture zone as the nearest fault is located 1 mile west of the site.

Seismic Shaking Intensity: the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale

The Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI) scale (**Table 3-6**) is a common measure of earthquake effects due to ground shaking intensity. The MMI values for intensity range from I (earthquake not felt) to XII (damage nearly total), and intensities ranging from IV to XI could cause moderate to significant structural damage. According to the probabilistic seismic hazards map, the project site has a potential ground motion during a strong seismic event (peak ground acceleration) of 0.81 percent of the force of gravity (CGS, 2008c). This equates to a MMI intensity rating of severe (X and above).

TABLE 3-6: MODIFIED MERCALLI INTENSITY SCALE

Intensity Value	Intensity Description	Average Peak Acceleration
I.	Not felt except by a very few persons under especially favorable circumstances.	< 0.0015g
II.	Felt only by a few persons at rest, especially on upper floors on buildings. Delicately suspended objects may swing.	< 0.0015g
III.	Felt quite noticeably indoors, especially on upper floors of buildings, but many persons do not recognize it as an earthquake. Standing cars may rock slightly. Vibration similar to the passing of a truck. Duration estimated.	< 0.0015g
IV.	During the day felt indoors by many, outdoors by few. At night, some awakened. Dishes, windows, doors disturbed; walls make cracking sound. Sensation like heavy truck striking building. Standing motorcars rocked noticeably.	0.015g-0.02g
V.	Felt by nearly everyone, many awakened. Some dishes, windows, etc., broken; a few instances of cracked plaster; unstable objects overturned. Disturbances of trees, poles, and other tall objects sometimes noticed. Pendulum clocks may stop.	0.03g-0.04g
VI.	Felt by all, many frightened and run outdoors. Some heavy furniture moved; a few instances of fallen plaster or damaged chimneys. Damage slight.	0.06g-0.07g
VII.	Everybody runs outdoors. Damage negligible in buildings of good design and construction; slight to moderate in well-built ordinary structures; considerable in poorly built or badly designed structures; some chimneys broken. Noticed by persons driving cars.	0.10g-0.15g
VIII.	Damage slight in specially designed structures; considerable in ordinary substantial buildings, with partial collapse; great in poorly built structures. Panel walls thrown out of frame structures. Fall of chimneys, factory stacks, columns, monuments, and walls. Heavy furniture overturned. Sand and mud ejected in small amounts. Changes in well water. Persons driving cars disturbed.	0.25g-0.30g
IX.	Damage considerable in specially designed structures; well-designed frame structures thrown out of plumb; great in substantial buildings, with partial collapse. Buildings shifted off foundations. Ground cracked conspicuously. Underground pipes broken.	0.50g-0.55g
X.	Some well-built wooden structures destroyed; most masonry and frame structures destroyed with foundations; ground badly cracked. Rails bent. Landslides considerable from riverbanks and steep slopes. Shifted sand and mud. Water splashed (slopped) over banks.	> 0.60g
XI.	Few, if any, masonry structures remain standing. Bridges destroyed. Broad fissures in ground. Underground pipelines completely out of service. Earth slumps and land slips in soft ground. Rails bent greatly.	> 0.60g
XII.	Damage total. Practically all works of construction are damaged greatly or destroyed. Waves seen on ground surface. Lines of sight and level are distorted. Objects are thrown upward into the air.	> 0.60g
Note: ^a g is gravity = 9.8 meters per second squared.		
Source: Bolt, 1988.		

Liquefaction

When subjected to energy associated with the shaking intensity of a considerably sized earthquake (MMI VIII and above), certain soils when saturated with water may lose their solid structure and act as liquids. Soils comprised of sand and sandy loams, in areas with high groundwater tables or rainfall, are subject to liquefaction. Ground subject to liquefaction may sink or pull apart. Liquefaction may lead to lateral spreading, where slopes even out, changing the topography of the area. Due to the site's proximity to the San Benito River and potential for high water table, the project site has the potential to experience topsoil

liquefaction during periods of strong seismic shaking and water saturation. Both staging areas have been mapped as lands susceptible to Moderate liquefaction hazards on the City's Relative Liquefaction Susceptibility Map (Rosenberg, 1998).

Landslides

Areas susceptible to landslides are comprised of weak soils on sloping terrain. Landslides can be induced by weather, such as heavy rains, or strong seismic shaking events. The project site is relatively flat (0 to 2 percent slopes) and is not conducive to landslides.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A-D, F-G

The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Act Earthquake Fault Zone and there are no known potential fault rupture hazards on the project site. The project site has the potential to experience topsoil liquefaction during periods of strong seismic shaking and water saturation and the southern portion of the project site contains a soil map unit that is classified as moderately expansive. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the development of new habitable structures or otherwise result in substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Impacts associated with seismicity, liquefaction, and expansive soils are considered to be ***less than significant***.

Question E

Soils underlying the project site are Metz sandy loam (MeA), Metz gravelly sandy loam (MgA), Riverwash (Rw), and Sorrento silty clay loam (SrA) which have a moderate potential for erosion (NRCS, 2008). The greatest chance of impacts from erosion occurs during grading and construction activities. Erosion control measures are an integral component of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) required under the Clean Water Act's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit required for construction sites disturbing over one-acre of soil. With a total disturbance area greater than one acre, the City will be required to apply for coverage under NPDES permitting system. To comply with the State's NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activity (General Permit), the City will file a Notice of Intent with the Central Coast Water Quality Control Board (CCRWWCB) and prepare a SWPPP prior to construction. A copy of the SWPPP must be current and remain on the project site. The CCRWWCB requires that all construction sites have adequate control measures to prevent the discharge of sediment and other pollutants to streams or rivers. With the incorporation of the provisions of the NPDES and the CCRWWCB requirements and **Mitigation Measure GS-1**, impacts from the construction of the Proposed Project on soil erosion would be ***less than significant***.

Question H

The Proposed Project does not include development of septic facilities or alternative wastewater treatment options. ***No impact*** to soils would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

GS-1 Erosion control measures shall be required prior to and throughout the rainy season. Erosion and water quality control measures identified in the SWPPP could include but not be limited to the following:

1. Temporary erosion control measures (such as silt fences, staked straw bales, and temporary revegetation) shall be employed for disturbed areas. No disturbed surfaces will be left without erosion control measures in place during the winter and spring months.
2. Sediment shall be retained on-site by a system of sediment basins, traps, or other appropriate measures.
3. A spill prevention and countermeasure plan shall be developed that will identify proper storage, collection, and disposal measures for potential pollutants (such as fuel, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.) used on-site. The plan will also require the proper storage, handling, use, and disposal of petroleum products.
4. Construction activities shall be scheduled to minimize land disturbance during peak runoff periods and to the immediate area required for construction. Soil conservation practices shall be completed during the fall or late winter to reduce erosion during spring runoff. Existing vegetation will be retained where possible. To the extent feasible, grading activities shall be limited to the immediate area required for construction.
5. Surface water runoff shall be controlled by directing flowing water away from critical areas and by reducing runoff velocity. Diversion structures such as terraces, dikes, and ditches shall collect and direct runoff water around vulnerable areas to prepared drainage outlets. Surface roughening, berms, check dams, hay bales, or similar devices shall be used to reduce runoff velocity and erosion.
6. Sediment shall be contained when conditions are too extreme for treatment by surface protection. Temporary sediment traps, filter fabric fences, inlet protectors, vegetative filters and buffers, or settling basins shall be used to detain runoff water long enough for sediment particles to settle out. Store, cover, and isolate construction materials, including topsoil and chemicals, to prevent runoff losses and contamination of groundwater.
7. Topsoil removed during construction shall be carefully stored and treated as an important resource. Berms shall be placed around topsoil stockpiles to prevent runoff during storm events.
8. Establish fuel and vehicle maintenance areas away from all drainage courses and design these areas to control runoff.
9. Disturbed areas will be re-vegetated after completion of construction activities.
10. All necessary permits and approvals shall be obtained.
11. Provide sanitary facilities for construction workers.

<u>HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handles hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working within the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

A hazardous material is defined in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) as: “a substance or combination of substances which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics, may either (1) cause, or significantly contribute to, an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible, or incapacitating reversible illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or

potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of, or otherwise managed” (CCR, Title 22, Section 66260.10).

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies and developers to comply with the CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites (DTSC, 2007). A regulatory agency database search was conducted for the project area to identify sites that store, treat, and/or generate hazardous materials, sites with open environmental cases with ongoing monitoring and/or remedial activities, sites that have had a documented release of hazardous materials, and sites that have existing contamination. The project site was not listed on the Cortese List,

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A and B

During grading and construction it is anticipated that limited quantities of miscellaneous hazardous substances, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and hydraulic fluid, would be brought and stored on-site. As with any liquid and solid, during handling and transfer from one container to another, the potential for an accidental release exists. The accidental release could pose both a hazard to construction employees as well as the environment. No hazardous materials are association with operation of the Proposed Project. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measures HM-1** through **HM-5**, impacts associated with hazardous materials handing during construction are considered to be *less than significant*.

Question C

The closest school facilities are the Early Childhood Education Center and R.O. Hardin Elementary School located approximately 4,000 feet east of the project site. The Proposed Project would not result in hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within a one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. **No impact** would occur.

Question D

The project site is not listed on the Cortese list (compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5). **No impact** would occur.

Questions E and F

The nearest airports are the Hollister Municipal Airport located approximately 3.23 miles northeast and Frazier Lake Airpark located approximately 7.56 miles north of the project area. The project area is not located within an area covered by an airport land use plan. There are no private airstrips in the project vicinity. **No impact** would occur.

Question G

During construction of the Proposed Project it is expected that project-related construction traffic would occur along the roadways adjacent to the project site and other roadways within the project area. The

increase in construction traffic, as discussed in the traffic section below, is not anticipated to be substantial and therefore would not prevent the implementation of an emergency response plan. Impacts are considered to be ***less than significant***.

Question H

Equipment used during grading and construction activities may create sparks, which could ignite dry grass on the project site. During construction, the use of power tools and acetylene torches may also increase the risk of fire hazard. This risk, similar to that found at other construction sites, is considered potentially significant. **Mitigation Measures HM-4** through **HM-5** included below will reduce potentially significant impacts associated with fire hazards created during construction to ***less than significant***.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- HM-1** To reduce the potential for accidental releases, fuel, oil, and hydraulic fluids shall be transferred directly from a service truck to construction equipment tanks and shall not otherwise be stored on site.
- HM-2** Personnel shall follow written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for filling and servicing construction equipment and vehicles. The SOPs, which are designed to reduce the potential for incidents involving the hazardous materials, shall include the following:
- A. Refueling shall be conducted only with approved pumps, hoses, and nozzles;
 - B. Catch pans shall be placed under equipment to catch potential spills during servicing;
 - C. All disconnected hoses shall be placed in containers to collect residual fuel from the hose;
 - D. Vehicle engines shall be shut down during refueling;
 - E. No smoking, open flames, or welding shall be allowed in refueling or service areas;
 - F. Refueling shall be performed away from bodies of water to prevent contamination of water in the event of a leak or spill;
 - G. Service trucks shall be provided with fire extinguishers and spill containment equipment, such as absorbents;
 - H. Should a spill contaminate soil, the soil shall be put into containers and disposed of in accordance with local, State, and Federal regulations;
 - I. All containers used to store hazardous materials shall be inspected at least once per week for signs of leaking or failure. All maintenance and refueling areas shall be inspected monthly. Results of inspections shall be recorded in a logbook that would be maintained on site; and
 - J. The amount of hazardous materials used in project construction and operation shall be consistently kept at the lowest volumes needed.
- HM-3** If suspected soil contamination is encountered during excavation and grading activities, all work shall be halted and a qualified individual, in consultation with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (SFBRWQCB), shall determine the appropriate course of action.

- HM-4** During construction, staging areas, welding areas, or areas slated for development using spark-producing equipment shall be cleared of dried vegetation or other materials that could serve as fire fuel. To the extent feasible, the contractor shall keep these areas clear of combustible materials in order to maintain a firebreak.
- HM-5** Any construction equipment that normally includes a spark arrester shall be equipped with an arrester in good working order. This includes, but is not limited to, vehicles, heavy equipment, and chainsaws.

3.0 Environmental Analysis

<u>HYDROLOGY & WATER QUALITY</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Surface Water

The San Benito River flows adjacent to the southwestern side of the proposed trail alignment. The San Benito River flows from the southeast to the northwest through the southern portion of the City. The San Benito River is the largest tributary of the Pajaro River watershed, which has a drainage area of approximately 661 square miles. Flow within the San Benito River adjacent to the project site is seasonal and dependent upon annual rainfall.

Drainage and Flooding

The project area drains west towards the floodplain of the San Benito River. A majority of the soils on the project site range from high to slow infiltration rates and corresponding low to moderate runoff potential when saturated. FEMA flood maps indicate that the portions of the trail alignment and the proposed Bridge Road parking area are within the 100-year flood plain (City of Hollister, 2005). According to the San Benito County FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) last revised January 4, 2008, the project site is within Flood Zone AE with an Zone X "Other Flood Areas" overlay which is defined as, "Areas of 0.2 percent annual chance of flood; areas of 1 percent chance of flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1 percent annual chance flood" (FEMA, 2008).

Groundwater

Groundwater recharge in the project area occurs generally through infiltration from the San Benito River and the Tres Pinos Creek south of Hollister as well as treated water from the IWTP adjacent to the project site (City of Hollister, 2007). In general, groundwater levels in the project area have increased from lows during the late 1970s and 1980s to their current levels as a result of changes in pumping and management practices within the groundwater basin.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A and F

Construction equipment and materials have the potential to leak, thereby discharging pollutants into stormwater. Construction site pollutants include particulate matter, sediment, oils and greases, concrete, paints, and adhesives. Discharge of these pollutants could result in contamination of area drainages and tributaries to the San Benito River, causing an exceedance of water quality objectives. Because grading and earth moving activities associated with the components of the Proposed Project have the potential to result in soil erosion, siltation, and contamination of stormwater, this is considered a potentially significant impact.

As stated above, to comply with the State's NPDES General Permit, the City shall file a Notice of Intent with the CCRWQCB and prepare a SWPPP prior to construction. A copy of the SWPPP must be current and remain on the project site. As required by **Mitigation Measure HDY-1**, the SWPPP shall identify the best management practices (BMPs) that will be used to reduce the potential for surface water contamination from construction activities to a **less-than-significant** level.

Question B

The Proposed Project may include up to two drinking water fountains that would connect to existing potable water pipelines. The proposed parking areas and paved trails would result in an increase of 1.65 acres of impermeable surfaces. The 1.65-acre increase in impermeable surface area would not impact groundwater re-charge rates as runoff would drain to the San Benito River where recharge would occur and there would not be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. **No impact** would occur.

Question C, D, and E

The Proposed Project would consist of the development of a paved bike/pedestrian trail over an existing unpaved trail with minor ancillary construction activities associated with the relocation of a perimeter fence. The existing drainage pattern of the site or area would remain the same and there would not be a substantial increase in the surface area that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Anticipated runoff from the proposed trail and parking areas would drain to the San Benito River but would not result in a substantial source of polluted runoff. Impacts are considered to be **less than significant**.

Questions G, H, and I

The Proposed Project does not involve construction of any habitable structures and would not impede or redirect flood flows nor would it expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding. **No impact** would occur.

Question J

The project is not located in an area with the potential for seiches, tsunamis, or mudflow. Therefore, impacts from the inundation by tsunami, mudflow, or seiche are **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

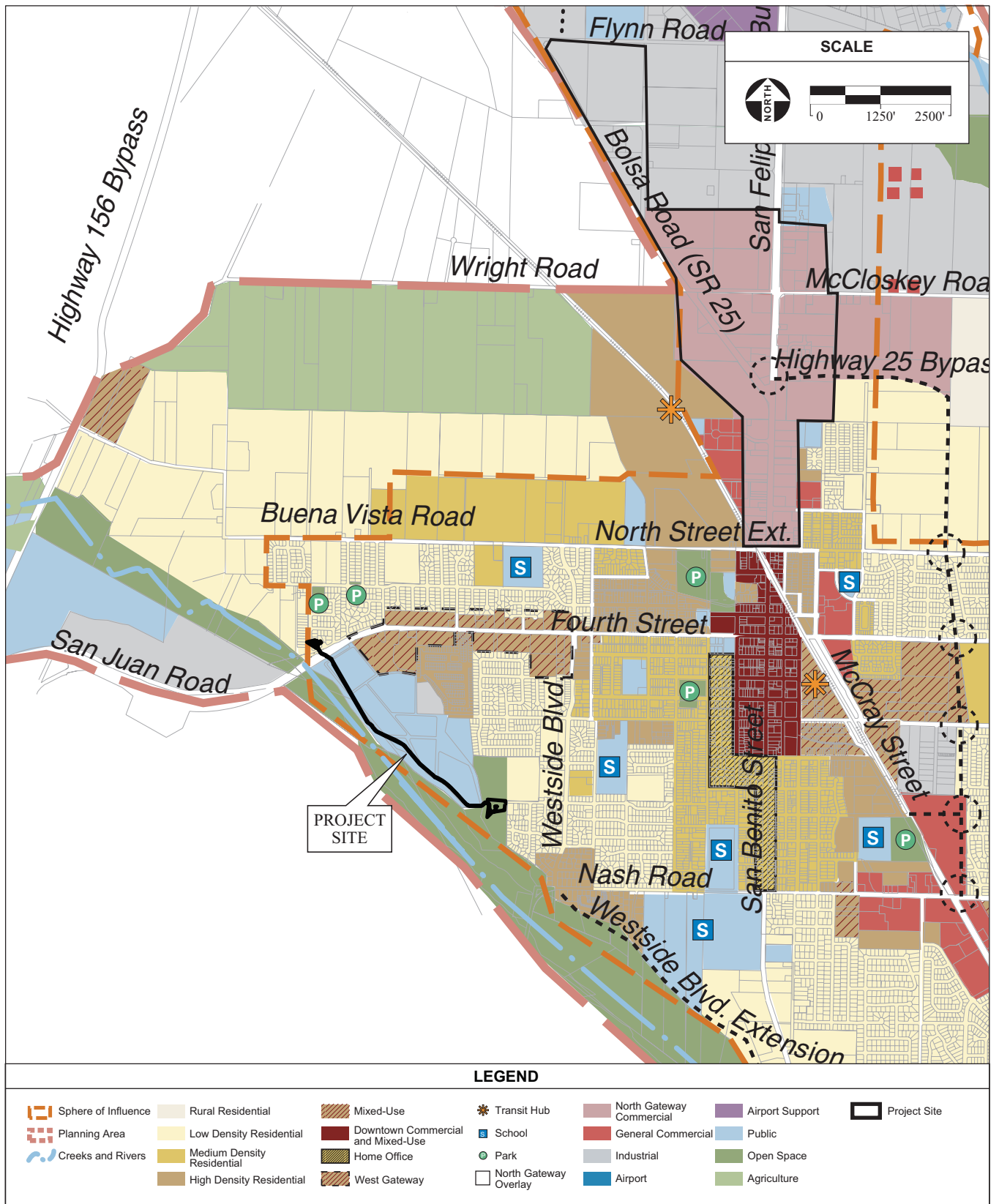
HDY-1 Implement **Mitigation Measure GS-1**.

<u>LAND USE & PLANNING</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Land uses within the proposed trail corridor consist of an existing unpaved trail that extends through open space land adjacent to the San Benito River, and a perimeter access road within the IWTP boundaries, portions of which are used for the storage of cement debris. The proposed parking areas are currently vacant. Land uses immediately adjacent to the project site consist of single-family residential, commercial, and light industrial uses to the north and east. Light industrial and commercial land uses are also present west of the project site along San Juan Road. The City's Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP) is located immediately east and the San Benito River is located immediately west of the project site. The Bridge Road parking area is bound by single-family residential uses to the north and east. The Apricot Lane parking area is bound by single-family residential uses to the east, an inactive sand mine to the west and an abandoned orchard to the north. Riverside Park is currently under construction directly south of the San Benito River across from the proposed trail alignment (**Figure 2-3**).

The City's Park Facility Master Plan (2002) includes the development of a river parkway trail along the west side of the City near the San Benito River. The Proposed Project would be the first segment of this river parkway trail (City of Hollister, 2002). The proposed parking areas and northern portion of the trail alignment are designated within the City's General Plan as Open Space which is applied to, "public and privately owned lands used for low-intensity, open space activities such as hiking, walking or picnicking. The designation also highlights environmentally sensitive areas such as rivers and creeks, habitats, City parks and recreation facilities" (City of Hollister 2005). The southern portion of the trail alignment is designated within the General Plan as Public, which is applied to, "publicly and privately owned lands used for activities such as utilities, schools, and other City of Hollister, county, state or federal facilities" (City of Hollister 2005). Surrounding land uses are designated within the City of Hollister General Plan as a mixture of low-density residential, open space, and public (**Figure 3-5**). Land uses to the west beyond the City boundaries are designated by the San Benito County General Plan as Floodplain, Heavy Industrial, and Agricultural Productive.



SOURCE: City of Hollister Community Development Dept. 2004; AES, 2008

San Benito River Greenway Project / 208536 ■

Figure 3-5
City of Hollister General Plan Land Use Designations

The City's General Plan goals and policies that are applicable to the Proposed Project are listed below:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Goal LU3 | Develop and maintain attractive landscaping on public and private properties, open space and public gathering spaces. |
| Policy LU3.4 | Existing Trees Preserve existing significant trees and tree groupings where possible. Replace trees removed due to site development. |
| Policy LU3.6 | Landscaping On Public and Private Sites Require landscaping on public and private sites, including entry areas, street medians, parks, schools, parking lots, plazas, courtyards and recreational areas. |
| Goal LU9 | Encourage development patterns that promote energy efficiency and conservation of natural resources. |
| Policy LU9.4 | San Benito River Where possible, preserve and restore natural drainage ways to the San Benito River, and coordinate recreational and trail use along the river. |

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Question A

The proposed trail would be bounded by the City's IWTP to the east and the San Benito River riparian area to the west. The proposed parking areas would be located adjacent to existing residential areas. As such, the Proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. **No impact** would occur.

Question B

The Proposed Project would be generally consistent with all applicable General Plan policies. Landscaped areas and tree plantings would be incorporated throughout the trail corridor and parking areas and thus the Proposed Project would be consistent with applicable General Plan policies related to the landscaping within public use areas and the preservation of trees. The Proposed Project would enhance recreational facilities adjacent to the San Benito River which is consistent with General Plan policy LU 9.4 which promotes the coordination of recreational and trail use along the San Benito River (City of Hollister, 2005). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. **No impact** would occur.

Question C

There are no applicable habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans for the project area. **No impact** would occur.

<u>MINERAL RESOURCES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

The northern San Benito County area includes areas mapped as significant sources of aggregate by the State of California under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMRA). The purpose of the mapping program under SMRA is to ensure that significant mineral resources can be protected from premature and/or incompatible development and will be available for extraction. Within the project area, mineral resource zones are found along the San Benito River and near Hollister Municipal Airport, and principal economic minerals identified are sand and gravel deposits of the San Benito River and along the San Andreas Fault (SBCWD & WRASBC, 2004b).

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A and B

Construction of the Proposed Project would consist of minimal grading activities within a previously disturbed area. The Proposed Project would not result in the loss of the availability of a known mineral resource that would be of local or regional value. **No impacts** to mineral resources would occur.

<u>NOISE</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Noise is often described as unwanted sound and thus is a subjective reaction to the physical phenomenon of sound. Sound is variation in air pressure that the ear can detect. The threshold of hearing is considered to be zero decibels (dB), and the range of sounds in normal human experience is 0 to 140 dB. To compensate for the fact that the ear is not as sensitive at some frequencies and sound pressure levels as at others, a number of frequency weighting scales have been developed. The “A” weighting scale, denoted as dBA, is most commonly used for environmental noise assessment, as sound pressure levels measured using an A-weighting filter correlate well with community response to noise sources such as aircraft and traffic.

The ambient or background noise level is defined as the existing range of noise levels from all sources near and distant from a particular area. Ambient noise in the vicinity of the project site is mainly a result of traffic along San Juan Road, surface streets, and IWTP operations.

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to ambient noise levels than others, sensitivity being a function of noise exposure (in term of both exposure duration and insulation from noise) and the types of

activities involved. Residential land uses are generally more sensitive to noise than commercial and industrial land uses. Sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project area consist primarily of residential housing units. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are located approximately 200 feet northeast from the Bridge Road parking area and approximately 180 feet east of the Apricot Lane parking area.

Industrial and commercial land uses in the vicinity of the site are not considered sensitive to noise. Likewise, recreational and agricultural areas to the west of the project site are not considered noise-sensitive. The noise environment in the Bridge Road parking area is dominated by roadway noise from San Juan Hollister Road. The noise environment near the Apricot Lane parking area consists of noise associated with residential neighborhoods.

City of Hollister Noise Policies

The City of Hollister General Plan, 2005 Noise Element established the following applicable goals and policies regarding construction noise levels:

Goal HS3 Achieve noise levels consistent with acceptable standards and reduce or eliminate objectionable noise sources.

Policy HS3.1 **Protection of Residential Areas from Unacceptable Noise Levels:** Protect the noise environment in existing residential areas, requiring the evaluation of mitigation measures for projects under the following circumstances: (a) the project would cause the Ldn to increase 3 dB(A) or more; (b) any increase would result in an Ldn greater than 60 dB(A); (c) the Ldn already exceeds 60 dB(A); and (d) the project has the potential to generate significant adverse community response.

Policy HS3.3 **Construction Noise:** Regulate construction activity to reduce noise between 7:00 pm and 7:00 am.

Policy HS3.4 **Vehicle Noise:** Strive to reduce traffic noise levels, especially as they impact residential areas, and continue enforcement of vehicle noise standards through noise readings and enforcement actions. In particular, strive to minimize truck traffic in residential areas and ensure enforcement of Vehicle Code provisions which prohibit alteration of vehicular exhaust systems in a way that increases noise emissions.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A-D

Construction

Construction of the project would create a minimal short-term source of noise to nearby residents. Implementation of **Mitigation Measures N-1** and **N-2** would reduce any short-term construction impacts below noise policy levels cited within the General Plan policies identified above. The City of Hollister's Zoning Ordinance limits construction activities to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Temporary noise sources on the project site would be limited to construction activities involving vehicles and equipment. The nature of the project involves construction equipment to be continuously in motion and not located in a single stationary setting over the span of the project. Equipment required for grading and paving of the proposed trail generally does not result in significant levels of groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels, nor would the project create a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. Impacts are therefore considered to be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Operations

Operation of the Proposed Project would not introduce any new significant sources of noise. ***No impacts*** would occur.

Questions E and F

The Proposed Project is not located in the vicinity of a public airport or private airstrip. ***No impacts*** will occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- N-1** Engine-powered construction equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers and enclosures as supplied by the manufacturer, and shall be maintained in good condition.
- N-2** All powered equipment will comply with applicable local, State, and Federal regulations, and all such equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturer's specifications to minimize construction noise effects.

<u>POPULATION</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through the extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Question A

The Proposed Project would not provide new housing or additional infrastructure that could induce substantial population growth within the area. **No impact** would occur.

Questions B and C

Implementation of the Proposed Project would not displace existing housing or people. **No impacts** would occur.

<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response time or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Police Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Fire Protection/Emergency Medical Service

The City of Hollister Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the project area. The fire department is comprised of two fire stations Station 1 is located at 110 5th Street and Station 2 is located at 1000 Union Road. The closest fire station to the project site is Station 2, located at 110 5th Street, approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the project area.

Law Enforcement

The City of Hollister Police Department provides law enforcement and safety services to the project area. The police department is comprised of one main station and one substation. The main station is located northeast of the project area at 395 Apollo Court this station is approximately 3.5 miles north of the project site. The substation is located in the Briggs building at Fourth Street and San Benito Street. The main Sheriff's office is located in the San Benito County courthouse at Fifth Street and Monterey Road.

Schools

The Hollister Unified School District (School District) provides public education in the project area. The School District is comprised of 10 regular education schools (6 kindergarten through 5th grade, two middle schools 6th - 8th grade), one early childhood education center, one accelerated achievement academy, and one dual language academy. The closest facility is the R. O. Hardin Elementary School located at 881 Line St approximately 0.75 miles east of the project area.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A – E

Implementation of the project would not alter or restrict public service routes, or increase the potential demand for public services. New structures would be built adjacent to existing roadways. The Proposed Project would enhance the City's existing park facilities through the creation of a riverwalk trail which would enhance community access to the San Benito River. ***No impacts*** would occur.

<u>RECREATION</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

The City of Hollister has eight public parks, the Hollister Community Center, and two sports complexes. There are two existing public parks in the vicinity of the project site these are Dunne Park located approximately one mile east of the project site and Vista Hill Park located approximately 1.2 miles northeast of the project site and the.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A and B

The Proposed Project would not result in population growth that would increase the use of regional parks and other recreational facilities. The environmental effects of project-related construction activities are identified within this section. The Proposed Project would enhance recreational activities and facilities in the project area. **No impact** would occur.

<u>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase on either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Affected Roadways

San Juan Road begins at Highway 156 Bypass to San Juan Road approximately 1.18 miles west of the project site and extends east past the project site until it transitions into 4th Street approximately one mile east of the project site. San Juan Road is a two-lane divided paved major arterial.

Bridge Road begins at the signalized intersection of Graf Road and San Juan Road and extends west for approximately 1,500 feet. Bridge road is a two-lane undivided road that would connect to the northern proposed parking area.

Bridgevale Road intersects with Bridge Road at the proposed driveway into the Bridge Road parking area. Bridgevale Road extends for approximately 1,200 feet north until it meets West Graf Road.

Apricot Lane begins at the intersection of Homestead Avenue and A Street and heads west for approximately a 0.5 miles until it dead ends at the proposed location of the Apricot Lane parking area. Apricot Lane is a two-lane undivided road that would provide access to the southern proposed parking area.

Westside Boulevard begins at the intersection of Buena Vista Road and extends for approximately 0.5 miles west of the project site intersecting with Apricot Lane and ending at Nash Road. Westside Boulevard is a two-lane divided road that provides access to Apricot Lane.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A, B, and E

Construction

Project implementation would temporarily increase traffic volumes along the access roadways to the proposed parking areas. The increase in traffic would be minimal and over a short duration of time. Traffic congestion would primarily increase from construction worker trips and the delivery of construction equipment and materials to and from the project site. The expected increase in traffic would take place between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday for approximately 30 days. The estimated increase in trips along the project corridor would be less than 30 one-way trips per day. Approximately 30 trips per day is not a substantial increase and would not cause an exceedance of any level of service standard. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measures TT-1** through **TT-4**, impacts are considered to be ***less than significant***.

Operation

Operational activity will be limited to visitors driving to the proposed trail and routine maintenance trips. Operational activities are expected to create up to 2.28 vehicle trips per day per acre of land use (refer to the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation* 7th edition, 2003 [412]). The total project area was determined to be 4.57 acres based on a 30 foot wide landscaped corridor and 1.81 acres of parking area. Operation of the Proposed Project is anticipated to generate up to 10 trips per day and is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in the volume of traffic on affected roadways that would cause an exceedance of an applicable level of service standard, or result in inadequate emergency access. This impact is considered ***less than significant***.

Question C

The Proposed Project would have ***no impact*** on air traffic patterns.

Question D

The Proposed Project would not change the design of existing roadways and does not include any operational features that would impact traffic or increase hazards. ***No impact*** would occur.

Question F

Construction parking would be limited to nearby streets and maintenance roads or within a staging area designated for construction equipment and worker parking. The Proposed Project includes up to 20 parking spaces that would accommodate users of the proposed recreational facilities. There would be sufficient parking for both construction and operation of the Proposed Project. **No impact** would occur.

Question G

The Proposed Project would not require altering the existing roadway design or permanently increasing traffic congestion and vehicle trips within the existing roadway network. Aspects of the Proposed Project would not conflict with adopted plans supporting alternative transportation. **No impact** would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- TT-1** The City shall identify all access and parking restrictions, pavement markings and signage requirements (e.g., speed limit, temporary loading zones).
- TT-2** All roads shall remain passable to emergency service vehicles.
- TT-3** The City shall develop circulation and detour plans to minimize impact to local street circulation. This may include the use of signing and flagging to guide vehicles through and/or around construction zones.

<u>UTILITIES & SERVICE SYSTEMS</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

Water Suppliers and Supply

Three water suppliers serve the project area: the San Benito County Water District (SBCWD), the Sunnyslope County Water District (SCWD), and the City of Hollister.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Solid waste disposal within the Hollister Planning Area is currently provided under contract via the Hollister Disposal Company. Solid waste is disposed of at the John Smith landfill, the only permitted landfill (a Class III non-hazardous solid waste disposal facility) serving the Hollister area. The landfill is located on John Smith Road, east of Fairview Road. The landfill is owned by the County of San Benito and is operated by Hollister Disposal Company, under contract with the County.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

Questions A – G

The Proposed Project would not create growth in the area which would cause a need for additional water or wastewater facilities. The proposed picnic facilities located at the Apricot Lane parking area would generate a minimal amount of trash which would be picked up from on-site trash facilities by the Hollister Disposal Company. The removal of soil from the project site would be limited and would not result in a significant impact to solid waste reduction. Nevertheless, Mitigation Measure US-1 is proposed to further reduce impacts from solid waste generation. The Proposed Project would result in a minor increase in potable water demand from the proposed drinking fountains; however, this increase in use would not result in a significant demand on potable water. The Proposed Project would not significantly increase use of potable water nor generate significant amounts of wastewater or solid waste. **No impact** would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- US-1** A condition shall be placed on the Proposed Project that requires the submittal of a solid waste disposal plan unless the City has adopted an ordinance that establishes criteria and procedures to divert at least 50 percent of all construction debris from the landfill. The plan shall include measures to divert at least 50 percent of the solid waste from the John Smith landfill.

<u>MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environment effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Questions A-C

As discussed in the previous sections, the Proposed Project would not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce habitats or species, or eliminate important examples of the major cultural periods of the State. In addition, the Proposed Project would not contribute environmental effects that have substantial adverse effects on human beings. When appropriate, mitigation measures have been provided to reduce all potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Question B

Cumulative impacts and indirect effects for each resource area have been considered within the analysis of each resource area. When appropriate, mitigation measures have been provided to reduce all potential impacts to a ***less-than-significant*** level.

MITIGATION MEASURES

See Mitigation Measures **AQ-1**, **BR-1** through **BR-9**, **CR-1**, **GS-1**, **HDY-1**, **HM-1** through **HM-5**, **N-1** through **N-2**, **TT-1** through **TT-3**, and **US-1**.

SECTION 4.0

SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION

On the basis of the environmental evaluation presented in **Section 3.0**:

- ☐ I find that the Proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions to the project design and project-specific mitigation measures described in **Section 3.0** have been agreed to by the project proponent. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION is recommended to be adopted.
- ☐ I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

City of Hollister
Lead Agency

SECTION 5.0

LIST OF PREPARERS

5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

City of Hollister – Lead Agency

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Dana Hirschberg, Senior Graphics Specialist

Glenn Mayfield, Graphics Specialist

SECTION 6.0

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6.0 REFERENCES

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