



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

Planning and Development

www.sbcountyplanning.org

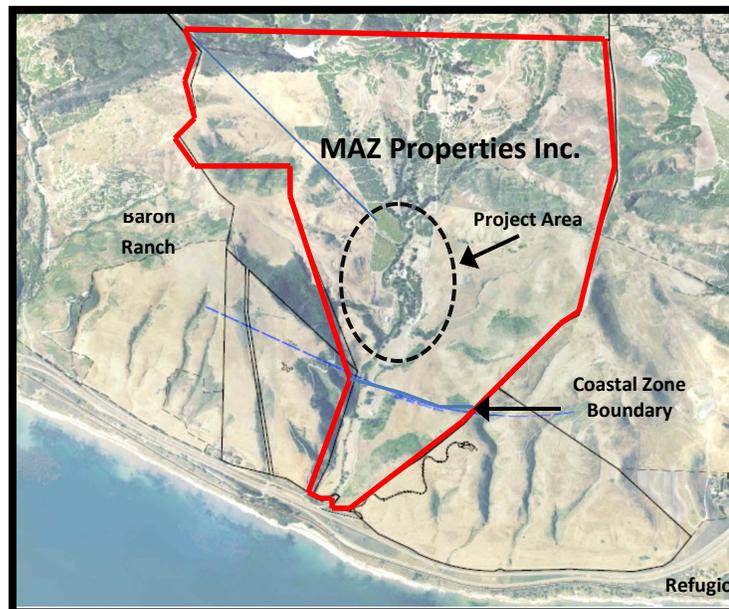
# Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration

19NGD-00000-00014

## MAZ Properties Inc Advanced Wastewater Treatment System Project

Case No. 15CUP-00000-00029

October 2019



### Owner/Applicant

MAZ Properties, Inc  
ATTN: John E. Vallance  
PO Box 1984  
Santa Monica CA 90406

### Agent

Alicia Harrison  
Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber,  
Schreck  
1020 State Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

### Engineer

Mark Lloyd  
L & P Consultants  
3 W. Carrillo Street  
Suite 205  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

For More Information Contact Natasha Campbell, Contract Planner  
Development Review Division (805) 570-4871

## 1.0 REQUEST/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Project Details:** Mark Lloyd, representing the property owner, MAZ Properties, Inc., requests approval of a new wastewater treatment system to replace the existing septic systems, which currently serve the El Rancho de Tajiguas “village” area Building #s 6, 8, 9, 11 (2 units), 13, 20, 21, and 22, (farm employee residences on both sides of Tajiguas Creek), as well as Buildings #16 (ranch office), #17 (agricultural equipment storage), and #19 (agricultural barn), which include restrooms. No other development would be served by the proposed system. The project includes:

- Replacement of existing septic tanks in the same locations, if needed, based on condition;
- Installation of new wastewater effluent lines and possible use of some existing wastewater line segments (depending on condition and location);
- Abandonment in place (allowed by EHS) of the three gravel leach fields that would no longer be used;
- Construction of an advanced wastewater treatment system module that would provide tertiary level treatment of wastewater effluent from the afore-mentioned farm employee dwellings and agricultural buildings; and
- Provision of a consolidated leach field for disposal of the tertiary treatment water, to be located in the vicinity of the most southerly existing leach field.
- Implementation of a restoration plan to avoid and offset project impacts, including removal of invasive species (arundo) and planting of compatible native species within the Tajiguas Creek riparian buffer area.

No other development is proposed nor would be approved as part of this request and no other changes are proposed onsite as part of the project. The project is proposed as part of ongoing creek habitat enhancement efforts on the ranch, including removing barriers to steelhead migration and improving water quality. Water quality monitoring has identified high coliform bacteria levels in Tajiguas Creek and the existing septic systems are suspected to be deteriorating with age, and may be a potential contributing source into Tajiguas Creek. The “Advanced Treatment Wastewater System” is proposed to remedy this situation and is consistent with the ongoing creek enhancement efforts.

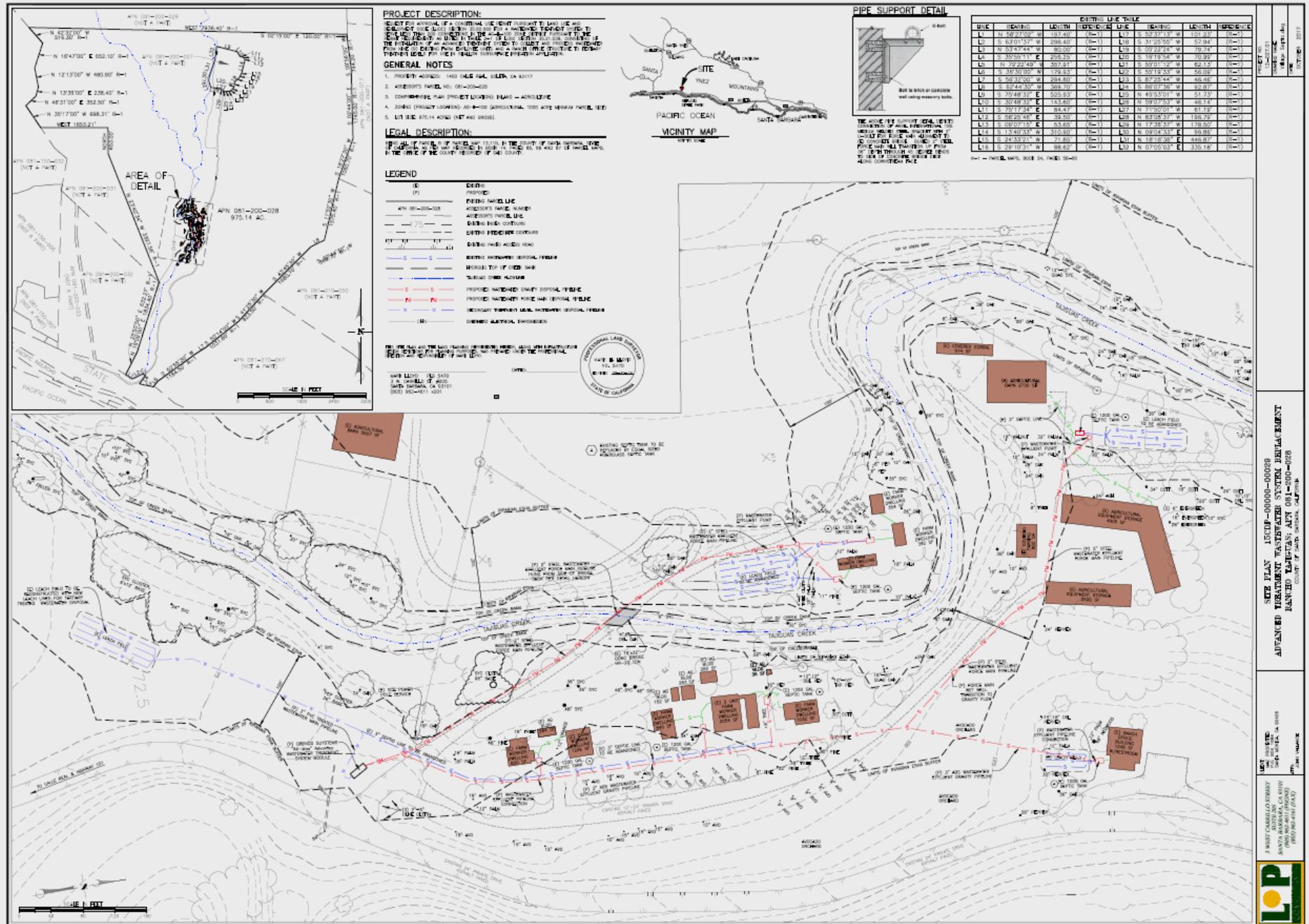
## 2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located on the Gaviota Coast, approximately 1.5 miles west of Refugio Road in the Third Supervisorial District, commonly known as 14000 Calle Real (See cover page and Figure 1, *Vicinity Photo*). The proposed wastewater facilities and existing structures to be served by the upgraded facilities are located on both sides of Tajiguas Creek, approximately 0.75 to 1.0 mile north of Highway 101, on a portion of APN 081-200-028 that is located outside of the Coastal Zone.

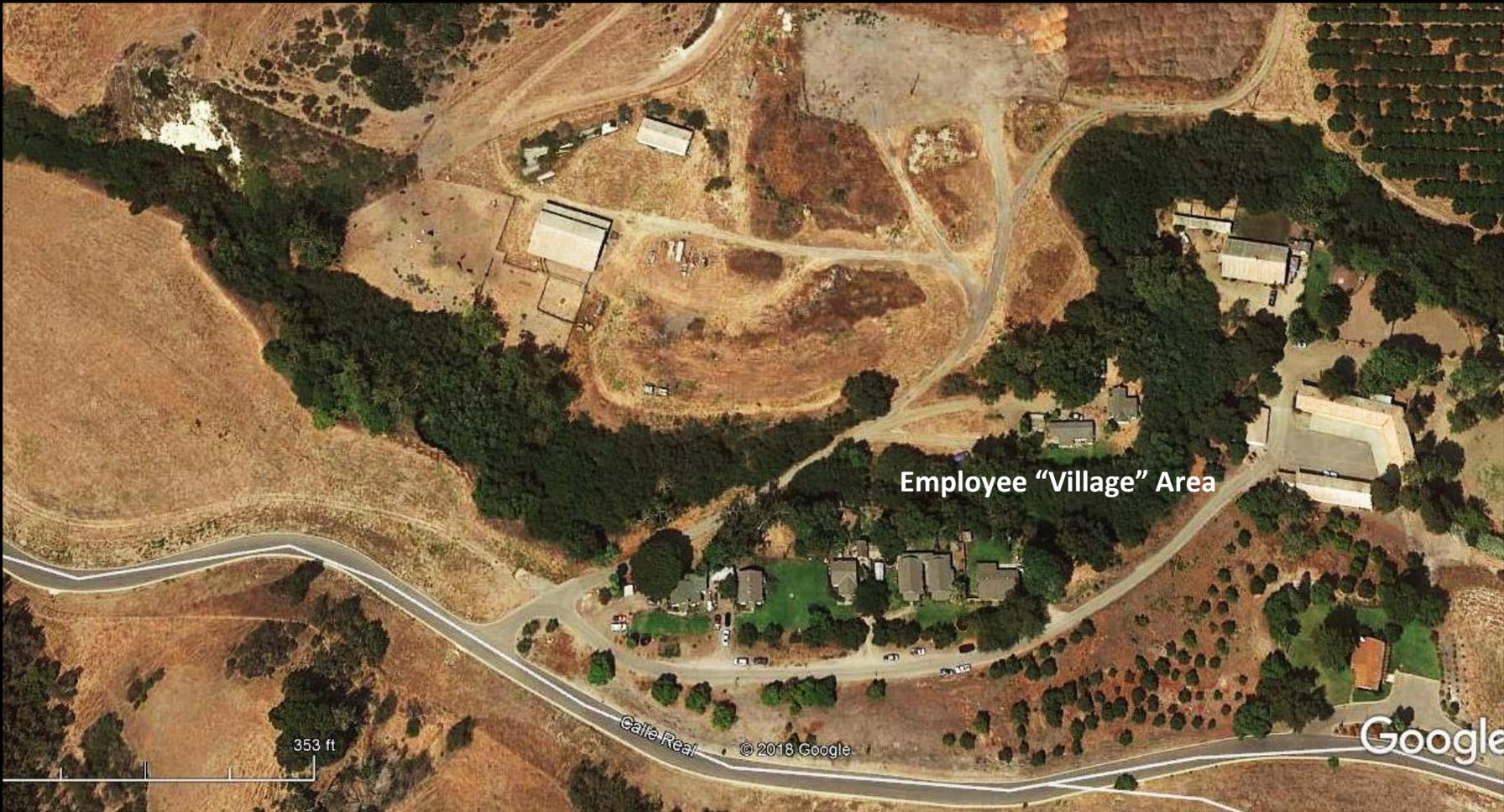
**Figure 1 Vicinity Photo**



Figure 2 Site Plan



**Figure 3 Employee Village/Project Area Photo**



<b>Table 1 Site Information</b>	
Inland Area/ Coastal Zone (CZ)	Project area is in the Inland Area; Southern part of APN is in the CZ (see cover page photo)
Comprehensive Plan Designation	Gaviota Coast Plan, Rural Region, Commercial Agriculture; Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Overlay (ESH-GAV), Southern part of APN (outside project area) is within Coastal Zone (CZ) and CZ Critical Viewshed Corridor Overlay
Zoning District, Ordinance	LUDC Inland Area, Agriculture II, 100-acre minimum parcel size (AG-II-100); Southern part of APN is within Coastal Zone with 320-acre minimum parcel size (AG-II-320)
Agricultural Preserve	82-AP-014, 77-AP-060A through 77-AP-060E
Site Size	973.98 acres (net)
Present Use & Development	Commercial Agriculture (orchards and livestock grazing), Farm Employee Housing, Agricultural Support Structures and Uses; Total of 37,738 sf of structural development
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	North: Agriculture (AG-II-100) within the larger Rancho de Tajiguas (of which project parcel is a part) and Los Padres National Forest South: Calle Real and Highway 101 East: Agriculture, AG-II-100 West: Baron Ranch (Santa Barbara County)
Access	Private driveway on Calle Real
Public Services	Water Supply Existing Private Water System Sewage: Septic systems (to be upgraded) Fire: County Fire, Station #18 (17200 Mariposa Reina) Other: Vista Del Mar Union School District (K-8)/ Santa Ynez Valley Union High School District

### 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### 3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING

##### Slope/Topography

The project is located in a level portion of APN 081-200-028, along both sides of Tajiguas Creek. The larger approximately 974-acre parcel extends up the steep hillsides of the ranch, including slopes exceeding 40 percent.

##### Biological Resources:

The existing structures, aging septic systems, and the proposed upgraded wastewater treatment components are located along both sides of Tajiguas Creek. Where the new wastewater line crosses Tajiguas Creek, it would be attached to the existing bridge. There is existing riparian habitat along the creek. Sensitive species known or expected to be present in this area include California red-legged frog (CRLF). See additional discussion in Section 4.4 (Biological Resources) regarding onsite biological resources.

### **Archaeological Sites**

Based on a records search and onsite archaeological investigations, no cultural resources have been identified or are expected to be located within the areas of proposed earth disturbance for the project. Also see Section 4.5 (Cultural Resources).

### **Soils**

Soils in the area of proposed disturbance (e.g., trenching for wastewater lines, the treatment module and leach field, as well as replacement of existing septic tanks if needed) include mostly Gullied Land, a non-prime agricultural soil (GU, Class 8). There may also be small areas along the wastewater line and leach field that include agueda silty clay loam 2-9% slopes, a prime agricultural soil (AaC, Class II/III) and Linne clay loam 15-30% slopes, a non-prime agricultural soil (LaE, Class IV).

### **Surface Water Bodies**

Tajiguas Creek runs through the parcel. The proposed wastewater treatment system upgrade would involve replacement of aging septic tanks (as necessary) and wastewater disposal lines, effluent from which would be treated in a new treatment module and then conveyed to a consolidated leach field. Both the treatment module and consolidated leach field would be located on the east side of the creek.

### **Surrounding Land Uses:**

The property is part of the larger El Rancho De Tajiguas, which totals over 3,000 acres and is enrolled in the County's Agricultural Preserve Program (Williamson Act) under Agricultural Preserve Contract numbers 76-AP-037, 77-AP-060, 82-AP-014, and 82-AP-015. Surrounding uses include Calle Real, Highway 101, Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, and the Pacific Ocean to the south; ranches with commercial orchards and livestock grazing to the east, including the Freeman and Rancho Guacamole ranches; the Santa Barbara County Baron Ranch, with orchard and livestock grazing and public trails to the west; and Los Padres National Forest to the north.

### **Existing Development/Uses:**

The parcel includes the bulk of the current and historic El Rancho de Tajiguas farm employee housing and agricultural support structures, with total structural development of approximately 37,738 square feet. The parcel also includes paved roadways, commercial orchards, rangeland used for cattle grazing, two existing water wells, and related water distribution/storage infrastructure including water tanks, reservoirs, etc.

## **3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE**

The environmental baseline from which the project's impacts are measured consists of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as described above. The existing structures and related infrastructure, including the existing septic systems, are either permitted or are legal non-conforming. Therefore, these structures and related infrastructure are considered part of the environmental baseline from which the project's impacts are measured.

#### 4.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and is defined as follows:

**Potentially Significant Impact:** A fair argument can be made, based on the substantial evidence in the file, that an effect may be significant.

**Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation:** Incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a Potentially Significant Impact to a Less Than Significant Impact.

**Less Than Significant Impact:** An impact is considered adverse but does not trigger a significance threshold.

**No Impact:** There is adequate support that the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the subject project.

**Reviewed Under Previous Document:** The analysis contained in a previously adopted/certified environmental document addresses this issue adequately for use in the current case and is summarized in the discussion below. The discussion should include reference to the previous documents, a citation of the page(s) where the information is found, and identification of mitigation measures incorporated from the previous documents.

#### 4.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?				√	
b. Change to the visual character of an area?				√	
c. Glare or night lighting which may affect adjoining areas?				√	
d. Visually incompatible structures?				√	

**Impact Discussion:** The project is limited to subsurface work with the exception of the partially buried new treatment module in the field south of the existing dwellings and the wastewater lines attached to the bridge. The project components, including structures, land alterations and lighting, would not be visible from any public viewing place, such as roads, highways, railroads, public and other open spaces, trails, beaches or other recreation areas or private residences that are not a part of the larger El Rancho de Tajiguas. In addition, the advanced wastewater treatment facilities would not be visually incompatible and the project does not adversely alter the character of the landscape or topography. The project would not affect neighboring areas with glare or night lighting. Therefore, the project would not cause a significant project specific impact or a cumulatively considerable effect on aesthetics.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No significant impacts to aesthetics/visual resources area identified. No mitigation is required.

## 4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity (whether prime or non-prime) or conflict with agricultural preserve programs?				√	
b. An effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance?				√	

The project is located in the central portion of the larger El Rancho de Tajiguas, in an area referred to as the “Village” area. The Village includes nine agricultural employee dwellings, most dating to the 1920s and earlier. The project involves replacement of existing onsite septic systems with an advanced wastewater treatment system, (see Figure 2, Site Plan). Creek water testing performed as part of onsite creek habitat enhancement efforts onsite has identified higher than expected levels of coliform bacteria, which may be a result of aging septic systems in proximity to the creek. The treatment system components are proposed adjacent to an existing paved ranch road and in primarily the same locations as the existing system components (e.g., septic tanks, wastewater lines, southernmost leach field, etc). The project would not alter/adversely affect agricultural operations in the immediate project area, on the larger El Rancho de Tajiguas, or on neighboring ranches. Therefore, the project would not cause a significant project specific impact or a cumulatively considerable effect on agricultural resources.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No significant impacts to agricultural resources are identified. No mitigation is required.

### 4.3a AIR QUALITY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources)?			√		
b. The creation of objectionable smoke, ash or odors?			√		
c. Extensive dust generation?			√		

**County Environmental Threshold:** Chapter 5 of the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (as revised in July 2015) addresses the subject of air quality. The thresholds provide that a proposed project will not have a significant impact on air quality if operation of the project will:

- emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger for offsets for any pollutant (currently 55 pounds per day for NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC, and 80 pounds per day for PM<sub>10</sub>);
- emit less than 25 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) or reactive organic compounds (ROC) from motor vehicle trips only;

- not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except ozone);
- not exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board; and
- be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans.

No thresholds have been established for short-term impacts associated with construction activities. However, the County's Grading Ordinance requires standard dust control conditions for all projects involving grading activities. Long-term/operational emissions thresholds have been established to address mobile emissions (i.e., motor vehicle emissions) and stationary source emissions (i.e., stationary boilers, engines, and chemical or industrial processing operations that release pollutants).

### **Impact Discussion:**

#### **a-c. Potential Air Quality Impacts**

**Short-Term Construction Impacts.** Short-term construction impacts would be associated with trenching and installation of the advanced wastewater treatment components. Therefore, the project would generate short-term emissions from trenching and installation of new wastewater components, including new tanks, wastewater lines, new treatment module and the consolidated leach field. Trenching for the replacement wastewater lines would involve the greatest area of disturbance (approximately 2,000 linear feet) and related emissions from trenching equipment. Project-related construction activities have been minimized to the extent possible under the circumstances. Where existing septic tanks or wastewater lines can be utilized, no additional grading or trenching will be required. In addition, the project layout has been designed to follow the existing infrastructure to minimize necessary earth disturbance. Emissions of ozone precursors (NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC) during project construction would result primarily from the on-site use of earthmoving equipment. Due to the limited need for heavy equipment and limited period of time that grading activities would occur on the project site to accommodate the approximately 2,000 linear feet of disturbance area, construction-related emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC would not be significant on a project-specific or cumulative basis. However, due to the non-attainment status of the air basin for ozone, the project would be required to implement standard APCD construction period emission reduction measures to reduce construction-related emissions of ozone precursors to the extent feasible. Compliance with these measures is routinely required for all new development in the County. With regard to short-term emissions of fugitive dust and PM<sub>10</sub> emissions, the project would be subject to required implementation of standard dust control measures required for all new development in the County. This would ensure that emissions from earth moving operations at the project site would not result in a significant increase in short-term emissions of fugitive dust.

**Long-term Emissions:** The project would not result in significant new vehicle emissions as the project is limited to the short-term construction period (e.g. earthwork necessary to install new wastewater lines and treatment module) and operation of the new packaged treatment plant, which is replacing existing septic systems. No increase in average daily vehicular trips (ADT) to or from the site would result from the project and air quality impacts are typically less than significant if a project generates fewer than 100 ADT. The new treatment system would not involve new stationary equipment, machinery, hazardous materials storage, industrial or chemical processing that would result in a substantive increase in the amount of pollutants released into the atmosphere. The proposed treatment system would be electric and would not generate significant emissions, as confirmed by Carly Barham of APCD (11/28/17 email to N Campbell). Enclosed septic tanks (either existing or replacement tanks if found to be leaking) and wastewater lines are the system components in proximity to onsite dwellings. Neither the treatment module nor the leach field is expected to generate noticeable adverse odors according to the project engineer (M Lloyd, phone call 12/1/17). In addition, the project would not generate additional smoke, ash, odors, or long term dust after construction. (See treatment system information in Attachment 1). The project's contribution to global warming from the generation of greenhouse gases would be negligible.

The proposed project involves replacement of aging septic systems with an advanced (packaged) wastewater treatment system, which would have comparable emissions to the existing individual onsite septic systems. No other changes to long-term emissions are anticipated, including any long-term increase in vehicle trips as the upgrades are limited to serving existing residences and existing bathrooms in nearby non-residential agricultural support structures. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a potentially significant long-term impact on air quality.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The project would not result in significant project specific emissions/air quality impacts nor would the project result in a cumulatively considerable effect on air quality.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is required.

**4.3b AIR QUALITY - GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Will the project:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif.</b>	<b>Less than Signif. with Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Signif.</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				√	
<b>b.</b> Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				√	

**Impact Discussion:**

The project involves replacement of aging septic systems with an advanced wastewater treatment system that would serve onsite agricultural employee dwellings constructed in the early 1900's as well as three agricultural structures that include restroom facilities.

Based on the project description identified in Section 1, the proposed project would not result in a long-term increase in greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, as compared to the existing environmental setting. The project would not result in an increase in long-term vehicle emissions or increased energy demand for heating, cooling, or lighting of onsite structures. As noted earlier in this section, the proposed treatment system would be electric and is not expected to generate significant emissions, as confirmed by Carly Barham of APCD. As a result, no significant impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions are anticipated.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No significant impacts are identified. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

#### 4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<b>Flora</b>					
a. A loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community?		√			
b. A reduction in the numbers or restriction in the range of any unique, rare or threatened species of plants?			√		
c. A reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation (including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements)?		√			
d. An impact on non-native vegetation whether naturalized or horticultural if of habitat value?			√		
e. The loss of healthy native specimen trees?		√			
f. Introduction of herbicides, pesticides, animal life, human habitation, non-native plants or other factors that would change or hamper the existing habitat?			√		
<b>Fauna</b>					
g. A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals?		√			
h. A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals onsite (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates)?			√		
i. A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.)?		√			
j. Introduction of barriers to movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?		√			
k. Introduction of any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife?		√			

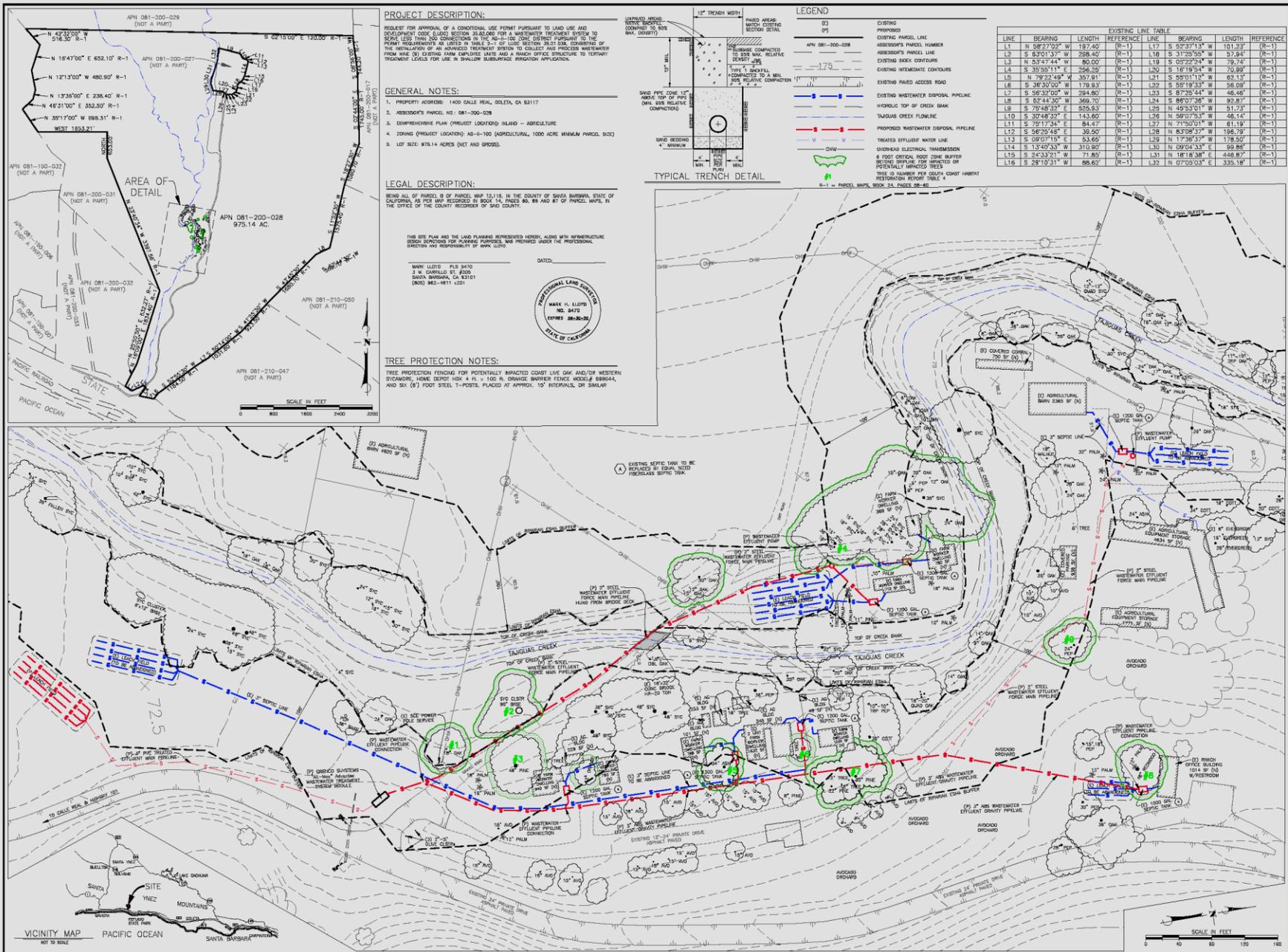
#### Existing Plant and Animal Communities/Conditions:

##### *Background and Methods:*

Santa Barbara County has a wide diversity of habitat types, including chaparral, oak woodlands, wetlands and beach dunes. These are complex ecosystems and many factors are involved in assessing the value of the resources and the significance of project impacts. For this project, South Coast Habitat Restoration (SCHR) prepared a biological report of the project site and areas adjacent to the project site. The biological report was performed to identify potential impacts of the project on biological resources including the potential for sensitive native plants and California red-legged frog (CRLF) in the project area as well as to propose mitigation measures, if applicable, to address identified impacts. A biological survey and assessment was conducted on July 28, 2017 to identify special-status plant and wildlife species that could potentially be impacted during implementation of the Project. The initial SCHR biological report (September 27, 2017) was peer reviewed for the County by Mary Carroll (Arcadis Inc.).

In response to Arcadis comments on the September 2017 report, SCHR performed additional field reconnaissance (September 6, 2018 and April 24, 2019) and updated the report to address comments in the peer review.

Figure 4 Project Site Plan with Trees



15-00221  
 COUNTY MAP  
 DATE: MAY 2018

SITE PLAN - 15CDP-00000-00029  
 ADVANCED TREATMENT WASTEWATER SYSTEM REPLACEMENT  
 RANCHO TAJIGUAS; APN 081-200-028  
 COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

DATE PREPARED: 05/01/2018  
 DRAWN BY: J. VALDEZ  
 CHECKED BY: J. VALDEZ  
 PROJECT NO.: 15-00221 (P&I)  
 SHEET NO.: 4 OF 4

**LP**  
 CONSULTANTS

The portion of the El Rancho de Tajiguas proposed for the advanced wastewater treatment system has been subject to disturbance and regular residential and agricultural activities since the early 1900's. The proposed project is a voluntary preemptive effort to improve the existing condition. The project is proposed and designed to avoid future degradation of the creek and enhance water quality and riparian habitat values by eliminating potential leaks or failure of the existing aging septic systems. The four existing leach fields, two of which are located within the ESHA buffer, would be abandoned as part of the project. These leach fields would be replaced with a new consolidated leach field (which may include part of the most southerly existing leach field). The consolidated leach field would be located outside of the ESHA buffer, and the wastewater is proposed to be treated through the new and upgraded system.

The following analysis is based on the final SCHR report, *Rancho Tajiguas Advanced Treatment Wastewater System Replacement Revised Biological Resources Impact Analysis*, dated May 29, 2019.

The biological report considered the potential biological impacts of the proposed project, which involves installation of septic tanks and a 2" steel wastewater effluent pipeline in various locations. The pipeline section that would carry wastewater from dwellings on the west side of the creek to the east side of the creek would involve trenching to underground the pipeline and attaching the pipeline to the existing concrete vehicular bridge, where the pipeline would cross the creek. The pipe would convey the wastewater to a treatment module and then to a leach field on the east side of the creek. The total area of the project trenching would be 4,006 square feet. The biological report includes a proposed restoration plan to avoid and offset impacts resulting from project installation activities.

The alignment of the new pipeline was designed to avoid and minimize impacts to the maximum extent feasible to existing trees and creek bank habitat. Areas selected for the new pipeline alignment have been disturbed for decades as part of the employee dwellings, ranch roads and agricultural operations. The property has been in agricultural use (orchard and livestock grazing) for decades and the proposed areas of disturbance are within or adjacent to existing disturbed areas, consisting of employee dwellings and roads that serve the existing agricultural operation.

The property is located wholly within the Tajiguas watershed. Tajiguas Creek bisects the property into eastern and western portions of the ranch. The Tajiguas Creek watershed is known to support a population of California Red-Legged Frogs (CRLF). The creek has a healthy native riparian canopy within the project setting.

Specific biological habitats are considered environmentally sensitive and are subject to the provisions of the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Gaviota (ESH GAV) Overlays, including qualifying habitat that exists outside of the mapped ESH and ESH GAV overlays. A general guideline that is used for inclusion in these designated habitat areas is plant communities that have a California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) rarity ranking of G1, S1, G2, S2, G3, or S3. Two additional habitat types have been included due to their sensitive nature within the county, although they do not meet the rarity ranking criterion (i.e., Coast Live Oak Woodlands and Western rush marshes).

The CNDDDB literature was reviewed before beginning field surveys. CNDDDB surveys were conducted to identify special status plants species that could be present within the project areas of impact. Table 2 identifies potentially occurring special status plants in the project area per the CNDDDB review.

<b>Table 2 – Special Status Plants Potentially Occurring within Project Area (CNDDDB BIOS Viewer 5.56.24)</b>					
<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>CDFW Status</b>	<b>CA Rare Plant Rank</b>
Santa Barbara honeysuckle	<i>Loonier subspicata</i> <i>var. subspicata</i>	None	None	-	1B.2
White-veined monardella	<i>Monardella hypoleuca</i> <i>ssp. hypoleuca</i>	None	None	-	1B.3
Black-flowered figwort	<i>Scrophularia atrata</i>	None	None	-	1B.2
Sonoran maiden fern	<i>Thelypteris puberula</i> <i>var. sonorensis</i>	None	None	-	2B.2

A field survey was conducted on July 28, 2017, with follow-up site reconnaissance on September 6, 2018 and April 24, 2019, to identify if any special status plants were found in the project vicinity. The survey consisted of meandering transects throughout the project areas. Plant species observed were identified to the level necessary to ensure that special status species would be detected.

Table 3 represents plant species that were encountered by SCHR within the project area and vicinity.

<b>Table 3 – Plants species observed during site visit – July 28, 2017</b>		
<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Native (N) or Non-Native (NN)</b>
Coyote brush	<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	N
Blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>	N
Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	N
Western Sycamore	<i>Platanus racemosa</i>	N
Arroyo Willow	<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>	N
Cottonwood	<i>Populus sp.</i>	N
Smilo grass	<i>Piptatherum miliaceum</i>	NN
Giant reed	<i>Arundo donax</i>	NN
Crab grass	<i>Digitaria californica</i>	NN
Sweet mustard	<i>Brassica sp.</i>	NN
Mediterranean Barley	<i>Hordeum branchyantherum</i>	NN
Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	NN
Prickly lettuce	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	NN
Cheeseweed	<i>Malva parviflora</i>	NN
Wild oat	<i>Avena fatua</i>	NN
Palm tree	<i>Palm sp.</i>	NN

California Red Legged Frog: CRLF have been documented in the watershed, as well as near the project vicinity. As a result no USFWS protocol level surveys were conducted to determine presence/absence. It is assumed CRLF are present in the project area adjacent to the creek.

**Thresholds:** Santa Barbara County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008) includes guidelines for the assessment of biological resource impacts. The following thresholds are applicable to this project:

*Wetlands:* Projects which result in a net loss of important wetland area or wetland habitat value, either through direct or indirect impacts to wetland vegetation, degradation of water quality, or would threaten the continuity of wetland-dependant animal or plant species are considered to have a potentially significant effect on the environment. Projects which substantially interrupt wildlife access, use and dispersal in wetland areas would typically be considered to have a potentially significant impact. Projects which disrupt the hydrology of wetlands systems would be considered to have a potentially significant impact.

*Riparian Habitats:* Project created impacts may be considered significant due to: direct removal of riparian vegetation; disruption of riparian wildlife habitat, particularly animal dispersal corridors and or understory vegetation; or intrusion within the upland edge of the riparian canopy leading to potential disruption of animal migration, breeding, etc. through increased noise, light and glare, and human or domestic animal intrusion; or construction activity which disrupts critical time periods for fish and other wildlife species.

*Individual Native Trees:* Project created impacts may be considered significant due to the loss of 10% or more of the trees of biological value on a project site.

#### **Impact Discussion:**

Long-Term Impacts (a-k): The project is not anticipated to have long term adverse impacts to native plants, wildlife or habitat, based on the following:

- The existing disturbed nature of the project area;
- The temporary nature of the proposed project – impacts limited to the construction period;
- Beneficial removal of existing invasive arundo near the creek; and
- Selective siting of the project focused on areas of existing and past disturbance and otherwise avoiding sensitive resources (largely outside of tree CRZs and ESHA)

Long-term impacts associated with the project are expected to be beneficial, as the project is proposed as part of overall creek habitat enhancement efforts on the ranch, and to specifically reduce the potential for onsite septic systems to leak or otherwise degrade water quality in nearby Tajiguas Creek.

Short-Term Impacts: The project involves construction activities and new wastewater infrastructure to upgrade existing onsite septic systems. Project impacts would be limited to short-term construction period impacts described below.

The project is located on both sides of Tajiguas Creek, but is largely located outside of the environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA). The exceptions to this include the transition of the new pipeline from buried underground to an above ground connection at the existing bridge (approximately 131 square feet) and like for like replacement of any existing septic tanks found to be leaking for the dwellings near the creek.

(a, c) The project would result in potentially significant impacts from direct removal of 131 square feet and potential additional removal and/or damage to County designated special status riparian habitat ESHA along Tajiguas Creek. The majority of the proposed work is located outside of the ESHA, but within the 100-foot ESHA buffer area. Approximately 1,465 square feet of the project area, including the new leach field, are located outside of the ESHA 100-foot buffer.

Within and nearest to the creek, this habitat is comprised of riparian woodland habitat dominated by western sycamore, coast live oak, white alder, black cottonwood, arroyo willow, red willow, blue elderberry, and coyote brush. The percent cover of the canopy within this section of the creek is nearly 100%. The ESHA buffer, where most of the disturbance would occur, also includes annual grassland and ruderal/disturbed habitat related to existing dwellings, roads and agricultural operations. Vegetation within the ruderal/disturbed area is dominated by non-native species including grasses, giant reeds, and other invasive plant species. The impacts to vegetation types within and outside of the ESHA buffer are provided in Table 4.

<b>Table 4 – Impacts within ESHA And ESHA Setback</b>	
<b>Impact Area</b>	<b>Area of Impact (square feet)</b>
Within the Creek (willow)	131
Within the 100-foot ESHA Buffer	2,410
Annual grassland	1,822
Ruderal/disturbed	588
Outside ESHA Buffer	1,465
Total Project Area	4,006

Feasible mitigation (Mitigation Measures Bio-1, Bio-3, Bio-8, Geo-1, W-1, and W-2) would reduce impacts to riparian habitat along Tajiguas Creek to a less than significant level, Class II.

(b) None of the special status plant species in Table 2 (*Special Status Plants*) were observed during the SCHR survey. Further, these species are not expected to occur in the project area as a result of the previously disturbed nature of the project area. Santa Barbara honeysuckle was not documented in the project area, but it has been documented on the ranch at a location more than 2,700 feet from the closest point of the proposed project (Storror 2017). Due to the disturbed nature of the project area, occurrence of unique, rare or threatened species of plants is not anticipated as a result of the project. Therefore, no mitigation is recommended to address impacts to special status plant species in the biological report.

<b>Table 5 – Summary of Impacts to Native Trees</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Impact to CRZ (%)</b>
1	18” Oak	1.1
2	96” Sycamore cluster	1.7
3	48” Pine (non-native)	0.7
4	28”, 36” Sycamore cluster	1.2
5	34” Ash	2.5
6	8” Focus (non-native)	3.3
7	2-12” Chinese Elm, 30” Pine (non-native)	1.7
8	48” Redwood	3.6
9	24” Pepper (non-native)	2.2

(e) The alignment of the new pipeline was designed to avoid and minimize impacts to the creek, existing trees and creek bank habitat. Figure 2 (*Project Site Plan*) identifies a six-foot buffer from the dripline of the trees, where trenching would occur. This establishes the critical root zone (CRZ) for the impacted trees. While some trenching would occur within the CRZ of specified trees, none of the trees is expected to be impacted within more than 20% of their CRZ (threshold determination for CRZ impact).

As identified in Table 5, the project (as proposed) would impact less than 20% of the CRZ of native trees. However, native trees are located in close proximity to construction activities and these trees would be impacted if protection measures are not adequately implemented during removal/abandonment of existing tanks/pipelines/leach lines and during installation of new infrastructure and if trees are unintentionally damaged or removed even with protection measures in place. Feasible mitigation (Mitigation Measure Bio-1, Bio-2, Bio-3, and Bio-8) would reduce impacts to native trees to a less than significant level.

(i, k) No trees are proposed for removal. However, project construction activities could result in potentially significant impacts if nesting trees are not protected and if nesting birds are present and adequate buffers and/or work delays (if determined appropriate) are not implemented to ensure activities do not result in disruption or abandonment of the nesting and breeding activities in nearby trees. (Mitigation measure BIO-9)

(g) Potentially significant impacts to California red legged frogs (CRLF), including direct loss of CRLF, could result if CRLF are present during construction activities, including trenching for the new wastewater line, given proximity of project-related work to Tajiguas Creek. Indirect impacts could result if the project degrades CRLF habitat through vegetation removal, sedimentation, or release of fuel, paint or other materials into the creek habitat during the construction period. Feasible mitigation (Mitigation Measures Bio-1, Bio-3 through Bio-8, Geo-1, W-1, and W-2) would reduce direct impacts (loss) and indirect impacts (e.g., degradation of habitat and water quality from construction activities) to CRLF to a less than significant level.

**Cumulative Impacts:** The project's impacts to biological resources would be short-term. The long-term biological impacts of upgrading the onsite septic systems would be beneficial. Therefore, the project would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on the County's biological resources.

**Beneficial Impact:** The project would improve the existing condition to avoid future degradation of the creek and environs that could result from potential leaks or failure of the existing system. The project will remove invasive arundo in the ESHA where the pipeline approaches the creek. All areas of the creek disturbed as part of the project will be stabilized through erosion control and native vegetation.

**Mitigation and Residual Impacts:** With the implementation of the following measures, potentially significant impacts can be mitigated to a less than significant level:

Bio-1 **Riparian Habitat/Tree Protection and Restoration Plan:** The Owner/Applicant shall submit for P&D approval a Riparian Habitat and Native Tree Protection and Restoration Plan prepared by a P&D-approved biologist, designed to protect riparian habitat and native trees and offset impacts from project installation. The Plan shall include the following, which shall be depicted on the project grading plan and any other project plans:

During Construction/Installation:

- a. To avoid damage during construction, the perimeter of the project disturbance area on the north and west sides (facing Tajiguas Creek) as well as the critical root zones (CRZ) of native trees in proximity to grading/trenching/installation activities shall be temporarily fenced with chain-link or other material satisfactory to P&D, and staked to prevent any collapse.

- i. The CRZ is assumed to be six feet outside of the native tree dripline unless the CRZ is more specifically defined by a P&D-approved arborist/biologist. Fencing shall be with chain-link or other material satisfactory to P&D, at least 3 feet high, staked to prevent any collapse, and with signs identifying the protection area, placed in 15-ft intervals on the fencing.
  - ii. Fencing/staking/signage shall be maintained throughout all grading/construction activities.
- b. A P&D approved biologist shall specifically direct any trenching required within the CRZ of native specimen trees, cutting of any roots of one inch diameter or greater, and tree removal or trimming to accommodate the project during the construction period.
- c. Grading shall be designed to avoid ponding and ensure proper drainage within driplines of oak trees.
- d. Native species shall not be removed.
- e. Equipment storage & construction staging and parking areas shall be depicted on the Plan and be located outside of the CRZ of native trees.
- f. The type and location of protective fencing or other barriers to be in place to protect the riparian habitat ESHA and native trees shall be depicted on the Plan.

#### Restoration

- a. The project will impact approximately 131 square feet of ESHA, which shall be restored at a 3:1 ratio (393 square feet).
- b. No native trees are proposed to have disturbance within more than 20 percent of their CRZ, which is assumed to be six feet outside of the dripline unless specifically identified by a P&D approved arborist/biologist. If more than 20 percent of the CRZ is disturbed or native trees are damaged or removed, they shall be replaced at a 10:1 ratio as part of the restoration plan.
- c. Non-native vegetation, arundo donax, shall be removed as part of the project. The area of arundo to be removed is approximately 20' x 20' (~400 square feet) and is located on the east side of the creek. This arundo shall be excavated while the heavy equipment is installing the new pipeline. All arundo roots shall be disposed of in an area where they will not re-root and re-establish. The excavated area shall be prepared with erosion control fabric to prevent any erosion and will be revegetated with native plants and native seeds.
- d. Native plants to be used in the restoration plan are proposed to include: 2 Arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), 6 Mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), 6 Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), 5 Giant Rye Grass (*Elymus condensatus*). This mix is subject to modification based on P&D review of the final project plans (e.g., if the total area of riparian area disturbance is updated). Willows shall be planted closer to the creek, with the other plants closer to the road.
  - i. Native plants shall be purchased from local genetic stock.
  - ii. The new plantings shall be irrigated with drip irrigation on a timer, and shall be weaned off of irrigation over a period of two to three years.
  - iii. The restoration site shall be weeded as needed in order to have plants survive and not be outcompeted by non-native grasses.
- e. Any additional unforeseen damage/disturbance to ESHA shall also be restored at a 3:1 ratio.
- f. The restoration plan shall include a description of habitat restoration quantifiable performance targets and proposed monitoring and reporting.

**PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** The Applicant/Owner shall submit a Riparian Habitat/Tree Protection and Restoration Plan (Plan) prepared by a P&D approved biologist. **TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall submit the Plan prior to zoning clearance. The Owner/Applicant shall include as notes or depictions all plan components listed above, graphically depicting all those related to earth movement, construction, and temporarily and/or permanently installed protection measures prior to issuance of grading/building permits. The Owner/Applicant shall install protection measures onsite prior to

issuance of grading/building permits and pre-construction meeting, shall comply with protection measures and shall implement restoration plan as identified in the approved Plan. **MONITORING:** The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate to compliance staff that riparian habitat and native trees identified for protection were not damaged or removed or, if damage or removal occurred, that correction (restoration) is completed as required by the Plan prior to Final Building Clearance.

**Bio-2 Unexpected Habitat/Tree Damage and Mitigation.** In the event of unexpected habitat or native tree damage or removal, mitigation shall include but is not limited to posting of a performance security and hiring an outside consulting biologist or arborist to assess damage and recommend mitigation. **Plan Requirements and Timing:** Applicant/Owner shall be required to implement required mitigation under the direction of P&D prior to any further work occurring on site. Any performance securities required for installation and maintenance of replacement trees will be released by P&D after its inspection and approval of such installation and maintenance. Damaged trees shall be mitigated up to a 10:1 ratio and riparian habitat shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio. If it becomes necessary to remove a tree or riparian habitat not planned for removal, if feasible, the tree/plants shall be boxed and replanted. If a P&D approved arborist certifies that it is not feasible to replant the tree, it shall be replaced on up to a 10:1 basis with trees with 5-gallon or larger size saplings grown from locally obtained seed. **MONITORING:** Permit Compliance shall inspect for compliance during construction.

**Bio-3 Onsite Biologist.** The Owner/Applicant shall designate a P&D-approved biologist to be onsite throughout all installation (grading, trenching, construction) activities. Duties include the responsibility to ensure all aspects of the approved tree/riparian habitat protection measures are carried out, including responsibility for inspection of tree and ESHA protection fencing, erosion controls and construction best management practices. In addition, the biologist shall have expertise with sensitive species anticipated to be present, including CRLF.

- a. Prior to ground disturbing activities adjacent to the creek, a County of Santa Barbara approved biologist shall be on site to survey for CRLF. Silt fencing shall be placed around trenched areas that shall remain exposed overnight.
- b. Biologist shall survey any trenched areas left open overnight prior to filling. If CRLF are encountered as part of work activities, all work shall cease and project biologist shall contact County of SB and USFWS staff. CRLF shall not be handled without permission from USFWS. Work shall not resume in areas where CRLF are encountered until authorized by County of SB and USFWS.
- c. Biologist shall document all observations of CRLF and resource protection measures to avoid impacts to sensitive wildlife and nesting birds (including detailed notes and photographs);
- d. Biologist shall document all work near riparian trees, including tree protection measures, any required pruning, and the final total amount of disturbance within the critical root zone of native trees (including detailed notes and photographs)
- e. Biologist shall document all habitat restoration activities, including *Arundo* removal
- f. Biologist shall prepare and submit a final as-built summary memo documenting construction monitoring and restoration implementation.

**MONITORING:** The Owner/Applicant shall submit to P&D compliance monitoring staff the name and contact information for the approved arborist/biologist prior to commencement of construction / pre-construction meeting. P&D compliance monitoring staff shall site inspect as appropriate.

- Bio-4 **Bio-08 Fish and Wildlife.** No alteration to stream channels or banks shall be permitted (no zoning clearance shall be issued) until the Owner/Applicant demonstrates receipt of all authorizations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and/or federal agencies for any planned alteration to stream channels or banks [trenching for new wastewater line adjacent to creek and proposed attachment of new line to existing bridge].
- Bio-5 **Indemnity for Violation of the Endangered Species Act:** The applicant shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the County or its agents, officers and employees from any and all claims, actions, proceedings, demands, damages, costs, expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments or liabilities, against the County or its agents, offices or employees brought by any entity or person for any and all actions or omissions of the applicant or his agents, employees or other independent contractors arising out of this permit alleged to be in violation of the federal or California Endangered Species Acts (16 USC Sec. 1531 et seq.; Cal. Fish and Game Code Sec. 2050 et sec.). This permit does not authorize, approved or otherwise support a “take” of any listed species as defined under the federal or California Endangered Species Acts. Applicant shall notify County immediately of any potential violation of the federal and/or California Endangered Species Act.
- Bio-6 **Compliance with USFWS Letter:** The applicant shall implement minimization and avoidance measures specific to California Red-Legged Frog, consistent with the letter from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dated February 15, 2018. Compliance with Condition Bio-7 *Threatened and Endangered Species Approvals* shall be considered compliance with this condition.
- Bio-7 **Threatened and Endangered Species Approvals:** The permittee shall obtain all necessary approvals from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and/or National Marine Fisheries Service, including an Incidental Take Permit and/or Habitat Conservation Plan for the CRLF, if required, prior to Zoning Clearance issuance. **Timing** Permittee shall provide to P&D copies of approvals obtained from CDFW, FWS and/or NMFS prior to issuance of Zoning Clearance. **MONITORING:** Permittee shall provide to P&D copies of approvals from CDFW, FWS and/or NMFS. P&D staff shall confirm receipt of any necessary approvals prior to issuance of Zoning Clearance.
- Bio-8 **Worker Training.** Prior to the start of work, a County-approved biologist shall oversee a worker orientation for all construction contractors. This training shall educate all workers regarding presence of special status section within the project area, how to identify those species, what their habitat requirements are, and applicable regulatory requirements and protection measures. **Plan Requirements and Timing:** Applicant/Owner shall provide documentation of worker training session prior to commencement of work. **MONITORING:** Permit Compliance shall confirm workers have received biologist worker training prior to commencement of project work.

**Bio-9 Nesting Surveys.** If construction is proposed to occur during the breeding season (February 1st and September 1st), a focused survey for nesting birds shall first be conducted by a qualified avian biologist, no earlier than three days prior to the beginning of project related activities. The survey shall occur within the area to be disturbed and shall extend outward 500 feet or up to the property boundary. If any occupied bird nests or cavity roosts are found, the P&D approved biologist shall determine the need to delay grading and construction activities and/or the need for a revised work plan to avoid harassment of the nesting birds, including establishment of an appropriate avoidance buffer zone that considers the bird species, nest location, nest height, existing pre-construction level of disturbance in the vicinity of the nest, and proposed construction activities. A buffer ranging in size from 100 feet for nesting passerine species to 500 feet for nesting raptors shall be determined and demarcated by the biologist with bright orange construction fencing, flagging, construction lathe, or other means to mark the boundary, unless a smaller biologist-recommended buffer is considered adequate based on the factors listed above (as approved by P&D). All construction personnel shall be notified as to the existence of the buffer zone and to avoid entering the buffer zone during the nesting season. All buffers shall be marked using high-visibility flagging or fencing acceptable to P&D, and, unless approved by the qualified biologist, no construction activities shall be allowed within the buffers until the young have fledged from the nest or the nest fails.

**PLAN REQUIREMENTS and TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall submit survey(s) and identification of buffer areas, if determined necessary (on plans and marked in field) for P&D review and approval prior to Grading Permit issuance. Any required flagging/fencing shall remain in place until applicable construction activities are complete. **MONITORING:** P&D compliance monitoring staff shall ensure compliance prior to and throughout construction.

**Residual Impact:**

With the incorporation of the above mitigation measures as well as GEO-1, W-1 and W-2, residual impacts would be less than significant. (Class II)

### 4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif. Class III	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any object, building, structure, area, place, record, or manuscript that qualifies as a historical resource as defined in CEQA Section 15064.5?					
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistoric or historic archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5?			✓		
a. Disturb any human remains, including those located outside of formal cemeteries?			✓		
<p>b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in the Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:</p> <p>1) listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020(k), or</p> <p>2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>				✓	

**County Environmental Thresholds:** Chapter 8 of the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008, revised February 27, 2018) contains guidelines for the identification, significance evaluation, and mitigation of impacts to cultural resources, including archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, these guidelines specify that if a resource cannot be avoided, it must be evaluated for importance under specific CEQA criteria. CEQA Section 15064.5(a)(3)A-D contains the criteria for evaluating the importance of archaeological and historic resources. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be “historically significant” if the resource meets the significance criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources: (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage; (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past; (C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The resource also

must possess integrity of at least some of the following: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. For archaeological resources, the criterion usually applied is (D).

CEQA calls cultural resources that meet these criteria “historical resources”. Specifically, a “historical resource” is a cultural resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, or included in or eligible for inclusion in a local register of historical resources, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1, or deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1. As such, any cultural resource that is evaluated as significant under CEQA criteria, whether it is an archaeological resource of historic or prehistoric age, a historic built environment resource, or a tribal cultural resource, is termed a “historical resource”.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b), substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired. The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project: (1) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; (2) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources; or (3) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

For the built environment, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Weeks and Grimmer 1995), is generally considered as mitigated to a less than a significant impact level on the historical resource.

### **Existing Setting:**

Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1 and in accordance with the provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 52, on July 18, 2017, a formal notice of application completeness for the proposed project was sent to Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chair, Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians on May 8, 2018. The notice provided notification of the opportunity for consultation under AB 52, and included a description of the proposed project. No reply was received from the County’s letter.

**Archaeological/Tribal Resources:** As part of preparation of a Phase I survey by SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA), SWCA mailed letters to each of six local tribal contacts identified by the NAHC. The letters requested any information regarding resources in the area. The outreach resulted in a response from Freddie Romero, Cultural Resources Coordinator for the Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians. Mr. Romero responded to SWCA by phone (October 22, 2018) and email (October 23, 2018), expressing concerns about the sensitivity of the project area and the potential need for an extended Phase I survey. SWCA met onsite with Mr. Romero on December 7, 2018 and SWCA subsequently performed an extended Phase I survey January 23-25, 2019. No archaeological resources were identified within or near the project area as part of the records search, Native American coordination, Phase I field surveys or extended Phase I work. In addition, Mr. Romero concurred with the findings of the extended Phase I in a phone call with SWCA on January 28, 2019 and in an email with Planning & Development dated February 11, 2019.

In the unlikely event that archaeological resources are exposed during project implementation, standard practice requires work to stop in the immediate vicinity, and an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards (National Park Service 1983) should be retained to evaluate the find and recommend relevant mitigation measures. In the event that human remains are discovered, State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 shall be followed. In addition, per Mr. Romero’s request, the applicant has agreed to contact Mr. Romero directly in the event of a discovery during construction.

**Built Environment:** The proposed development is limited to replacement of the existing septic systems with new infrastructure, improved treatment, and a consolidated leach field. The project does not include the demolition or alteration of any of the structures, including no changes to the employee dwellings that would be served by the proposed advanced wastewater treatment system. These dwelling units were built in the early 1900s (more than 50 years old). Based on available information, these structures are considered potentially significant historic resources. As noted, the project would not result in changes to the existing buildings, other than replacement of buried septic tanks and wastewater effluent pipelines, which serve the structures. All wastewater system components would be buried, with two minor exceptions: 1) a wastewater pipeline conveying effluent from residences on the west side of Tajiguas Creek would be attached to the bridge; and 2) the advanced treatment module, located in the field west of the employee residences, would be partially above ground. The pipeline on the bridge and the treatment module would not be prominent features in the landscape and these features are typical of other historic and existing ranch infrastructure, including components of the existing domestic and agricultural water system that serve the larger ranch. Therefore, the project would not alter the contextual nature of the site in a manner which would significantly degrade the potential historical significance of the existing structure(s) or the larger ranch setting. As a result, no project specific or cumulatively considerable impacts to historic resources are anticipated.

No significant historical resources or unique or otherwise significant archaeological or tribal resources were identified within the project area.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is necessary. Standard regulatory requirements would apply in the event resources are unexpectedly encountered during earthwork. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

#### 4.6 ENERGY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Substantial increase in demand, especially during peak periods, upon existing sources of energy?			√		
b. Requirement for the development or extension of new sources of energy?				√	

**Impact Discussion:** The County has not identified significance thresholds for electrical and/or natural gas service impacts (Thresholds and Guidelines Manual). Private electrical and natural gas utility companies provide service to customers in Central and Southern California, including the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. The proposed project consists of replacement of aging septic systems with an advanced wastewater treatment system, and energy use is expected to be substantially the same. In summary, the project would have a negligible effect on regional energy needs. No significant adverse impacts would result.

**Cumulative Impacts:** The project’s contribution to the regionally significant demand for energy is not considerable, and would be therefore less than significant.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

#### 4.7 FIRE PROTECTION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area?				√	
b. Project-caused high fire hazard?				√	
c. Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for fire fighting?				√	
d. Introduction of development that will hamper fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas?				√	
e. Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time?				√	

**Impact Discussion:** The project does not involve an increase in population or new residential, commercial, or industrial development, which could increase fire hazards and demand for fire protection services. The project is located in an area with adequate fire protection services response time, given its rural area location (phone call w G. Fidler, November 2017).

**Cumulative Impacts:** The project involves upgrading existing septic systems for existing legal non-conforming structures, most of which were built in the early 1900s. The project would not create significant fire hazards and would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on fire safety within the County.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No project specific or cumulative impacts are identified. No mitigation is required.

## 4.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards?				√	
b. Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading?				√	
c. Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise?				√	
d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic, paleontologic or physical features?				√	
e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?		√			
f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed of the ocean, or any bay, inlet or lake?			√		
g. The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent?			√		
h. Extraction of mineral or ore?				√	
i. Excessive grading on slopes of over 20%?				√	
j. Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil?				√	
k. Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas?				√	
l. Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden?				√	

**Setting:** Project short-term construction period activities would involve trenching and replacement of septic tanks, pipelines, and leach fields in proximity to Tajiguas Creek. As a result, the project would result in potentially significant impacts from increased erosion and sedimentation, including from trenching in proximity to Tajiguas Creek, particularly where the wastewater lines would convert from underground lines to lines attached to the bridge over Tajiguas Creek.

### Threshold

Pursuant to the County’s Adopted Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, impacts related to geological resources may have the potential to be significant if the proposed project involves any of the following characteristics:

1. The project site or any part of the project is located on land having substantial geologic constraints, as determined by P&D or PWD. Areas constrained by geology include parcels located near active or potentially active faults and property underlain by rock types associated with compressible/collapsible soils or susceptible to landslides or severe erosion. "Special Problems" areas designated by the Board of Supervisors have been established based on geologic constraints, flood hazards and other physical limitations to development.

2. The project results in potentially hazardous geologic conditions such as the construction of cut slopes exceeding a grade of 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical.
3. The project proposes construction of a cut slope over 15 feet in height as measured from the lowest finished grade.
4. The project is located on slopes exceeding 20% grade.

**Impact Discussion:**

(a) Potential to Result in Geologic Hazards. The project is limited to upgrading the existing wastewater treatment facility and no habitable structures are involved. There are no known geologic hazards in the area of project disturbance, which would impact installation or long-term use of the new wastewater infrastructure, including, but not limited to, faults.

(b, c, i) Potential for Grading-Related Impacts. The project would involve a negligible amount of fill which would have negligible impacts on the environment.

(c) Exposure to Rising Sea Level. Predictions about the long-term effects of global climate change include rising sea levels due to the melting of glaciers and thermal expansion. Rising sea-levels caused by global climate change could increase the rate of coastal-bluff retreat due to scouring of the base of bluffs. Although the exact rate of potential sea level rise cannot be determined, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change<sup>1</sup> predicts that sea levels could possibly rise between 50 and 90 centimeters (approximately 1.6-to-3 feet) by the year 2100. Although the project does involve property that is near the coast, the area proposed for development is situated at a minimum altitude of 75 feet above current sea level and approximately 0.75 miles inland from the coastal bluffs. Therefore, even if these rates of sea level rise are realized, the development area would remain well above sea level within that planning horizon.

(e, f) Potential Erosion and Sedimentation Impacts. The project would involve short-term earth disturbance, including vegetation removal, grading and trenching activities. As a result, the project would result in potentially significant impacts from increased erosion and sedimentation, including from trenching in proximity to Tajiguas Creek, particularly where the wastewater lines would convert from underground lines to lines attached to the bridge over Tajiguas Creek. The potential for the project to cause substantial erosion and sediment transport would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure Geo-1.

(d, g, h, j, k, l) Other Potential Geological Hazards. There are no unique geological features located on the project site. With regard to the ability of site soils to accommodate private septic systems, the existing structures, some of which were built as early as 1900, are served by private septic systems and Environmental Health Services has reviewed the project and would approve the final septic system design as part of the standard regulatory process. The project would not involve mining, the loss of topsoil, or construction-related vibrations.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

Since the project would not result in significant geologic impacts after mitigation, and geologic impacts are typically localized in nature, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on geologic hazards within the County.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a scientific intergovernmental body set up by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

**Mitigation:** The following mitigation measure is required to reduce potentially significant geologic impacts:

**GEO-1 Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.** As determined by the latest edition of the California Green Code and/or Chapter 14 of the Santa Barbara County Code, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) and/or an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) shall be implemented as part of the project. Grading and erosion and sediment control plans shall be designed to minimize erosion during the construction period and shall be implemented for the duration of the grading period and until re-graded areas have been stabilized by structures, long-term erosion control measures or permanent plantings. The Owner/Applicant shall submit the SWPPP, SWMP or ESCP using Best Management Practices (BMP) designed to stabilize the site, protect natural watercourses/creeks, prevent erosion, convey storm water runoff to existing drainage systems keeping contaminants and sediments onsite. The SWPPP or ESCP shall be a part of the Grading and Drainage Plan submittal to be reviewed for its technical merits by P&D, Flood Control District and Project Clean Water as applicable. Information on Erosion Control requirements can be found on the County web site re: Grading Ordinance Chapter 14 (<http://sbcountyplanning.org/building/grading.cfm>, (refer to California Stormwater Best Management Handbook and ESCP Requirements); and in the California Green Code for SWPPP (projects < 1 acre) and/or SWMP requirements. **PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** The grading and SWPPP, SWMP and/or ESCP shall be submitted for review and approved by P&D prior to approval of zoning clearances. The plan shall be designed to address erosion, sediment and pollution control during all phases of development of the site until all disturbed areas are permanently stabilized. **TIMING:** The SWPPP requirements shall be implemented prior to the commencement of grading and throughout the year. The ESCP/SWMP requirements shall be implemented between November 1st and April 15th of each year, except pollution control measures shall be implemented year round. **MONITORING:** P&D shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

**Residual Impact:** With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, residual impacts would be less than significant.

#### 4.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. In the known history of this property, have there been any past uses, storage or discharge of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel or oil stored in underground tanks, pesticides, solvents or other chemicals)?				√	
b. The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials?				√	
c. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?				√	
d. Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?				√	
e. The creation of a potential public health hazard?				√	
f. Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)?				√	

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<b>g.</b> Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities?				√	
<b>h.</b> The contamination of a public water supply?				√	

**Impact Discussion:**

The project involves replacing aging septic systems with an advanced wastewater treatment system to ensure onsite wastewater does not adversely affect Tajiguas Creek. There are no aspects of the proposed project or use that would include or involve hazardous materials at levels that would constitute a hazard to human health or the environment. Therefore, the project would not result in significant project specific impacts or cumulatively considerable impacts related to hazardous materials or risk of upset.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is required.

**4.11 LAND USE**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<b>a.</b> Structures and/or land use incompatible with existing land use?				√	
<b>b.</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?			√		
<b>c.</b> The induction of substantial growth or concentration of population?				√	
<b>d.</b> The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?				√	
<b>e.</b> Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal?				√	
<b>f.</b> Displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				√	
<b>g.</b> Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				√	
<b>h.</b> The loss of a substantial amount of open space?				√	

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<b>i.</b> An economic or social effect that would result in a physical change? (i.e. Closure of a freeway ramp results in isolation of an area, businesses located in the vicinity close, neighborhood degenerates, and buildings deteriorate. Or, if construction of new freeway divides an existing community, the construction would be the physical change, but the economic/social effect on the community would be the basis for determining that the physical change would be significant.)				√	
<b>j.</b> Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones?				√	

**Impact Discussion:**

(a,b) The project is proposed to improve the environmental quality of the Tajiguas Creek riparian corridor including water quality in the creek. The proposed project is compatible with existing land uses on the ranch and nearby properties and would not cause a long-term physical change that would conflict with adopted environmental policies or regulations.

(c, d) The project would not involve the extension of a sewer trunk line. Further, the project is not growth inducing as the new treatment system would replace an existing aging septic system and is designed and restricted to serve specific existing permitted and legal non-conforming development.

(e, f, g, h) The project would serve existing permitted or legal non-conforming farm worker housing and restrooms for ranch employees. The project would not result in the loss of affordable housing, loss of open space, or displacement of people.

(j) The project would not conflict with any airport safety zones.

**Cumulative Impacts:** The project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to existing land uses as the project is limited to improving aging septic systems that serve existing development. The project would improve the quality of wastewater effluent and would dispose of the effluent in a new consolidated leach field located in an environmentally preferred location compared to the existing setting. In addition, the project does not involve new development, and the new wastewater system would be limited to serving only existing development.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No impacts are identified. Refer to Sections 4.4. (Biological Resources), Section 4.5 (Cultural Resources), Section 4.8 (Geology), Section 4.12 (Noise) and Section 4.13 (Water Resources) for feasible mitigation required to reduce these land use related policy conflicts/impacts to less than significant levels.

## 4.12 NOISE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Long-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds (e.g. locating noise sensitive uses next to an airport)?				√	
b. Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds?				√	
c. Project-generated substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night)?				√	

**Setting/Threshold:** Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound which is measured on a logarithmic scale and expressed in decibels (dB(A)). The duration of noise and the time period at which it occurs are important values in determining impacts on noise-sensitive land uses. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level ( $L_{dn}$ ) are noise indices which account for differences in intrusiveness between day- and night-time uses. County noise thresholds are: 1) 65 dB(A) CNEL maximum for exterior exposure, and 2) 45 dB(A) CNEL maximum for interior exposure of noise-sensitive uses. Noise-sensitive land uses include: residential dwellings; transient lodging; hospitals and other long-term care facilities; public or private educational facilities; libraries, churches; and places of public assembly.

The proposed project site is located outside of 65 dB(A) noise contours for roadways, public facilities, airport approach and take-off zones. Surrounding noise-sensitive uses consist of agricultural employee housing. Given work hours for onsite agricultural workers, the project is not expected to result in significant short-term noise impacts.

### Impact Discussion:

(a, c) Project related noise impacts would be limited to the short-term construction period. The project would not increase ambient noise levels for adjoining areas and would not result in long-term exposure of people to noise levels that exceed County thresholds.

(b) The employee village area housing is located within 1,600 feet of the project’s construction activities. However, short-term noise impacts would not be considered significant based on the following:

- Noisy project activities associated with the project would be limited to trenching and backfilling the trenches (M. Lloyd, phone call with N. Campbell 09/25/19);
- The project would be graded and constructed primarily by ranch employees;
- The nearby residences are occupied by ranch employees who would otherwise be engaged in agricultural related work onsite, which include activities with similar noise levels as the project installation activities (various maintenance activities, vehicles, heavy equipment, etc.);
- Work hours and noise levels on the ranch differ from those associated with typical residential neighborhoods;
- The project would replace basic wastewater infrastructure that serves existing occupied employee residences. Therefore, it is critical that the project is completed in as short of time as possible, for the comfort and convenience of the employees living in the affected residences.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No significant impacts are identified and therefore no mitigation is required to ensure noise impacts would be less than significant.

### 4.13 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. A need for new or altered police protection and/or health care services?				√	
b. Student generation exceeding school capacity?				√	
c. Significant amounts of solid waste or breach any national, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal and generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity)?				√	
d. A need for new or altered sewer system facilities (sewer lines, lift-stations, etc.)?				√	
e. The construction of new storm water drainage or water quality control facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				√	

**Impact Discussion:** The proposed project is limited to replacing aging septic systems onsite with an advanced wastewater treatment system to serve existing legal non-conforming and permitted development. The system would not serve new development and the project would not generate demand for increased public services. The proposed new system would require final approval from Environmental Health Services. However, the system would result in an upgrade to the existing aging septic systems onsite. Therefore, the project would have no impact to public facilities.

**Cumulative Impacts:** The project, which is limited to upgrading existing septic systems to serve existing development would not result in project specific or cumulative impacts to public services. Therefore, the project’s contribution to the regionally significant demand for public services is not considerable, and is less than significant.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is required.

### 4.14 RECREATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Conflict with established recreational uses of the area?				√	
b. Conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails?				√	
c. Substantial impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities (e.g., overuse of an area with constraints on numbers of people, vehicles, animals, etc. which might safely use the area)?				√	

**Impact Discussion:**

(a, b) The existing/proposed septic systems are located in the central part of the ranch, which is not located on or near any established recreational uses, including biking, equestrian or hiking trails. No adverse impacts would result.

(c) The proposed project would not result in any population increase and would have no adverse impacts on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities, either in the project vicinity or County-wide.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

**Cumulative Impacts:** Since the project would not affect recreational resources, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on recreational resources within the County and impacts to recreation would be less than significant.

#### 4.15 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement (daily, peak-hour, etc.) in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?				√	
b. A need for private or public road maintenance, or need for new road(s)?				√	
c. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?				√	
d. Substantial impact upon existing transit systems (e.g. bus service) or alteration of present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?				√	
e. Alteration to waterborne, rail or air traffic?				√	
f. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians (including short-term construction and long-term operational)?				√	
g. Inadequate sight distance?				√	
ingress/egress?				√	
general road capacity?				√	
emergency access?				√	
h. Impacts to Congestion Management Plan system?				√	

**Impact Discussion:**

The proposed project is limited to replacing existing aging septic systems. The project involves a short-term construction period, with construction equipment/vehicles and labor available on the ranch. In addition, the operational phase of the project would direct wastewater to a tertiary treatment module and then to one consolidated leach field. Therefore, the project would not result in changes to existing agricultural operations or residential uses onsite and the project would not increase the density, development, or level of activity on the project site. As such, the project would not increase vehicular traffic to or from the site nor would it affect roadways; parking facilities; pedestrian, bicycle, or transit access; or any other type of transportation facility. The project would not result in a substantive increase in traffic and therefore would not affect modes of transportation and would not contribute considerably to regionally significant traffic congestion. Transportation impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

#### 4.16 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?				√	
b. Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?			√		
c. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?				√	
d. Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution?			√		
e. Alterations to the course or flow of flood water or need for private or public flood control projects?				√	
f. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding (placement of project in 100 year flood plain), accelerated runoff or tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion?				√	
g. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater?			√		
h. Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference?				√	
i. Overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? Or, a significant increase in the existing overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin?				√	
j. The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion?				√	
k. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?				√	
l. Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water?		√			

#### Existing Setting:

The ranch is served by private wells and surface water diverted from Tajiguas Creek. The project area is located in proximity to Tajiguas Creek, on both sides of the creek (see Figure 4, *Site Plan with Trees*).

### **Water Resources Thresholds:**

A project is determined to have a significant effect on water resources if it would exceed established threshold values, which have been set for each overdrafted groundwater basin or watershed thresholds based on watershed specific analysis. These values were determined based on an estimation of remaining life of available water storage. If the project's net new consumptive water use [total consumptive demand adjusted for recharge less discontinued historic use] exceeds the threshold adopted for the basin/watershed, the project's impacts on water resources are considered significant.

A project is also deemed to have a significant effect on water resources if a net increase in pumpage from a well would substantially affect production or quality from a nearby well.

### **Water Quality Thresholds:**

A significant water quality impact is presumed to occur if the project:

- Is located within an urbanized area of the county and the project construction or redevelopment individually or as a part of a larger common plan of development or sale would disturb one (1) or more acres of land;
- Increases the amount of impervious surfaces on a site by 25% or more;
- Results in channelization or relocation of a natural drainage channel;
- Results in removal or reduction of riparian vegetation or other vegetation (excluding non-native vegetation removed for restoration projects) from the buffer zone of any streams, creeks or wetlands;
- Is an industrial facility that falls under one or more of categories of industrial activity regulated under the NPDES Phase I industrial storm water regulations (facilities with effluent limitation; manufacturing; mineral, metal, oil and gas, hazardous waste, treatment or disposal facilities; landfills; recycling facilities; steam electric plants; transportation facilities; treatment works; and light industrial activity);
- Discharges pollutants that exceed the water quality standards set forth in the applicable NPDES permit, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Basin Plan or otherwise impairs the beneficial uses<sup>2</sup> of a receiving water body;
- Results in a discharge of pollutants into an "impaired" water body that has been designated as such by the State Water Resources Control Board or the RWQCB under Section 303 (d) of the Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (i.e., the Clean Water Act); or
- Results in a discharge of pollutants of concern to a receiving water body, as identified by the RWQCB.

### **Impact Discussion:**

The project would replace existing infrastructure, consolidate existing leach fields into one new leach field located further from Tajiguas Creek, and add an improved wastewater treatment module (improving the level of wastewater treatment).

---

<sup>2</sup> Beneficial uses for Santa Barbara County are identified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin, or Basin Plan, and include (among others) recreation, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, fresh water habitat, estuarine habitat, support for rare, threatened or endangered species, preservation of biological habitats of special significance.

(a, c, e) The project is limited to replacing and upgrading wastewater system infrastructure, including for structures built in the early 1900s. Wastewater would be conveyed to a new consolidated leach field outside of the Tajiguas Creek riparian corridor buffer area. The project would not result in potentially significant impacts to surface water in any water body, including Tajiguas Creek, with regard to currents, course, direction, amount or flow of water, including flood water.

(b) The only new impervious surfaces associated with the project would be the partially buried treatment module, which would involve approximately 300 square feet, located within an existing agricultural field. The treatment module would provide wastewater treatment before the wastewater is conveyed to the new consolidated leach field. (see Figure 2, Site Plan). Therefore, the project is not expected to result in long-term changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff.

(d) Construction activities associated with replacement and installation of the proposed wastewater system upgrade would involve trenching, grading, and associated vegetation removal, which could potentially create temporary runoff and erosion problems. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1, W-1 and W-2 during the construction period would reduce construction period impacts to water quality to a less than significant level.

(g, h, i, k) The residences and agricultural support structures that would be served by the wastewater upgrade project would continue to be supplied water from onsite wells and surface water supplies. The project would not increase water demand onsite. No new or expanded development would be served by the proposed wastewater treatment facilities and the project would not result in a change in either domestic or agricultural water demand (increase or decrease). The project's impact on water supplies and the direction, rate of flow or overdraft of groundwater resources would therefore be less than significant.

(j) The proposed upgrade to existing septic onsite systems would replace old systems, some components of which may have been initially installed over 100 years ago. Environmental Health Services would approve the final system design prior to zoning clearance as part of the standard regulatory review process. The proposed facilities would improve the level of wastewater treatment and would consolidate four existing leach fields to one leach field that is set back further from the creek. The project's improved wastewater treatment would result in a long-term beneficial impact to water quality.

(l) The project would not result in degraded stormwater runoff. The project involves replacing and upgrading wastewater transport and treatment facilities within a limited area of the ranch. In addition, the project would only serve existing development. No new development would be served by the project's new infrastructure, including the replacement septic tanks, new pipelines, the proposed treatment module and the new leach field. The project would not result in increased use of fertilizers, pesticides, pesticides, or household chemicals, would not increase or affect the course of surface or groundwater, and would not alter the direction, volume or frequency of runoff.

(f) Predictions about the long-term effects of global climate change include rising sea levels due to melting of glaciers and thermal expansion. Rising sea levels could increase the incidence of flooding in coastal areas with altitudes at or near sea-level. Although the exact rate of future sea level rise is unknown, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has estimated that sea levels may rise between 50 and 90 centimeters (approximately 1.6-to-3 feet) by the year 2100.<sup>3</sup> Although the project involves property that is near the coast, the project area within the larger ranch is situated at a minimum elevation of 75 feet above current sea level and approximately 0.75 miles inland from the coastal bluffs. Therefore, even if these rates of sea level rise are realized, the development area would remain well above sea level within this planning horizon.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a scientific intergovernmental body set up by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

**Cumulative Impacts:** The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for water resources. Therefore, the project's contribution to the regionally significant issues of water supplies and water quality is not considerable, and is less than significant. In addition, the proposed upgrade to existing septic systems to serve existing development would result in an overall benefit to water resources.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's potential short-term water resource impacts to a less than significant level:

**W-1 Construction Period Water Quality Protection:** The Owner/Applicant shall comply with the following measures to protect water quality impacts during construction:

- a. Construction materials and waste such as paint, mortar, concrete slurry, fuels, etc. shall be stored, handled, and disposed of in a manner which minimizes the potential for materials to be conveyed in runoff water.
- b. The Owner/Applicant shall designate construction equipment filling and storage area(s) to contain spills, facilitate clean-up and proper disposal and prevent contamination from discharging into Tajiguas Creek. The areas shall be located outside of the Tajiguas Creek buffer area (100 feet from edge of riparian canopy) or within the critical root zone of native trees.
- c. The Owner/Applicant shall designate a washout area(s) for the washing of concrete trucks, paint, equipment, or similar activities to ensure wash water is not discharged within the Tajiguas Creek riparian buffer area (100 feet from edge of riparian canopy) or within the critical root zone of native trees. The riparian buffer area shall be identified on the project grading plan and related wastewater plans. Note that polluted water and materials shall be contained in this area and, if required to be disposed of offsite by applicable regulations, such polluted water and materials shall be removed from the site daily if possible, but no later than prior to final inspection.

**PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** The Owner/Applicant shall ensure all above construction site measures are printed as notes on plans and that the equipment storage and washout areas, as well as the riparian buffer, are identified on the project grading plans and other plans related to the wastewater treatment project for P&D /Building & Safety review and approval. **TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall install these designated areas prior to commencement of construction. Signage shall be used to facilitate contractor use of appropriate areas. The designated areas and related signage shall be in place throughout construction. **MONITORING:** The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate compliance with these measures to P&D compliance monitoring staff as requested during construction. P&D compliance monitoring staff shall ensure compliance prior to and throughout construction.

**W-2 Erosion and Sediment Control Revegetation.** The Owner/Applicant shall revegetate graded areas as part of the restoration plan implementation as soon as possible after project completion. If the restoration plan is not implemented within 2 weeks of project completion, the disturbed areas shall be immediately reseeded with appropriate native species and other measures shall be concurrently implemented to avoid wind or water borne erosion of the disturbed areas. **PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** Include this measure as a note on all grading plans. **TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall revegetate graded areas at the completion of project work, but no later than 2 weeks after work is completed. **MONITORING:** The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate compliance to grading and building inspectors in the field.

**Residual Impact:** With the incorporation of Mitigation Measures W-1, W-2 and Geo-1, residual impacts to water resources would be less than significant.

## 5.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

### 5.1 County Departments Consulted

Police, County Fire, Public Works, Flood Control, Parks, Environmental Health, Special Districts, APCD, Project Clean Water,

Regional Programs, Other : USFWS, CDFW, RWQCB

---

### 5.2 Comprehensive Plan

<input type="checkbox"/>	Seismic Safety/Safety Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conservation Element
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Open Space Element	<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise Element
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coastal Plan and Maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Circulation Element
<input type="checkbox"/>	ERME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gaviota Coast Plan

### 5.3 Other Sources

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Field work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ag Preserve maps
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Calculations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Control maps
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other technical references (reports, survey, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic studies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planning files, maps, reports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Records	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Zoning maps
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grading plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Soils maps/reports
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elevation, architectural renderings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plant maps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Published geological map/reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Archaeological maps and reports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Topographical maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

---



---

## 6.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC (*short- and long-term*) AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

1. **Biological Resources** - Potentially significant impacts to environmentally sensitive habitat (riparian habitat), native trees, nesting birds, and California Red-Legged Frog during the construction period. Impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-1 through Bio-9 (Class II).
2. **Geologic Processes** – Potentially significant short-term impacts from erosion/sedimentation during the construction period. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce this impact to a less than significant level (Class II).
3. **Water Quality** – Potentially significant water quality impacts during the project construction period. Implementation of Mitigation Measures W-1, W-2 and GEO-1 would reduce impacts to a less than significant level (Class II).

## 7.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
1. Does the project have the potential to substantially 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, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or significantly increase energy consumption, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		√			
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?				√	
3. 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 probable future projects.)				√	
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				√	
5. Is there disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR ?				√	

1. As identified in Section 4 of this document, the project has the potential to result in potentially significant biological resources, geologic processes and water quality impacts during the construction period. Mitigation has been identified that would reduce these potentially significant impacts to less than levels.
2. The project would not achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals. Rather, the project would result in mitigable short-term construction period impacts in order to improve water quality over the long-term from enhanced treatment of wastewater from structures located in proximity to Tajiguas Creek, benefitting both the watershed and wildlife inhabiting the Tajiguas Creek riparian corridor.
3. The project’s potential to result in individually limited but cumulatively considerable impacts has been evaluated for each impact issue area in Section 4 of this document. This analysis concludes that the limited project proposal would not contribute considerably to any environmental impacts when considered in connection with past, current or reasonably foreseeable projects.

4. The project would not cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings as the project is limited to upgrading the existing aging septic systems in the farm employee “village” area of the ranch with an advanced wastewater treatment system that includes a module which will provide enhanced treatment of existing wastewater effluent volume (serving only existing permitted or legal non-conforming development) prior to effluent disposal in a newly constructed consolidated leach field. The project is expected to have a beneficial impact on human beings and the surrounding environment as the project would upgrade existing wastewater treatment and septic system features as necessary. This is proposed with the goal of improving water quality including reducing coliform bacteria levels in Tajiguas Creek, which may be the result of existing septic systems’ deterioration and proximity to the creek.
5. There is no known disagreement regarding the significance of project effects.

## **8.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

### *GAVIOTA COAST PLAN*

- Policy NS-1: Watershed Planning. Planning efforts shall be considered in light of the conditions of, and in context with, the local watershed.
- Policy NS-2: Natural Resources Protection. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) areas and important or sensitive biological and natural resources shall be protected to the maximum extent feasible.
- Policy NS-3: Natural Resources Enhancement. Support voluntary and incentive based efforts to restore and enhance Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) areas and important or sensitive biological and natural resources within the Gaviota Coast.
- Policy NS-4: ESH Criteria and Habitat Types.
- NS-5: Wetlands. The County shall seek opportunities and create incentives for restoration of degraded wetlands.
- Policy NS-6: Wildlife Corridors. Development shall avoid to the maximum extent feasible and otherwise minimize disruption of identified wildlife travel corridors.
- Policy NS-7: Riparian Vegetation. Riparian vegetation shall be protected to the maximum extent feasible.
- Policy NS-8: Invasive Species Habitat Removal. The County should continue to support efforts to assist landowners in removing invasive or noxious species.
- NS-9: Natural Stream Channels. With the exception of local, state, or federal resource agency permitted activities, natural stream channels and conditions shall be maintained in an undisturbed state to the maximum extent feasible in order to protect banks from erosion, enhance wildlife passageways, and provide natural greenbelts.
- Policy NS-10: Habitat Buffers. Buffer policies should be flexible and consider the purpose, ecological benefit, and context of the buffer as well as the use of the land next to the buffer.

Policy NS-11: Restoration. Biological impacts shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible. In cases where adverse impacts to biological resources cannot be avoided after impacts have been minimized, restoration shall be required.

- Dev Std NS-1: Wildlife Corridors. Environmental review of development proposals shall evaluate and mitigate for the significant effects on wildlife movement caused by fencing, roads, lighting, and siting.
- Dev Std NS-2: ESH Setbacks and Buffers.
- Dev Std NS-2: ESH Setbacks and Buffers.(Coastal)
- Dev Std NS-3: Rare Plants.
- Dev Std NS-4: Sensitive Wildlife Species.
- Dev Std NS-5: Wetlands.
- Policy CS-1: Cultural Resources Preservation & Protection. Preserve and protect significant cultural, archaeological and historical resources to the maximum extent feasible.
- Policy CS-2: Properties of Concern. Significant cultural resources including historic buildings, structures, Rural Historic Landscapes, archaeological sites, Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP), and Tribal Cultural Resources and other places of concern to the Native Americans shall be protected and preserved to the maximum extent feasible.
- Dev Std CS-1: Phase 1 Archaeological Surveys. A Phase 1 archaeological survey shall be performed when identified as necessary by a County or contract archaeologist.
- Dev Std CS-2: Phase 2 and 3 Archaeological Studies. If archaeological remains are identified and cannot be avoided through project redesign, the proponent shall fund a Phase 2 study to determine the significance of the resource prior to issuance of any permit for development. All feasible mitigation recommendations resulting from the Phase 1 or Phase 2 work, including completion of additional archaeological analysis (Phase 3) and/or project redesign shall be incorporated into any permit issued for development.
- Dev Std CS-3: Identification of Traditional Cultural, Historical, and Spiritual Sites. Native Americans shall be consulted when development proposals are submitted that impact significant archaeological or cultural sites.
- Dev Std CS-4: Native American Contact List.
- Dev Std CS-5: Integrity of Historic Resources. No permits shall be issued for any development or activity that would adversely affect the integrity of officially designated Historic County Landmarks and Places of Historical Merit or those eligible for such designation, historical resources eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources, or identified historical resources districts unless a professional evaluation of the proposed project has been performed by a qualified Architectural Historian pursuant to the County's most current Regulations Governing Archaeological and Historical Projects.

### 9.0 RECOMMENDATION BY P&D STAFF

On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of Planning and Development:

\_\_\_\_\_ Finds that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, recommends that a Negative Declaration (ND) be prepared.

Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures incorporated into the REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION would successfully mitigate the potentially significant impacts. Staff recommends the preparation of an ND. The ND finding is based on the assumption that mitigation measures will be acceptable to the applicant; if not acceptable a revised Initial Study finding for the preparation of an EIR may result.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and recommends that an EIR be prepared.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finds that from existing documents (previous EIRs, etc.) that a subsequent document (containing updated and site-specific information, etc.) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15162/15163/15164 should be prepared.

Potentially significant unavoidable adverse impact areas:

\_\_\_\_\_ With Public Hearing      \_\_\_\_\_ Without Public Hearing

### PREVIOUS DOCUMENT:

*Natasha J Campbell*

PROJECT EVALUATOR: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: 10/4/19

### 11.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER

- I agree with staff conclusions. Preparation of the appropriate document may proceed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT agree with staff conclusions. The following actions will be taken:
- \_\_\_\_\_ I require consultation and further information prior to making my determination.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ INITIAL STUDY DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: *[Signature]* \_\_\_\_\_ NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE: 10/16/19

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ REVISION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### 12.0 ATTACHMENTS

1. Treatment Module Information
2. South Coast Habitat Restoration Report 5/29/19



## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Advanced Wastewater Treatment Module Information**

## Proposed Advanced Wastewater Treatment Module

Technical Data Sheet

# AdvanTex® AX-MAX Treatment Systems



### Applications

Orenco's AdvanTex® AX-MAX is a complete, fully-plumbed, AdvanTex Wastewater Treatment Plant for residential, commercial, municipal, and mobile applications with medium-to-large flows and permits requiring secondary treatment or better. It can be used as a stand-alone unit or in multi-unit arrays under adverse conditions in a wide range of environments.

The AX-MAX is ideal for:

- Small sites and poor soils
- Sites that require shallow bury
- Mobile and temporary installations
- Disaster response sanitation
- Remote locations
- Extreme hot or cold climates

### General

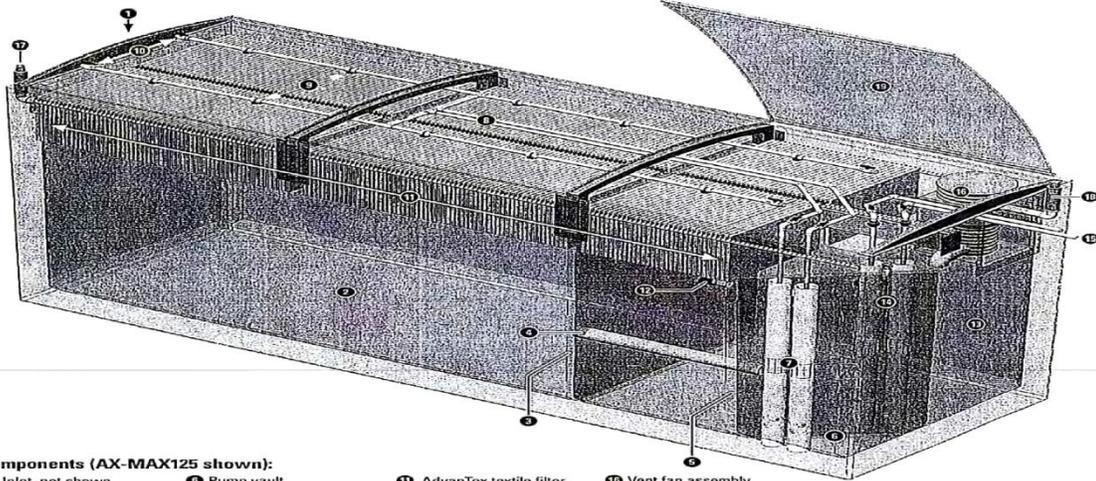
The AX-MAX is a modular system that can be preceded by primary treatment or configured to incorporate primary, secondary, and tertiary wastewater treatment before reuse or dispersal.

The heart of the AX-MAX system is the AdvanTex Recirculating Treatment Tank, a sturdy, watertight, corrosion-proof fiberglass tank that includes the same dependable, textile treatment media found in all AdvanTex products.

### Standard Models

AX-MAX100-14, AX-MAX150-21, AX-MAX200-28, AXMAX-250-35, AX-MAX300 (Units without pump systems.)

AX-MAX75-14, AX-MAX125-21, AX-MAX175-28, AX-MAX225-35, AX-MAX275-42 (Units with pump systems.)



### Components (AX-MAX125 shown):

- |                         |                         |                             |                      |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Inlet, not shown      | 6 Pump vault            | 11 AdvanTex textile filter  | 16 Vent fan assembly |
| 2 Recirc-blend chamber  | 7 Recirc pumping system | 12 Recirc-return valve      | 17 Air inlet         |
| 3 Tank baffle           | 8 Distribution manifold | 13 Recirc-filtrate chamber  | 18 Air outlet        |
| 4 Recirc-crossover pipe | 9 Spray nozzles         | 14 Discharge pumping system | 19 Lid, typical      |
| 5 Pump vault baffle     | 10 Lateral ball valves  | 15 Outlet                   |                      |

**ATTACHMENT 2**

**South Coast Habitat Restoration Report**

**May 29, 2019**

**Rancho Tajiguas  
Advanced Treatment Wastewater System Replacement**



**Revised Biological Resources Impact Analysis**

May 29, 2019

**Prepared for:**

L&P Consultants  
Attention: Mark Lloyd  
3 West Carrillo Street, Suite 205  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Prepared by:**



**S C H R**

South Coast Habitat Restoration  
P.O. Box 335  
Carpinteria, CA 93014  
(805) 729-8787  
[www.schabitatrestoration.org](http://www.schabitatrestoration.org)

## Table of Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1 Introduction	1
Project Setting	1
Project Description	1
2 County Regulatory Setting	2
3 Survey Methods	8
4 Results and Findings	8
5 Recommended Mitigation Measures	10
6 References	13

### Figures

Figure 1 – Project Vicinity Map	14
Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph	15
Figure 3 – Project Site Plan	16
Figure 4—Restoration Area	17

### Tables

Table 1 – Special Status Plants Potentially Occurring within Project Area	8
Table 2 – Impacts within ESHA and ESHA setback	9
Table 3 – Plant Species Observed During Site Visit	9
Table 4 – Summary of Impacts to Native Trees	10

### Appendices

Appendix A	Photographs
Appendix B	Survey Area
Appendix C	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Letter

## **Section 1: Introduction**

---

MAZ Properties, Inc. proposes to install an advanced wastewater treatment system to collect and process wastewater from nine (9) existing farm employee units and a ranch office structure to tertiary treatment levels for use in shallow subsurface irrigation application on Rancho Tajiguas (14000 Calle Real, Goleta, CA, 93117, APN – 081-200-028), Santa Barbara County.

South Coast Habitat Restoration was contracted to conduct a biological survey of the project site and areas adjacent to the project site. The biological report was performed to identify potential impacts of the project on biological resources including potential sensitive native plants and California red-legged frog (CRLF) and propose mitigations to address any impacts identified.

The biological survey and assessment of the Project and surrounding area was conducted on July 28, 2017, with subsequent field reconnaissance on September 6, 2018 and April 24, 2019, to identify special-status plant and wildlife species that could potentially be impacted during implementation of the Project. This report presents the results of the biological survey and assessment and presents recommended measures that would mitigate potential environmental impacts when the Project is implemented.

The Project Site Plan is presented in Figure 3. Photographs of the Project area are attached as Appendix A. A list of potential special status plant species that may occur in the project vicinity is attached as Table 1. A list of plant species observed during surveys is attached as Table 3.

### **Project Setting**

The project is situated on private agricultural property along the Gaviota Coast in the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County. The property has been in agricultural use (persimmons, avocados and cattle ranching) for decades and the proposed areas for work are adjacent to disturbed areas consisting of employee dwellings and roads that serve the existing agricultural operation. The property is wholly located within the Tajiguas watershed. The Tajiguas creek bisects the property into eastern and western portions of the ranch. The Tajiguas creek watershed is known to support a population of California Red-Legged Frogs (CRLF) and have a healthy native riparian canopy within the project setting.

### **Project Description**

The project proposes to install septic tanks and a 2” steel wastewater effluent pipeline in various locations as shown in project plans (Figure 3). This pipeline will be trenched underground in various locations and carry wastewater from the west to the east side of the creek by attaching it to the existing concrete vehicular bridge. The pipe will convey the wastewater to a shallow subsurface irrigation application on the east side of the creek.

The total area of the project trenching is 4,006 square feet. The project is largely located outside of the environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA) of the creek except for the transition of the new pipeline from buried underground to an above ground connection at the existing bridge (approximately 131 square feet). Approximately 2,410 square feet of the trenching will occur within the 100 foot buffer of the Tajiguas creek. The remaining 1,465 square feet of the project area, including a new leach field, are located outside of the ESHA 100 foot buffer. The alignment of the new pipeline was designed to avoid and minimize impacts to the maximum extent feasible to existing trees and creek bank habitat. Areas

selected for the new pipeline alignment have been disturbed for decades as part of the employee dwellings, ranch roads and agricultural operations. See Appendix A for photographs showing the disturbed areas that the pipeline will be trenched into.

## **Section 2: County Regulatory Framework**

---

Local requirements for the protection of biological resources along the Gaviota Coast are provided in the County's Coastal Land Use Plan, Comprehensive Plan and Conservation Element Oak Tree Protection in Inland and Rural Areas of Santa Barbara County, and the Gaviota Coast Plan. These Plans/Elements provide a framework of policies designed to protect special-status species and sensitive habitat areas.

### **Coastal Land Use Plan (CLUP)**

#### **Native Plant Communities**

*CLUP Policy 9-35.* Oak trees, because they are particularly sensitive to environmental conditions, shall be protected. All land use activities, including cultivated agriculture and grazing, should be carried out in such a manner as to avoid damage to native oak trees. Regeneration of oak trees on grazing lands should be encouraged.

*CLUP Policy 9-36.* When sites are graded or developed, areas with significant amounts of native vegetation shall be preserved. All development shall be sited, designed, and constructed to minimize impacts of grading, paving, construction of roads or structures, runoff, and erosion on native vegetation. In particular, grading and paving shall not adversely affect root zone aeration and stability of native trees.

#### **Streams and Creeks**

*CLUP Policy 9-37.* The minimum buffer strip for major streams in rural areas, as defined by the land use plan, shall be presumptively 100 feet, and for streams in urban areas, 50 feet. These minimum buffers may be adjusted upward or downward on a case-by-case basis. The buffer shall be established based on an investigation of the following factors and after consultation with the CDFW and RWQCB in order to protect the biological productivity and water quality of streams:

1. soil type and stability of stream corridors; Coastal Land Use Plan Republished May 2014 143;
2. how surface water filters into the ground;
3. slope of the land on either side of the stream; and
4. location of the 100-year flood plain boundary.

Riparian vegetation shall be protected and shall be included in the buffer. Where riparian vegetation has previously been removed, except for channelization, the buffer shall allow for the reestablishment of riparian vegetation to its prior extent to the greatest degree possible.

*CLUP Policy 9-38.* No structures shall be located within the stream corridor except: public trails, dams for necessary water supply projects, flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the flood plain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development; and other development where the primary function is for the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat. Culverts, fences, pipelines, and bridges (when support

structures are located outside the critical habitat) may be permitted when no alternative route/location is feasible. All development shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible.

*CLUP Policy 9-40.* All development, including dredging, filling, and grading within stream corridors, shall be limited to activities necessary for the construction of uses specified in Policy 9-38. When such activities require removal of riparian plant species, revegetation with local native plants shall be required except where undesirable for flood control purposes. Minor clearing of vegetation for hiking, biking, and equestrian trails shall be permitted.

*CLUP Policy 9-41.* All permitted construction and grading within stream corridors shall be carried out in such a manner as to minimize impacts from increased runoff, sedimentation, biochemical degradation, or thermal pollution.

*CLUP Policy 9-42.* The following activities shall be prohibited within stream corridors: cultivated agriculture, pesticide applications, except by a mosquito abatement or flood control district, and installation of septic tanks.

*CLUP Policy 9-43.* Other than projects that are currently approved and/or funded, no further concrete channelization or other major alterations of streams in the coastal zone shall be permitted unless consistent with the provisions of Section 30236 of the Coastal Act.

### **Gaviota Coast Plan (GCP)**

*GCP Policy NS-1: Watershed Planning.* Planning efforts associated with long-term plans, programs, and projects shall be considered in light of the conditions of, and in context with, the local watershed. Where feasible, watershed health shall be enhanced through implementation of these planning efforts.

*GCP Policy NS-2: Natural Resources Protection.* Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) areas and important or sensitive biological and natural resources shall be protected to the maximum extent feasible. Where special-status plant and animal species are found pursuant to the review of a discretionary project, the habitat in which the sensitive species is located shall be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Within the Coastal Zone, ESH areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas. Development in areas adjacent to ESH areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

*Dev Std NS-2: ESH Setbacks and Buffers.* Mapped riparian ESH overlay areas shall have a minimum development area setback buffer of 100 feet from the edge of riparian vegetation. Development within other ESH areas shall be required, subject to Dev Std NS-3, to include setbacks or undeveloped buffer zones from these areas as part of the proposed development, except where setbacks or buffers would preclude reasonable use of the parcel. In determining the location, width and extent of setbacks and/or buffer areas, the County's biological resources and/or vegetation maps and other available data shall be used (e.g., maps, studies, or observations). Appropriate public recreational trails may be allowed within setbacks or buffer areas

*GCP Policy NS-3: Natural Resources Enhancement.* Support voluntary and incentive based efforts to restore and enhance ESH areas and important or sensitive biological and natural resources within the Gaviota Coast.

*GCP Policy NS-4: ESH Criteria and Habitat Types.* The following criteria are used in determining which habitats in the GCP area warrant the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area overlay designation:

- 1) Unique, rare, or fragile communities which should be preserved to ensure their survival in the future, e.g., dune vegetation, native grasslands.
- 2) Rare and endangered species habitats that are also protected by Federal and State laws, e.g., harbor seal rookeries and haul out areas.
- 3) Plant community ranges that are of significant scientific interest because of extensions of range, or unusual hybrid, disjunct, and relict species.
- 4) Sensitive wildlife habitats which are vital to species survival, e.g., White-tailed Kite habitat, butterfly trees.
- 5) Outstanding representative natural communities that have values ranging from a particularly rich flora and fauna to an unusual diversity of species.
- 6) Areas with outstanding educational values that should be protected for scientific research and educational uses now and in the future, e.g., Naples Reef.
- 7) Areas that are important because of their biological productivity such as wetlands, kelp beds, and intertidal areas.
- 8) Areas that are structurally important in protecting natural landforms and species, e.g., dunes which protect inland areas, riparian corridors that protect stream banks from erosion and provide shade, kelp beds which provide cover for many species.

Specific biological habitats are considered environmentally sensitive and shall be subject to the provisions of the ESH and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Gaviota (ESH GAV) Overlays including qualifying habitat that exists outside of the mapped ESH and ESH GAV overlays. A general guideline for inclusion is those plant communities that have a California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) rarity ranking of G1, S1, G2, S2, G3, or S3. Two habitat types have been included due to their sensitive nature within the county, although they do not meet the rarity ranking criterion (i.e., Coast Live Oak Woodlands and Western rush marshes). Additional sensitive wildlife habitats are also listed. The list includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Native Forests and Woodlands including, but not limited to: madrone forest, tanoak forest, black cottonwood forest, Bishop pine forest, California sycamore woodlands, coast live oak woodland, Valley oak, red willow thickets, and California bay forest;
- 2) Rare Native Chaparral and Coastal Scrub Habitats, including, but not limited to: Burton Mesa shrubland chaparral, central maritime chaparral, wart leaf Ceanothus chaparral, giant Coreopsis scrub, bush monkeyflower scrub, California brittle bush scrub, sawtooth goldenbush scrub, silver dune lupine-mock heather scrub, lemonade berry scrub, and white sage scrub;
- 3) Rare Native Grassland and Herbaceous vegetation, including, but not limited to: Dune mats, Western rush marshes, meadow barley patches, giant wildrye grassland, creeping ryegrass turfs, foothill needlegrass grasslands, purple needlegrass grasslands;
- 4) Coastal Wetlands, including, but not limited to: estuarine, riverine and riparian habitats;
- 5) Marine mammal haulouts;
- 6) Monarch butterfly habitat;

- 7) Raptor nesting and breeding areas; and
- 8) Special status species habitats.

*GCP Policy NS-6: Wildlife Corridors.* Development shall avoid to the maximum extent feasible and otherwise minimize disruption of identified wildlife travel corridors.

*GCP Policy NS-7: Riparian Vegetation.* Riparian vegetation shall be protected to the maximum extent feasible. Riparian vegetation shall not be removed except where clearing is necessary for the maintenance of existing roads and/or free flowing channel conditions, the removal of invasive exotic species, stream/creek restoration, or the provision of essential public services. Any unavoidable riparian vegetation removal conducted in compliance with the activities identified by this policy shall be conducted in compliance with the ESH and resource protection policies and provisions of the GCP, the Comprehensive Plan, and the LCP.

*GCP Policy NS-9: Natural Stream Channels.* With the exception of local, state, or federal resource agency permitted activities, natural stream channels and conditions shall be maintained in an undisturbed state to the maximum extent feasible in order to protect banks from erosion, enhance wildlife passageways, and provide natural greenbelts.

*GCP Policy NS-10: Habitat Buffers.* Buffer policies should be flexible and consider the purpose, ecological benefit, and context of the buffer as well as the use of the land next to the buffer.

*GCP Policy NS-11: Restoration.* Biological impacts shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible. In cases where adverse impacts to biological resources cannot be avoided after impacts have been minimized, restoration shall be required. A minimum replacement ratio shall be required to compensate for the destruction of native habitat areas or biological resources. The area or units to be restored, acquired, or dedicated for a permanent protective easement shall exceed the biological value of that which is destroyed. Where onsite restoration is infeasible or not beneficial with regard to long-term preservation of habitat, an offsite easement and/or alternative mitigation measures that provide adequate quality and quantity of habitat and will ensure long-term preservation shall be required.

### **Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan**

As described in the Conservation Element Oak Tree Protection in the Inland Rural Areas of Santa Barbara County, Development Standard 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, the following applies for the protection of all species of mature oak trees:

*“All development shall avoid removal of or damage to mature oak trees, to the maximum extent feasible. Mature oak trees are considered to be live oak trees six inches or greater diameter at breast height and blue oak trees four inches or greater diameter at breast height, or live and blue oaks six feet or greater in height. Native oak trees that cannot be avoided shall be replanted on site. When replanting oak trees on site is not feasible, replanting shall occur on receiver sites known to be capable of supporting the particular oak tree species, and in areas contiguous with existing woodlands or savannas where the removed species occurs. Replanting shall conform to the County’s Standard Conditions and Mitigation Measures. (This development standard applies to oak trees other than valley oaks, valley oak trees are address in separate Development Standards.)”*

The County’s Standard Conditions and Mitigation Measures require that grading, trenching, ground disturbance, construction activities and structural development occur beyond six feet of the dripline of all oak trees. Mitigation for impacted oak trees requires posting of a performance security and tree replacement at a 10:1 ratio, preferably on-site.

### Section 3: Survey Methods

---

The California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) literature was reviewed prior to beginning field surveys. CNDDDB surveys were conducted to identify special status plant species that could be present within the project areas of impact. Table 1 represents potentially occurring special status plants in the project area per the CNDDDB review.

Table 1 – Special Status Plants Potentially Occurring within Project Area (CNDDDB BIOS Viewer 5.56.24)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW Status	CA Rare Plant Rank
<i>Lonicera subspicata</i> var. <i>subspicata</i>	Santa Barbara honeysuckle	None	None	-	1B.2
<i>Monardella hypoleuca</i> ssp. <i>hypoleuca</i>	white-veined monardella	None	None	-	1B.3
<i>Scrophularia atrata</i>	black-flowered figwort	None	None	-	1B.2
<i>Thelypteris puberula</i> var. <i>sonorensis</i>	Sonoran maiden fern	None	None	-	2B.2

A field survey was conducted on July 28, 2017, with follow-up site reconnaissance on September 6, 2018 and April 24, 2019, to identify if any special status plants were found in the project vicinity. The survey consisted of meandering transects throughout the project areas. Plant species observed were identified to the level necessary to ensure that special status species would be detected.

#### *California Red Legged Frog*

CRLF have been documented in the watershed, as well as near the project vicinity. As a result no USFWS protocol level surveys were conducted to determine presence/absence. It is assumed CRLF are present in the project area adjacent to the creek.

### Section 4: Results and Findings

---

The majority of the proposed work is within the 100 foot setback of the ESHA. Within and nearest to the creek, this habitat is comprised of riparian woodland habitat dominated by western sycamore, coast live oak, white alder, black cottonwood, arroyo willow, red willow, blue elderberry, and coyote brush. The percent cover of the canopy within this section of the creek is nearly 100%. The ESHA setback also includes annual grassland and ruderal/disturbed habitat related to existing dwellings, roads and agricultural operations. Vegetation within the ruderal/disturbed area is dominated by non-native species including grasses, giant reeds, and other invasives. The impacts to vegetation types within and outside of the ESHA buffer are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 – Impacts within ESHA and ESHA setback

Impact Area	Area of Impact (square feet)
Within the Creek (willow)	131
Within the 100 ESHA Buffer	2,410
Annual grassland	1,822
Ruderal/disturbed	588
Outside ESHA Buffer	1,465
Total Project Area	4,006

Given the total project size of 4,006 square feet, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) is not required (applies to projects that disturb more than 1 acre of developed or undeveloped land).

None of the above special status plant species (Table 1) were observed during the survey and are not expected to occur in the project area as a result of the previously disturbed nature of the project area. Santa Barbara honeysuckle was not documented in the project area, but it has been documented on the ranch at a location more than 2,700 feet from the closest point of the proposed project (Storrer 2017). Again, due to the disturbed nature of the project area, we do not anticipate its occurrence.

Table 3 represents plant species that were encountered within the project area and vicinity.

Table 3 – Plants species observed during site visit – July 28, 2017

Common Name	Scientific Name	Native (N) or Non-Native (NN)
Coyote brush	<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	N
Blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>	N
Coast Live Oak	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	N
Western Sycamore	<i>Platanus racemosa</i>	N
Arroyo Willow	<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>	N
Cottonwood	<i>Populus sp.</i>	N
Smilo grass	<i>Piptatherum miliaceum</i>	NN
Giant reed	<i>Arundo donax</i>	NN
Crab grass	<i>Digitaria californica</i>	NN
Sweet mustard	<i>Brassica sp.</i>	NN
Mediterranean Barley	<i>Hordeum branchyantherum</i>	NN
Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	NN
Prickly lettuce	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	NN
Cheeseweed	<i>Malva parviflora</i>	NN
Wild oat	<i>Avena fatua</i>	NN
Palm tree	<i>Palm sp.</i>	NN

The alignment of the new pipeline was designed to avoid and minimize impacts to the creek and existing trees and creek bank habitat. However the pipeline does run within proximity to a number of existing trees. A six foot buffer from the dripline of the trees where trenching will occur is shown on the Project Site Plan (Figure 3). This establishes the critical root zone (CRZ) for the impacted trees. While some trenching will occur within the CRZ of specified trees, none of the trees will be impacted more than 20% (threshold determination for CRZ impact).

Table 4 – Summary of impacts to native trees

	Common Name	Impact to CRZ (%)
1	18" Oak	1.1
2	96" Sycamore cluster	1.7
3	48" Pine (non-native)	0.7
4	28", 36" Sycamore cluster	1.2
5	34" Ash	2.5
6	8" Focus (non-native)	3.3
7	2-12" Chinese Elm, 30" Pine (non-native)	1.7
8	48" Redwood	3.6
9	24" Pepper (non-native)	2.2

As a result of the existing disturbed nature of the project area, temporary nature of the project, removal of existing arundo near the creek, and siting of the project largely outside of tree CRZs and ESHA, the proposed work within the 100 foot buffer is not anticipated to have any long term negative impacts to the existing native trees, native plants or creek habitat, as shown above. The project area is already highly used due to the existing farm worker dwellings, roads and agricultural operations. Given this level of activity, the project is a voluntary preemptive effort to improve the existing condition so that there will be no future degradation of the creek and environs due to potential leaks or failure of the existing system. Two leachfields located within the ESHA buffer are being abandoned and relocated to two new locations located outside of the ESHA, and the wastewater will be treated through the new and upgraded system.

### Section 5: Recommended Mitigation Measures

---

Based on our research, field survey, site reconnaissance and County policy review, SCHR recommends the following minimization and avoidance measures to mitigate any potential temporary impacts associated with the wastewater improvement project:

- Impact 1:** The project will result in the removal of 131 square feet of ESHA.
- Impact 2:** Project trenching will occur within the CRZ of certain trees.
- Impact 3:** The project could result in direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds.
- Impact 4:** The project could result in direct and indirect impacts to CRLF.

**Beneficial Impact:** The project will improve the existing condition so that there will be no future degradation of the creek and environs due to potential leaks or failure of the existing system. The project will remove arundo in the ESHA where the pipeline approaches the creek. All areas of the creek disturbed as part of the project will be stabilized through erosion control and native vegetation.

With the implementation of the following measures, the potential direct and indirect impacts of the project on natural resources can be mitigated to a less than significant level:

Mitigation 1: Habitat Restoration. Impacts to ESHA shall be mitigated with a 3:1 ratio. The impact of 131 square feet will require restoration of 393 square feet. Any unforeseen impacts to special-status plant species shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio.

Non-native vegetation, *arundo donax*, will be removed as part of the project. Area of arundo is approximately 20' x 20' = 400 square feet and is located on the east side of the creek. This arundo will be excavated out while the heavy equipment is installing the new pipeline. All arundo roots will be disposed of in an area where they will not re-root and re-establish. The excavated area will be prepared with erosion control fabric to prevent any erosion and will be revegetated with native plants and native seeds. Proposed native plants will include the following:

Quantity	Common Name	Scientific Name
2	Arroyo willow	<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>
6	Mugwort	<i>Artemesia douglasiana</i>
6	Blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>
5	Giany Rye Grass	<i>Elymus condensatus</i>

Willows will be planted closer to the creek and the remaining plants will be planted closer towards the road. Native plants will be purchased from Santa Barbara Natives from local genetic stock. Plants will be planted in the fall in order to ensure greatest survival and will be irrigated as needed in order to ensure survival. The revegetation site will be weeded as needed in order to have plants survive and not be outcompeted by non-native grasses.

Mitigation 2: Worker Training. Prior to the start of work, a County-approved biologist shall oversee a worker orientation for all construction contractors. This training will educate all workers regarding presence of special status section within the project area, how to identify those species, what their habitat requirements are, and applicable regulatory requirements and protection measures.

Mitigation 3: Monitoring. A County-approved biologist shall be required full-time during presence of the vegetation removal and grading to ensure compliance with required mitigation measures. The biological monitor will also be responsible for inspection of tree protection fencing, erosion controls and construction best management practices. Prior to ground disturbing activities adjacent to the creek, a County of Santa Barbara approved biologist shall be on site to survey for CRLF. Silt fencing shall be placed around trenched areas that shall remain exposed overnight. Biologist shall survey any trenched areas left open overnight prior to filling. If CRLF are encountered as part of work activities, all work shall cease and project biologist will contact County of SB and USFWS staff. CRLF shall not be handled without permission from USFWS. Work shall not resume in areas where CRLF are encountered until authorized by County of SB and USFWS.

Mitigation 4: Protective fencing. Protective fencing shall be erected 6 feet outside of the dripline of the impacted trees (CRZ) where trenching will occur. In the event the trees are removed or damaged during construction, they shall be replaced consistent with County standards. Prior to initiation of vegetation removal or grading, exclusion fencing shall be erected at the boundary of the project limit of work to avoid equipment and human intrusion into adjacent native habitats.

Mitigation 5: Tree protection measures. An arborist should be present for any CRZ to be impacted greater than 20%.

Mitigation 6: Pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys. If the project is implemented during the breeding season (February 1 to August 31), a County-approved biologist shall conduct a pre-construction nesting bird survey of the work area and adjacent habitats within 7 days of construction commencement. Survey shall be conducted within 500 feet of the project disturbance area. If breeding birds with active nest are found prior to construction, a County-approved biologist shall oversee the establishment of a buffer around the nest and no construction will be allowed within the buffer until the young have fledged from the nest or the nest fails.

Mitigation 7: Construction best management practices. Erosion control measures (silt fencing, jute netting, straw bales, straw wattles) should be used throughout construction where sediment runoff from exposed areas could enter the creek in order to ensure runoff from construction does not enter the creek channel or adjacent habitat. (Specifications to be determined by contractor in consultation with biologist.) Fueling or application of oils is prohibited in areas within 50' of creek. Any accidental spills shall be immediately cleaned up and disposed of appropriately. Construction material shall be stockpiled in ruderal habitat and/or in existing disturbed areas at least 100 feet from the creek.

Mitigation 8: CRLF minimization and avoidance measures. For minimization and avoidance measures specific to CRLF, please see letter from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dated February 15, 2018 and attached to this report as Appendix C.

## **Section 6: References**

---

### **References**

CDFW. California Natural Diversity Database. BIOS Viewer 5.56.24.

County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development. 2009. Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan: Oak Tree Protection in the Inland Rural Areas of Santa Barbara County.

County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development. 2016. Gaviota Coast Plan. Board of Supervisors, Certified by the California Coastal Commission on November 7, 2018.

Gomez, M. Previous CRLF surveys in Tajiguas Creek, 2010 – 2017.

Storrer Environmental Services, LLC., 2017. Biological Resources Impact Analysis for The El Rancho De Tajiguas Coordinated Plan Project, Santa Barbara County, California.

Figure 1 – Project Vicinity Map

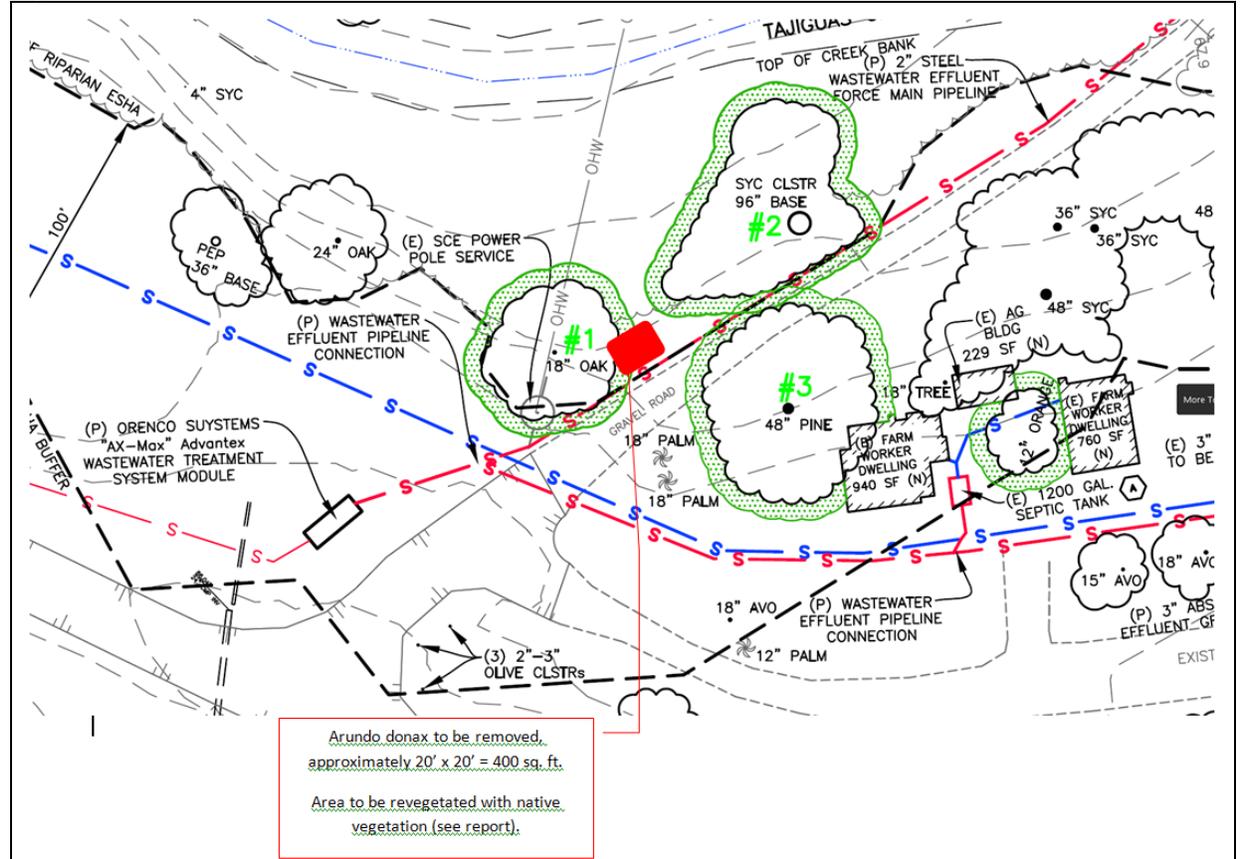


Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph



**Figure 3 – Project Site Plan**  
See attached PDF

Figure 4 – Restoration Area



Area to have *arundo donax* removed and native vegetation installed.

Appendix A - Photos – Survey Date 7/28/17

---



Surveyed area showing proposed location of 2" pipeline to be located on right side of asphalt road.



Surveyed area showing proposed location of 2" pipeline on right side of asphalt road. Note patch of non-native vegetation, *Arundo donax*, recommended to be removed as part of project.



Surveyed area showing proposed location of 2" pipeline on left side of asphalt road. Note patch of non-native vegetation, *Arundo donax*, recommended to be removed as part of project.



View of proposed pipe path towards leach field on southern end of project. This area has been previously disturbed and does not support any sensitive or protected flora species.



View of proposed leach field area on southern end of project. This area has been previously disturbed and does not support any sensitive or protected flora species.



Surveyed area showing proposed location of 2" pipeline on west side of creek. This area has been previously disturbed and does not support any sensitive or protected flora species.



Looking at bridge across Tajiguas Creek. Proposed pipe would be installed on right side of road, on downstream side of bridge.



**Appendix C – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Letter**

---

See attached.





# United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, California 93003

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
2018-CPA-0038

February 15, 2018

Alicia Harrison, Senior Land Use Project Manager  
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP  
1020 State Street  
Santa Barbara, California 93101

Subject: California Red-Legged Frog Avoidance and Minimization Measures for the Proposed El Rancho de Tajiguas Wastewater Treatment System Upgrade, West of the City of Goleta, Santa Barbara County, California

Dear Ms. Harrison:

We have reviewed information you provided by electronic mail to our office on December 19, 2017, and January 18, 2018 (A. Harrison, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP, in litt. 2017; South Coast Habitat Restoration 2017; and M. Lloyd, L&P Consultants, in litt. 2018) regarding the proposed El Rancho Tajiguas septic system upgrade. The proposed project would occur at 14000 Calle Real, approximately 16 miles west of the City of Goleta, in Santa Barbara County, California. Maz Properties, Inc. is proposing to improve an existing wastewater treatment system which serves farm employee residences and buildings associated with the El Rancho de Tajiguas property. The existing wastewater treatment system is suspected to have deteriorated with age and may be a potential contributing source of coliform bacteria into Tajiguas Creek. The proposed replacement would entail replacement of existing septic tanks, installation of new wastewater effluent lines, construction of an advanced wastewater treatment system module that would provide tertiary-level treatment of wastewater effluent, and provision of a consolidated leach field for disposal of tertiary-level treated wastewater. Project construction would occur during the dry season between May 1<sup>st</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup> for a duration of 6 to 8 weeks. The project proponent would complete most ground-disturbing activities in 3 to 4 weeks. The total project area would cover approximately 1.5 acres with approximately 0.4 acre of ground disturbance. The entire project area is within 100 meters of Tajiguas Creek, though the project is not expected to impact any wetted areas.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. To assist in meeting this mandate, the Service provides comments on public notices issued for projects that may have an effect on those resources, especially federally-listed plants and wildlife. The Service's responsibilities also include administering the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). Section 9 of the Act prohibits the taking of any federally listed endangered or threatened wildlife species. "Take" is defined at Section 3(19) of the Act to

mean “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” The Act provides for civil and criminal penalties for the unlawful taking of listed wildlife species. Such taking may be authorized by the Service in two ways: through interagency consultation for projects with Federal involvement pursuant to section 7, or through the issuance of an incidental take permit under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act.

We note that South Coast Habitat Restoration’s Biological Report (2017) for the project indicates that the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) is present on the site, which is supported by information in our records. Additionally, the project site is located within designated critical habitat for the California red-legged frog (Service 2010). Accordingly, we recommend the project proponent implement the Recommended Minimization and Avoidance Measures within South Coast Habitat Restoration’s Biological Report (2017) and the following avoidance and minimization measures:

1. During project activities, the project proponent should properly contain, remove from the work site, and dispose of regularly all trash that may attract predators. Following construction, the project proponent should remove all trash and construction debris from work areas.
2. The project proponent should limit the number of access routes, size of staging areas, and the total area of the activity to the minimum necessary to achieve the project goals. The project proponent should delineate Environmentally Sensitive Areas to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction, and minimize the impact to California red-legged frog habitat; including locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.
3. No work should occur during or 24 hours after any rain event (when California red-legged frogs are more active) to minimize impacts to California red-legged frogs. A rain event is considered any precipitation resulting in 0.2–inch or greater of precipitation. A biologist should survey the project site immediately before resuming project activities.
4. The project proponent should cover dirt or sand piles left overnight with tarps or plastic to prevent California red-legged frogs from sheltering in the material. A biological monitor should inspect all holes and trenches would be inspected each morning.
5. Unless approved by the Service, the project proponent should not impound water in the course of project activities in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.
6. If the project proponent determines the use of herbicides is necessary for their project, they should coordinate further with the Service to develop suitable avoidance and minimization measures for herbicide use for their project.

Thank you for the opportunity to coordinate with you to avoid and minimize impacts to the California red-legged frog. This letter does not authorize take of listed species nor provide any exemption from Section 9 of the Act. If the project proponent has reason to believe that project

Alicia Harrison

3

activities may impact the California red-legged frog, they should contact our office immediately for guidance on the steps that may be needed to comply with the Act. If you have any questions, please contact Dou-Shuan Yang of my staff at (805) 677-3302 or by electronic mail at Dou-Shuan\_Yang@fws.gov.

Sincerely,



*Arch*  
Stephen P. Henry  
Field Supervisor

## LITERATURE CITED

South Coast Habitat Restoration. 2017. Rancho Tajiguas advanced treatment wastewater system replacement biological report. Prepared for L&P Consultants, Santa Barbara, California.

[Service] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010. Endangered and threatened wildlife and plants: revised designation of critical habitat for California red-legged frog; final rule. Federal Register 75:12816-12874.

## IN LITTERIS

Harrison, Alicia. Senior Land Use Project Manager, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP, Santa Barbara, California. E-mail to Dou-Shuan Yang, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura, California, dated December 19, 2017. Subject: Call on Monday Re: Tajiguas

Lloyd, Mark. President, L&P Consultants, Santa Barbara, California. E-mail to Dou-Shuan Yang, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura, California, dated January 18, 2018. Subject: Call on Monday Re: Tajiguas