



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING
Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

PLN-2039
04/2019

Project Title & No. Bryden and AT&T Mobility Wireless Facility (DRC2018-00038)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The proposed project could have a "Potentially Significant Impact" for environmental factors checked below. Please refer to the attached pages for discussion on mitigation measures or project revisions to either reduce these impacts to less than significant levels or require further study.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use & Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities & Service Systems
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire
<input type="checkbox"/> Geology & Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the Environmental Coordinator finds that:

- ☐ The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Prepared by (Print)	Signature	Date
	for eve McMasters, Principal Environmental Specialist	
Reviewed by (Print)	Signature	Date

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Environmental Analysis

The County's environmental review process incorporates all of the requirements for completing the Initial Study as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study includes staff's on-site inspection of the project site and surroundings and a detailed review of the information in the file for the project. In addition, available background information is reviewed for each project. Relevant information regarding soil types and characteristics, geologic information, significant vegetation and/or wildlife resources, water availability, wastewater disposal services, existing land uses and surrounding land use categories and other information relevant to the environmental review process are evaluated for each project. Exhibit A includes the references used, as well as the agencies or groups that were contacted as a part of the Initial Study. The County Planning Department uses the checklist to summarize the results of the research accomplished during the initial environmental review of the project.

Persons, agencies or organizations interested in obtaining more information regarding the environmental review process for a project should contact the County of San Luis Obispo Planning Department, 976 Osos Street, Rm. 200, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408-2040 or call (805) 781-5600.

A. Project

DESCRIPTION: A request by Jim Bryden and AT&T Mobility for a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2018-00038) to allow for the construction and operation of a wireless communications facility consisting of twelve (12) panel antennas, thirty-six (36) remote radio units, six (6) surge suppression units, two (2) microwave dishes, and associated equipment and hardware, all within an approximately 21.5-foot wide, 21.5-foot tall cylinder portion of a new 45-foot tall faux elevated water tank to be located within a 27-foot by 38-foot lease area, surrounded by a 8-foot tall wooden fence enclosure. The enclosed lease area also includes a 64-square-foot equipment shelter and a diesel standby emergency generator. The proposed project will result in the disturbance of approximately 4,000 square feet (including utility trenching) on an approximately 22-acre parcel. The proposed project is within the Residential Rural land use category and is located at 1390 Los Berros Road, approximately 3.5 miles southwest of the city of Arroyo Grande. The site is in the South County Inland Sub Area of the South County Planning Area.

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S): 091-053-042

Latitude: 35° 04' 26" N **Longitude:** 120° 31' 13.2" W **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #** 4

B. Existing Setting

Plan Area: South County **Sub:** South County **Comm:** Rural

Land Use Category: Residential Rural

Combining Designation: None

Parcel Size: 22 acres

Topography: Gently sloping to moderately sloping

Vegetation: Scattered Oaks, Shrubs, Grasses

Existing Uses: Undeveloped

Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:

North: Agriculture; agricultural uses **East:** Residential Rural; single-family residence(s)

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

South: Residential Rural; single-family residence(s)

West: Residential Rural; single-family residence(s)

C. Environmental Analysis

The Initial Study Checklist provides detailed information about the environmental impacts of the proposed project and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

I. AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:</i>				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed wireless communications facility is located on the west side of Highway 101 at 1390 Los Berros Road, approximately 3.5 miles southeast of the city of Arroyo Grande. The project site is within a predominantly rural residential area and is located on gently to moderately sloping topography surrounded by sizable, rural residential parcels. The project parcel is vegetated with scattered oaks, shrubs and grasses, and is largely undeveloped with a barbed wire fence surrounding the parcel. The surrounding visual setting includes rural residences and agrarian uses, among natural, lightly oak forested land, and is primarily used for rural residential habitation and agrarian uses. The project is adjacent to a section of Highway 101 which has been identified as an eligible state scenic highway by the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) California Scenic Highway Mapping System (2018).

Section 22.30.180 of the Land Use Ordinance establishes the following screening standard for wireless communications facilities:

All facilities shall be screened with vegetation or landscaping. Where screening with vegetation is not feasible, the facilities shall be disguised to resemble rural, pastoral architecture (ex: windmills, barns, trees) or other features determined to blend with the surrounding area and be finished in a texture and color deemed unobtrusive to the neighborhood in which it is located.

Conservation and Open Space Element Policy VR 9.3 states:

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Locate, design and screen communications facilities, including towers, antennas, and associated equipment and buildings in order to avoid views of them in scenic areas, minimize their appearance and visually blend with the surrounding natural and built environments. Locate such facilities to avoid ridge tops where they would silhouette against the sky as viewed from major public view corridors and locations.

Conservation and Open Space Element Policy VR 9.4 states:

Encourage collocation of communications facilities (one or more carriers sharing a site, tower, or equipment) when feasible and where it would avoid or minimize adverse visual effects.

Discussion

(a) *Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

A scenic vista is generally defined as a high-quality view displaying good aesthetic and compositional values that can be seen from public viewpoints. Some scenic vistas are officially or informally designated by public agencies or other organizations. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista would occur if the project would significantly degrade the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads or other public areas. A proposed project's potential effect on a scenic vista is largely dependent upon the degree to which it would complement or contrast with the natural setting, the degree to which it would be noticeable in the existing environment, and whether it detracts from or complements the scenic vista.

The project site is located in a rural area accessed off of Los Berros Road. The site is adjacent to Highway 101 which serves as the primary public viewpoint of the project site. The project site is undeveloped and has an appealing natural agrarian character, but it is not officially or informally designated as a scenic vista. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from key viewing angles along Los Berros Road and Highway 101. The photo-simulations demonstrate that the facility will be primarily visible from both Los Berros Road and Highway 101. However, since the facility is designed to mimic the appearance of an agrarian-style elevated water tank, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. The proposed perimeter fence blends in with the character of the surrounding residential/agrarian setting since it is a wooden fence. To reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance. Therefore, impacts to the quality of the visual character of the area would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

(b) *Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

The project is located within a state scenic highway design corridor due to its proximity to Highway 101. The project site contains natural scenic resources including undeveloped hillsides with trees and shrubs. The proposed project would exert an impact on these scenic resources as it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential/agrarian landscape. However, since the facility is designed to appear like an agrarian-style elevated water tank, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- (c) *In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?*

The proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on visual resources since it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential/agrarian landscape. The project site is located in a rural area accessed off of Los Berros Road which, along with Highway 101, serves as the primary public key viewing areas of the project site. The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from key viewing angles along Los Berros Road and Highway 101. The photo-simulations demonstrate that the facility will be primarily visible from both Los Berros Road and Highway 101. However, since the facility is designed to mimic the appearance of an agrarian-style elevated water tank, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. The proposed perimeter fence blends in with the character of the surrounding residential/agrarian setting since it is a wooden fence. To reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance. Therefore, impacts to the quality of the visual character of the area would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

- (d) *Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

The proposed project would not result in the installation of lighting. The water tank would appear as a natural aged-wood tank, which would not result in substantial glare. Therefore, impacts relating to nighttime lighting and glare would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

Although the proposed communications facility is not a use that is inherently compatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential/agrarian landscape, the proposed project is a stealth design that would blend with existing natural features of the landscape. The proposed facility would visually blend with the landscape, and would therefore not be readily discernible as a wireless communications facility. This is consistent with the visual screening standard for wireless communications facilities which requires facilities to either be completely screened by vegetation or disguised to resemble natural or built features of the landscape. To reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance.

Mitigation

AES-1 **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:

- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- b. All antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
- c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.

AES-2 **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.

AES-3 **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:</i>				
(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The following area-specific elements relate to the property's importance for agricultural production:

Land Use Category: Residential Rural

Historic/Existing Commercial Crops: None

State Classification: Non-Prime Farmland

In Agricultural Preserve? Yes, Nipomo Mesa
Agricultural Preserve Area

Under Williamson Act contract? No

Based on the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and the San Luis Obispo County Important Farmland Map (DOC 2019), the project site does not contain any prime farmland. The soil types and characteristics subject to disturbance from this project include:

Chamise shaly loam (9 - 15 % slope). This moderately sloping gravelly loam soil is considered not well drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: slow percolation. The soil is considered Class VI without irrigation and Class VI when irrigated.

Chamise shaly loam (15 - 30 % slope). This moderately to steeply sloping gravelly loam soil is considered not well drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: steep slopes, slow percolation. The soil is considered Class VI without irrigation and Class is not rated when irrigated.

Still gravelly sandy clay loam (0 - 2% slope). This nearly level gravelly fine loamy soil is considered moderately drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: poor filtering capabilities, slow percolation. The soil is considered Class III without irrigation and Class II when irrigated.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

- (a) *(Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?)*

Based on information provided by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, the proposed project would be located on soils which are designated as "Not Prime Farmland". Therefore, no farmland of importance will be converted, and there will be no impact related to these farmland classifications.

- (b) *Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

The project property is zoned Residential Rural and is not under a Williamson Act contract, therefore, *no impacts* to agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts would occur.

- (c-d) *Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?*

Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project site is not zoned for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Protection, and is not listed as Private Timberland or Public Land with Forest by the CDFW. There is no forest land onsite and the proposed project would have *no impacts* to forest and timberland.

The project would not be located in an area that is zoned as forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production, nor would the project cause the rezoning of such lands. Therefore, *no impacts* to forestland or timberland would occur.

- (e) *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

As listed above in impact threshold a, the construction and use of the telecommunications tower would not affect Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or forest land. As noted in impact thresholds c and d, the project site is not located on or near any areas zoned for forest land, timberland, and are not listed as Private Timberlands or Public Lands with Forests by the CDFW. Since the proposed project would not result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest use, there would be no impact.

Conclusion

The project would not directly or indirectly result in the conversion of farmland, forest land, or timber land to non-agricultural uses or non-forest uses and would not conflict with agricultural zoning or otherwise adversely affect agricultural resources or uses. No significant impacts to agricultural resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

III. AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:</i>				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) under the jurisdiction of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). The SLOAPCD has developed and updated a CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012) and clarification memorandum (2017) to evaluate project specific impacts and help determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result. To evaluate long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and establish countywide programs to reach acceptable air quality levels, a Clean Air Plan has been adopted (Prepared by SLOAPCD).

Use of heavy equipment and earth moving operations during project construction can generate fugitive dust and engine combustion emissions that may have substantial temporary impacts on local air quality and climate change. Operational impacts are focused primarily on the indirect emissions (i.e., motor vehicles) associated with residential, commercial and industrial development. General screening criteria used by the SLO County APCD to determine the type and scope of projects requiring an air quality assessment, and/or mitigation, is presented in Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, due to the population that occupies the uses and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. The nearest offsite sensitive receptor to the project is a residence located approximately 630 feet to the southwest (APN 091-081-064).

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

(a) *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

As proposed, the project would result in the disturbance of approximately 4,000 square feet. This will result in the creation of construction dust, as well as short and long-term vehicle emissions. The project would be moving less than 1,200 cubic yards/day of material and would disturb less than four acres of area, and therefore would be below the general thresholds triggering construction-related mitigation.

The proposed project would require disturbance within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptors (i.e. single-family residence). Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of dust, potentially affecting local residents and businesses in close proximity to the project site. Dust complaints could result in violation of the SLOAPCD's nuisance rules, a potentially significant air quality impact. As such, the project would be subject to expanded fugitive dust control measures in addition to primary measures pursuant to Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.160.C (Construction Procedures, Air Quality Controls). These measures shall be shown on all grading and building plans in accordance with LUO Section 22.53.160C. Compliance with these measures would ensure fugitive dust emissions are adequately controlled to below 20 percent opacity limit as identified in the SLOAPCD's 401 Visible Emissions rule and that dust is not emitted offsite.

From an operational standpoint, based on Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012), the project would not exceed operational thresholds triggering mitigation.

The project is consistent with the general level of development anticipated and projected in the Clean Air Plan. Additionally, the project is required to incorporate the air quality control measures outlined in Section 22.52.160 C of the County's Land Use Ordinance. Therefore, impacts related to the implementation of an air quality plan would be *less than significant*.

(b) *Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?*

San Luis Obispo County is currently designated as nonattainment status for federal ozone, state ozone, and state PM₁₀ standards. With regards to federal ozone standards, only the eastern portion of the county is designated nonattainment. The project would not result in a noticeable increase in vehicular traffic since long-term maintenance and operational trips associated with the facility would be minimal. Therefore, impacts related to a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant would be *less than significant*.

(c) *Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

The proposed project would require disturbance within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptors (i.e. single-family residences). Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of dust, potentially affecting local residents and businesses in close proximity to the project site. Dust complaints could result in violation of the SLOAPCD's nuisance rules, a potentially significant air quality impact. As such, the project would be subject to expanded fugitive dust control measures in addition to primary measures pursuant to Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.160.C (Construction Procedures, Air Quality Controls). These measures shall be shown on all grading and building plans in accordance with LUO Section 22.53.160C. Compliance with these measures would ensure fugitive dust emissions

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

are adequately controlled to below 20 percent opacity limit as identified in the APCD's 401 Visible Emissions rule and that dust is not emitted offsite.

From an operational standpoint, based on Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012), the project would not exceed operational thresholds triggering mitigation.

Through the incorporation of the measures outlined in Section 22.52.160 C, impacts would be minimized to *less than significant* levels.

- (d) *Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

The project would not result in the generation of other emissions, such as those leading to odors, and the project site is not within proximity of a land use that could expose a substantial number of people to other emissions produced from the project site. Therefore, *no impacts* are expected to occur.

Conclusion

The project would be consistent with the Clean Air Plan and would not result in cumulatively considerable emissions of any criteria pollutant for which the County is in non-attainment. The project is required to be in compliance with County Land Use Ordinance requirements and would therefore not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or result in other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people. The project is not expected to result in any significant impacts to air quality, therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

Setting

On-site vegetation consists of non-native grasslands and sage scrub brush with scattered oak trees. No drainage or wetland features have been identified on the project site. The nearest waterway is the Los Berros Creek, approximately 1,700 feet northwest of the project site. A biological Assessment was prepared for the project by EBI Consulting in June 2019.

Discussion

- (a) *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

The Biological Assessment (June 2019) determined a number of special status species to exist in the vicinity of the project. However, due to the nature of the habitat at the project site, the report

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

concluded that none of these species were likely to exist at the project site. Therefore, impacts to special status species will be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?*

No riparian habitats or sensitive natural communities were identified to exist on the project site. Therefore, impacts will be *less than significant*.

- (c) *Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

No wetlands or wetland characteristics were identified around the project site. Therefore, impacts will be *less than significant*.

- (d) *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

The project is not located in close proximity to any waterbodies that support migratory fish populations. The project site is not within an established wildlife corridor, and the lack of suitable habitat makes the potential for migratory animals to occur on the site low. The project site area is not known to support migratory bird populations. Therefore, impacts are expected to be *less than significant*.

- (e) *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

The County of San Luis Obispo has adopted an oak woodland preservation ordinance; however, the project is not proposing the removal of oak trees or construction within 1.5 times the dripline of oak trees. Therefore, the project would have no impacts on local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

- (f) *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

There is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan adopted that includes the project site. Therefore, there will be *no impact*.

Conclusion

The project is not expected to result in significant biological impacts.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project is located in an area historically occupied the Obispeño Chumash (after Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa) tribal people. San Luis Obispo county possesses a rich and diverse cultural heritage and therefore has a wealth of historic and prehistoric resources, including sites and buildings associated with Native American inhabitation, Spanish missionaries, immigrant settlers, and military branches of the United States.

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).
2. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

Pursuant to CEQA, a resource included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in an historical resource survey shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.

A Cultural Resources Survey was prepared for the project by EBI Consulting in December 2018. The report identified no known archaeological or historic sites within the project area, and a pedestrian survey was negative for resources.

Discussion

- (a) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

According to the Cultural Resources Survey (December 2018), no known historical resources are present on the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact on historical resources.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

(b) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

No known archeological resources are present on the project site. As noted above, the Cultural Resources Survey (December 2018) identified no known archeological sites around the project site and a pedestrian survey was also negative for resources. In the unlikely event resources are uncovered during grading activities, implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources) would be required, which states:

In the event archeological resources are unearthed or discovered during any construction activities, the following standards apply:

A. Construction activities shall cease, and the Department shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.

B. In the event archeological resources are found to include human remains, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the County Coroner shall be notified in addition to the Department so proper disposition may be accomplished.

Based on the low known sensitivity of the project site, and with implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040, impacts to archaeological resources would be *less than significant*.

(c) *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?*

The nearest dedicated cemetery is the Arroyo Grande Cemetery, located 5.26 miles to the northwest. The record and literature search of the project area did not identify any know burial sites around the project. Additionally, consultation with the Native American tribes did not result in identification of known burials. (See Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.) Based on the low known sensitivity of the project site, and with implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040, impacts to human remains are expected to be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

County land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.040 includes a provision that construction work cease in the event resources are unearthed with work allowed to continue once the issue is resolved. No significant archaeological or historical resource impacts are expected to occur.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

VI. ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for urban and rural communities within the County of San Luis Obispo. Approximately 33% of electricity provided by PG&E is sourced from renewable resources and an additional 45% is sourced from greenhouse gas-free resources (PG&E 2019).

The County has adopted a Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) that establishes goals and policies that aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled, conserve water, increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This element provides the basis and direction for the development of the County's EnergyWise Plan (EWP), which outlines in greater detail the County's strategy to reduce government and community-wide greenhouse gas emissions through a number of goals, measures, and actions, including energy efficiency and development and use of renewable energy resources.

The EWP established the goal to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions to 15% below 2006 baseline levels by 2020. Two of the six community-wide goals identified to accomplish this were to "[a]ddress future energy needs through increased conservation and efficiency in all sectors" and "[i]ncrease the production of renewable energy from small-scale and commercial-scale renewable energy installations to account for 10% of local energy use by 2020." In addition, the County has published an EnergyWise Plan 2016 Update to summarize progress toward implementing measures established in the EWP and outline overall trends in energy use and emissions since the baseline year of the EWP inventory (2006).

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent version of which are referred to as the *2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*. These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements.

The County LUO includes a Renewable Energy Area combining designation to encourage and support the development of local renewable energy resources, conserving energy resources and decreasing reliance on environmentally costly energy sources. This designation is intended to identify areas of the county where

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

renewable energy production is favorable and establish procedures to streamline the environmental review and processing of land use permits for solar electric facilities (SEFs). The LUO establishes criteria for project eligibility, required application content for SEFs proposed within this designation, permit requirements, and development standards (LUO 22.14.100).

Discussion

- (a) *Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?*

Construction of the proposed project is not expected to result in any potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. As for the operation of the project, based on the provided design plans, the project would likely not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

The project would utilize connections to existing nearby power sources as well as a 30kW (emergency only) back-up generator. Energy use would be limited to powering the facility, as there would be no employee work area or administration needs. Furthermore, there would be a limited number of vehicle trips due to the unmanned nature of the facility. Therefore, the project's impact on energy resources would be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

The proposed project would not interfere with the County of San Luis Obispo's EnergyWise Plan, which notes the emission reduction goals for the county by 2035 (San Luis Obispo County 2011). Nor would the project conflict with any state plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project is not expected to create any potentially significant environmental impacts in terms of energy resource use and does not conflict with any state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project site has a topography of gently to moderately sloping and is not located within the County's Geologic Study Area. The project area has low landslide risk and low liquefaction potential. The project site is not located near any areas known to contain serpentine or ultramafic rock or soil outcrops, and the nearest known potentially capable fault line is approximately 5 miles to the northeast. As proposed, the project will result in the disturbance of approximately 4,000 square feet. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Wind Erodibility Index, the wind erodibility of the soils which would be disturbed by the proposed project is "moderately low." Additionally, the soils on the site have a moderate shrink-swell (expansive) potential.

Discussion

- (a) *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
- (a-i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*
- The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone. An unnamed fault line is located approximately 5 miles northeast of the project site. The project would not be open to the public and would be unmanned, with employees visiting the site briefly onsite once every four to six weeks for routine maintenance. Therefore, potential adverse impacts related to known fault zones would be *less than significant*.
- (a-ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*
- The project would be required to comply with the California Building Code (CBC) to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized to the greatest extent feasible. The project would not be open to the public and would be unmanned, with employees visiting the site briefly once every four to six weeks for routine maintenance. Therefore, impacts related to seismic ground shaking would be *less than significant*.
- (a-iii) *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*
- Based on information provided by the United States Geological Survey, the project site has a low liquefaction risk potential and strong seismic activity is not considered likely. Therefore, the proposed project would not be likely to create any substantial adverse effects involving seismic-related ground failure and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

(a-iv) *Landslides?*

The project site is gently to moderately sloping, but the project area has relatively flat topography. Based on the County Safety Element Landslide Hazards Map, the project is located in an area with low potential for landslide risk. Therefore, it is unlikely that the project would create any substantial adverse effects involving landslides and impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

The project would result in the disturbance of approximately 4,000 square feet and does not include substantial grading or vegetation removal. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Wind Erodibility Index, the wind erodibility of the soils which would be disturbed by the proposed project is "moderately low." During grading activities there would be a potential for erosion and sedimentation to occur. A sedimentation and erosion control plan is required for all construction and grading projects (Section 22.52.120) to minimize potential impacts related to erosion and sedimentation, and includes requirements for specific erosion control materials, setbacks from creeks, and siltation. Upon implementation of the above control measures, as recommended by the County, impacts related to soil erosion and sedimentation would be *less than significant*.

(c) *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?*

Landslides typically occur in areas with steep slopes or in areas containing escarpments. Based on the Landslide Hazards Map provided in the County Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area with slopes susceptible to local failure.

The project would be required to comply with CBC seismic requirements to address potential seismic-related ground failure including lateral spread. Based on the County Safety Element and USGS data, the project is not located in an area of historical or current land subsidence (USGS 2019). Based on the County Safety Element Liquefaction Hazards Map, the project site is located in an area with low potential for liquefaction risk. Therefore, impacts related to on or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse would be *less than significant*.

(d) *Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

The project site is located on soils that have a moderate shrink swell potential. The proposed project would be uninhabited and would be required to comply with the most recent CBC requirements, which have been developed to property safeguard structures and occupants from land stability hazards, such as expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be *less than significant*.

(e) *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?*

The proposed project would not result in the production of waste water; septic tanks and waste water disposal systems would not be required. Therefore, there would be *no impact* stemming from the installation of septic systems or waste water disposal systems.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

(f) *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

According to the National Environmental Policy Act Screening Report prepared by EBI Consulting in December 2018, no paleontological sites have been identified in the project area. No unique geologic features exist on the project site and would therefore not be affected. Therefore, impacts to paleontological resources and unique geologic features would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project is not expected to indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving any geologic hazards. The site is considered suitable for this type of development and the proposed project is not expected to result in erosion, loss of topsoil, substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. The project would be required to comply with CBC requirements which have been developed to properly safeguard against seismic and geologic hazards. The project would not result in significant impacts related to geology or soils and no mitigation is necessary.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

As noted in Section 3 Air Quality, the project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) under the jurisdiction of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). The SLOAPCD has developed and updated a CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012) and clarification memorandum (2017) to evaluate project specific impacts and help determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result. To evaluate long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and establish

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

countywide programs to reach acceptable air quality levels, a Clean Air Plan has been adopted (prepared by APCD).

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions have been found to result in an increase in the earth's average surface temperature by exacerbating the naturally occurring "greenhouse effect" in the earth's atmosphere. The rise in global temperature has been projected to lead to long-term changes in precipitation, sea level, temperatures, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth's climate system. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as global climate change. These changes are broadly attributed to GHG emissions, particularly those emissions that result from human production and use of fossil fuels.

The passage of AB32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006), recognized the need to reduce GHG emissions and set the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law required that by 2020, State emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels. This is to be accomplished by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions. Subsequent legislation (e.g., SB97-Greenhouse Gas Emissions bill) directed the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop statewide thresholds.

In March 2012, the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) approved thresholds for GHG emission impacts, and these thresholds have been incorporated into the APCD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook. APCD determined that a tiered process for residential / commercial land use projects was the most appropriate and effective approach for assessing the GHG emission impacts. The tiered approach includes three methods, any of which can be used for any given project:

1. Qualitative GHG Reduction Strategies (e.g. Climate Action Plans): A qualitative threshold that is consistent with AB 32 Scoping Plan measures and goals; or,
2. APCD GHG Numerical Threshold: Numerical value to determine the significance of a project's annual GHG emissions; or,
3. Efficiency-Based Threshold: Assesses the GHG impacts of a project on an emissions per capita basis.

For most projects, the Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year (MT CO₂e/year) will be the most applicable threshold. In addition to the residential/commercial threshold options proposed above, a bright-line numerical value threshold of 10,000 MT CO₂e/yr was adopted for stationary source (industrial) projects.

It should be noted that projects that generate less than the above-mentioned thresholds will also participate in emission reductions because air emissions, including GHGs, are under the purview of the CARB (or other regulatory agencies) and will be "regulated" either by CARB, the federal government, or other entities. For example, new vehicles will be subject to increased fuel economy standards and emission reductions, large and small appliances will be subject to more strict emissions standards, and energy delivered to consumers will increasingly come from renewable sources. Other programs that are intended to reduce the overall GHG emissions include Low Carbon Fuel Standards, Renewable Portfolio Standards, and the Clean Car Standards. As a result, even the emissions that result from projects that produce fewer emissions than the threshold will be subject to emission reductions.

Under CEQA, an individual project's GHG emissions will generally not result in direct significant impacts. This is because the climate change issue is global in nature. However, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. Projects that have GHG emissions above the noted thresholds may be considered cumulatively considerable and require mitigation.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

- (a-b) *Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*

Using the GHG threshold information described in the Setting section, the project is expected to generate less than the Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 metric tons of GHG emissions. Therefore, the project's potential direct and cumulative GHG emissions are found to be less significant and less than a cumulatively considerable contribution to GHG emissions. Section 15064(h)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines provide guidance on how to evaluate cumulative impacts. If it is shown that an incremental contribution to a cumulative impact, such as global climate change, is not 'cumulatively considerable', no mitigation is required. Because this project's emissions fall under the threshold, impacts *would be less than significant*.

Conclusion

Impacts relating to greenhouse gas emissions would be less than significant.

Mitigation

None required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project is not located in an area of known hazardous material contamination and is not on a site listed on the "Cortese List" (which is a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5) (SWRCB 2019; California Department of Toxic Substance Control [DTSC] 2019). The project is not located within an Airport Review Area and the closest active landing strip, Oceano Country Airport, is 5.5 miles west of the project site. Additionally, the project is not within the 100-year Flood Hazard Combining Designation. With regards to potential fire hazards, the proposed project is within the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and is within an area of State responsibility. Based on the County's fire response time map, it will take approximately 0 to 5 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety.

Discussion

- (a) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

The project does not propose the routine use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. The applicant supplied a Radio Frequency (RF) report which evaluated the proposed communications facility's compliance with appropriate guidelines limiting human exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic fields. According to the RF report for this project (EBI Consulting, December 2018), the maximum level of RF emissions from the proposed facility at ground-level would be equivalent to 17.5 percent of the applicable exposure limit. These results include several "worst-case" assumptions

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

and therefore are expected to overstate actual power density levels. Although the results are “worst-case” assumptions, they are still within Federal Guidelines for RF exposure limits. However, the County is precluded from evaluating or addressing risk outside of those guidelines. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to require use of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. Handling of these materials has the potential to result in an accidental release. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws. Additionally, the construction contractor would be required to implement best management practices (BMPs) for the storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials during all construction activities. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (c) *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

The nearest school is Nipomo High School, located 2.3 miles to the southeast. There are no schools within a quarter mile of the proposed project. Therefore, there would be *no impact*.

- (d) *Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

The project is not located in an area of known hazardous material contamination and is not on a site listed on the “Cortese List” pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, there would be *no impact*.

- (e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?*

The project is not located within an airport land use plan and is not located within two miles of an airport. Therefore, there would be no risk of exposing persons to a safety hazard or excessive noise from the operation of the airport and there would be *no impact*.

- (f) *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

The project would not conflict with any regional emergency response or evacuation plan as the existing access roads would be wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles and the project footprint is small. Construction and operation of the project would not require road closure, and the project would not physically block nearby residents from evacuating during an emergency. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- (g) *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?*

According to Cal Fire, the project site is located in a high fire hazard severity zone within a State Responsibility Area. With the exception of the construction period, the proposed project would not regularly have employees onsite. Once construction is completed, employees would only be onsite for periodic maintenance (once every four to six weeks). The project would not be accessible to the public. Therefore, impacts related to risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The construction and use of the proposed wireless telecommunications facility will not require the use or generation of any hazardous materials in levels which would create a significant impact. Additionally, the project is not located on a site known to contain, use, or generate any hazardous materials. The project is not within the Airport Review and is not expected to interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Finally, the threats posed by the project's location within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone will be minimized to less than significant levels through the requirements set forth by Cal Fire.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed unmanned wireless communications facility would not generate water demand outside the construction phase.

The topography of the project is gently to moderately sloping. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Wind Erodibility Index, the wind erodibility of the soils which would be disturbed by the proposed project is "moderately low". As described in the NRCS Soil Survey, the soil surface is considered to have moderate erodibility and is considered not well-drained. The project parcel is within the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. The closest creek from the proposed development is approximately 1,700 feet to the northwest of the project. The project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone.

For areas where drainage is identified as a potential issue, the Land Use Ordinance (LUO Sec. 22.52.110) includes a provision to prepare a drainage plan to minimize potential drainage impacts. When required, this plan would need to address measures such as: constructing on-site retention or detention basins or installing

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

surface water flow dissipaters. This plan would also need to show that the increased surface runoff would have no more impacts than that caused by historic flows.

Discussion

- (a) *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

With regards to project impacts on water quality the following conditions apply:

- Approximately 4,000 square feet of site disturbance;
- The project will be subject to standard County requirements for drainage, sedimentation and erosion control for construction and permanent use;
- The project is on soils with moderate erodibility, but not on moderate to steep slopes;
- The project is not within a 100-year Flood Hazard designation;
- The project is more than 500 feet from the closest creek and at least 100 feet from the nearest surface water body;
- All hazardous materials and/or wastes will be properly stored onsite, which include secondary containment should spills or leaks occur; and
- Stockpiles will be properly managed during construction to avoid material loss due to erosion.
- Erosion control measures to be implemented during construction include a permanent erosion control blanket to reduce surficial erosion of the slopes and allow for vegetation growth on the slopes.

Implementation of Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.110 and Section 22.52.120 will help ensure less than significant impacts to water quality standards and surface and ground water quality.

- (b) *Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

As proposed, operation of the project would not utilize water and would not result in wastewater production. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 2,000 square feet, which would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge on the 22-acre parcel. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (c) *Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:*

- (c-i) *Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?*

The project would be subject to Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.120A and would be required to prepare a sedimentation and erosion control plan. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 2,000 square feet and any issues associated with the addition of this impervious surface area, as it relates to erosion and siltation, would be addressed by the required sedimentation and erosion control plan. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- (c-ii) *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?*

There are no existing or planned stormwater drainage system within or adjacent to the project site. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 2,000 square feet, which would not substantially contribute to additional surface runoff based on the one-acre threshold established by the County. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (c-iii) *Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?*

There are no existing or planned stormwater drainage system within or adjacent to the project site. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 2,000 square feet, which would not substantially contribute to additional surface runoff based on the one-acre threshold established by the County. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (c-iv) *Impede or redirect flood flows?*

The project is not located within a flood zone and is not located within close proximity to a drainage channel. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 2,000 square feet, which would not substantially change the existing ground surface. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (d) *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

Based on the County Safety Element Dam Inundation Map, the project site is not located in an area that would become inundated in the event of dam failure. The proposed project is not located in a 100-year flood zone, and the Pacific Ocean is located 6 miles from the project site. The likelihood of flood, tsunami, or seiche affecting the project site is very low and therefore impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (e) *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

As stated earlier, the proposed project would not result in the use of water for any purpose besides construction, which would be temporary and limited in nature. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in the production of wastewater, which indicates the likelihood of conflicting with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

Based on the proposed amount of water to be used no significant impacts from water use are anticipated. The proposed project would be subject to Land Use Ordinance standards which would ensure that the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. It would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. Additionally, the proposed project would be subject to Land Use Ordinance standards which would ensure that the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner which would result in substantial erosion, siltation, surface runoff, or impede or redirect flood flows. The project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation or conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed wireless telecommunications tower would be located in an area designated Residential Rural by the County of San Luis Obispo. Surrounding uses are identified on Page 2 of this Initial Study and the proposed project is considered compatible with these surrounding uses. The proposed project was reviewed for consistency with policy and/or regulatory documents relating to the environment and appropriate land use (e.g., County Land Use Ordinance, South County Area Plan, etc.). Referrals were sent to outside agencies to review for policy consistencies (e.g., Environmental Health, Cal Fire, AB52, etc.). The project was found to be consistent with these documents (refer to Exhibit A for references of documents used).

Discussion

(a) Physically divide an established community?

The project is located outside of an existing community, within a rural, unincorporated area. The property is not located in such a way as to cause the physical divide of any establish community. The project would utilize the existing circulation system and onsite roads for access and would not require the construction of offsite infrastructure. Therefore, there would be *no impacts* relating to the division of an established community.

(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The project site is zoned as Residential Rural by the County of San Luis Obispo and no zoning changes are proposed. The project was found to be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the County General Plan, the North County Area Plan, the SLOAPCD Clean Air Plan, and other land use

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

policies for this area. The project would be conditioned to be consistent with standards set forth by County Fire/CAL FIRE, Environmental Health, and the Department of Public Works. The project does not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation in such a way that would cause a significant environmental impact which would not be otherwise addressed and mitigated through measure proposed within this document. Therefore, impacts related to inconsistency with land use and policies adopted to address environmental effects would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project with neither cause the division of an established community nor will it cause a significant environmental impact due to any conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

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

Setting

The County Land Use Ordinance provides regulations for development in delineated Energy and Extractive Resource Areas (EX) and Extractive Resource Areas (EX1). The proposed project is not located within an EX or EX1 designation. Based on the California Geological Survey (CGS) Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification, the project site is located within an Aggregate Materials study area which covers the majority of the county. Active mining operations are located approximately 6 miles northwest of the project site, near the Pismo Dunes Natural Preserve.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

- (a) *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?*

There are no known mineral resources on the project site. Although the project site is located within an Aggregate Materials study area, the project site does not contain resources identified in the study (aggregate materials - sand and gravel for concrete). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- (b) *Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?*

Based on Chapter 6 of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element – Mineral Resources, the project site is not located within an extractive resource area or an energy and extractive resource area, and the site is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, impacts related to preclusion of future extraction of locally important mineral resources would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project is not located in an area known to support any valuable mineral resources, nor is it located within a resource recovery area, as identified by the County.

Mitigation

None required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project result in:</i>				
(a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The existing ambient noise environmental is characterized by traffic on Highway 101. Noise-sensitive land uses typically include residences, schools, nursing homes, and parks. The nearest existing off-site noise-sensitive land use is a residence located approximately 630 feet to the southwest of the project parcel. The project site is not located within an Airport Review Area, and the nearest airport, Oceano Country Airport, is located 5.5 miles west of the project site.

The County Land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.120 establishes maximum allowed noise levels for both daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.) and nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) hours, as shown below. The maximum allowed exterior hourly noise level is 50 db for the daytime hours and 45 db for the nighttime hours.

Discussion

- (a) *Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

The proposed project would introduce noise generating equipment into an area already effected by high noise levels due to the proximity to Highway 101. The facility's primary operational noise source would be a diesel-powered emergency back-up generator. The emergency generator is intended to power the facility in the event of a power outage. It would also be operated for about 15 minutes every four to six weeks for routine maintenance and testing. As conditioned, the generator would only be operated for testing during day-time hours.

Project construction activities would also generate short-term (temporary) construction noise. These activities would be limited to the daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday, in accordance with County construction noise standards, as presented in Section 22.10.120.A of the Land Use Ordinance.

Noise impacts resulting from both construction and operation of the proposed facility are expected to be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Operation of the proposed project would not result in groundborne vibration. No construction equipment or methods are proposed that would generate substantial ground vibration. Therefore, impacts related to temporary or permanent groundborne vibration would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- (c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

The project is not located within an airport land use plan and is not located within two miles of an airport. Therefore, there would be *no impact* to people residing or working in the project area from excessive air traffic related noise levels.

Conclusion

The project would not result in activity that would create noise (groundborne or otherwise) or vibrations that would be in excess of any established standards. Additionally, the project would be located outside of any airport land use plan or is more than two miles from the nearest airport.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

Setting

In its efforts to provide for affordable housing, the County currently administers the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, which provides limited financing to projects relating to affordable housing throughout the county. The County's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires provision of new affordable housing in conjunction with both residential and nonresidential development and subdivisions.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

- (a) *Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

The proposed project would not result in new jobs in the area that would require new housing. The project does not propose new roads or infrastructure to undeveloped or underdeveloped areas that would indirectly result in population growth. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

- (b) *Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

The proposed project does not include any residential uses or structures for human habitation. The project would not result in a need for new housing and would not displace existing housing. Therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

Conclusion

The project will not result in a need for new housing and will not displace existing housing.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project area is served by the following public services:

Fire: Cal Fire (Formerly CDF) (Location: 20 Nipomo, Cal Fire Station, approximately 3 miles southeast of the project parcel) The project site has a High Fire Hazard Severity rating according to Cal Fire and Cal Fire response times are estimated to be between 0 to 5 minutes.

Police: County Sheriff (Location: Oceano substation, approximately 6 miles to the west of the project parcel).

School District(s): Lucia Mar School District.

Parks: The nearest park is Templeton Park, located approximately 6 miles west of the project site. No trails (proposed or existing) pass through the project parcel.

Discussion

- (a) *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:*

Fire protection?

The project is under the protection of Cal Fire/County Fire. Cal Fire/County Fire has given the area of the proposed project a High Fire Hazard Severity rating and estimates an emergency response time between 0 to 5 minutes. The proposed project was reviewed by County Fire/Cal Fire for consistency with the Uniform Fire Code and will be required to adhere to the requirements of Uniform Fire Code. The proposed project, along with other projects in the area, will result in a cumulative effect on fire protection services. The project's direct and cumulative impacts are within the general assumptions of allowed use for the subject property that was used to estimate the public facility fees in place. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Police protection?

The project is under the protection of the County Sherriff's Department. The development of the proposed wireless telecommunications facility would not result in the need for any additional police protection facilities or cause any environmental impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection. The proposed project, along with other projects in the area, would result in a cumulative effect on police protection services. The project's direct and cumulative impacts would be within the general assumptions of allowed use for the subject property that was used to estimate the public facility fees in place. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Schools?

The proposed project would not result in the need for new housing and would not result in population growth. Therefore, there will be *no impact* to existing schools or a need for new school facilities.

Parks?

The proposed project would not result in the need for new housing and would not result in population growth. Therefore, there will be *no impact* to existing parks or a need for new park facilities.

Other public facilities?

The proposed project proposes construction of an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility and would not generate substantial long-term increases in demand for roads, solid waste, or other public services or utilities. The proposed project site would be accessed by the existing local circulation system and onsite farm roads and would not generate substantial long-term operational trips. Therefore, potential impacts on public services or utilities would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

No significant project-specific impacts to the above-mentioned public services were identified. The project would not result in any substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the above-mentioned public services.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XVI. RECREATION

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

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Setting

The County of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Element (Recreation Element) establishes goals, policies, and implementation measures for the management, renovation, and expansion of existing, and the development of new, parks and recreation facilities in order to meet existing and projected needs and to assure an equitable distribution of parks throughout the county. The Recreation Element does not show any existing or potential future trails going through or adjacent to the project site.

Discussion

- (a) *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?*

The project does not propose any use which would be considered visitor serving or would otherwise bring an increase in visitation to the area. As discussed in Section XIV: Population and Housing, the project is not expected to result in any population growth or need for additional housing. Construction and operation of the proposed unmanned wireless telecommunications tower is expected to have *no impact* on the use of parks and other recreational facilities.

- (b) *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

The proposed project consists on the construction and operation of an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility. The project does not propose any recreational or public facilities and this type of development is expected to have *no impact* on recreational facilities.

Conclusion

The proposed project would not generate a significant increase in activity within any publicly accessible recreational facilities, nor would it necessitate the construction or expansion of such facilities to an extent which would have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The County has established the acceptable Level of Service on roads for this rural area as “C” or better. The existing road network in the area including the project’s access street—Los Berros—are operating at acceptable levels. Based on existing road speeds and configuration (vertical and horizontal road curves), sight distance is considered acceptable.

Discussion

- (a) *Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

Short-term construction-related trips would be minimal, and area roadways are operating at acceptable levels and would be able to accommodate construction-related traffic. Long-term maintenance and operational trips would not substantially differ from existing on-site use. As a result, the proposed project would have *less than significant* long-term impact on existing road service or traffic safety levels. The project does not conflict with adopted policies, plans and programs related to transportation, would not affect air traffic patterns or policies related to public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities.

- (b) *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 does not apply until July 1, 2020 and the County has not elected to be governed by the provisions of this section in the interim. The project would result in the establishment of a new unmanned wireless telecommunications facility. It is not expected that there would be any significant increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as a result of the establishment of these uses. This is because the use is not considered a vehicle dependent form of development. Therefore, the project would not substantially increase hazards and would have a *less than significant impact*.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

- (c) *Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

The project would make use of an existing driveway approach and any expansion of the driveway would not include any hazardous geometric design features. Therefore, the project would not substantially increase hazards and would have a *less than significant impact*.

- (d) *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

Los Berros Road and the project site's access road are currently able to accommodate emergency vehicles. The project would have the highest risk of emergencies during construction, which would be temporary. During operation, the likelihood of an emergency incident occurring would low as the facility is unmanned and employees' visitation would be infrequent. Additionally, the proposed project would not block or alter egress routes for the existing onsite residents. Therefore, impacts related to emergency access would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in a significant increase in the use of the existing roads servicing the area, nor would it increase or create any hazard or obstruction to emergency access.

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in 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:				
(i) 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 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Approved in 2014, Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

- 1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
 - b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of California Public Resources Code Section 5020.1.
- 2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying these criteria for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

AB 52 consultation letters were sent to four tribes on July 3, 2018: Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Salinan Tribe of San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties, Xolon Salinan Tribe, and yak tiʔu tiʔu yak tiʔhini. No responses were received as of November 21, 2019. A response was submitted by the Northern Chumash Tribal Council (NCTC) on July 5, 2018 requesting to see a cultural report for the project. A Cultural Resources Survey was submitted to the NCTC on July 5, 2019 (prepared by EBI Consulting, December 2018). No further response or request for consultation were received.

As noted in Section V: Cultural Resources, the project is located in an area historically occupied by the Obispeño Chumash and the Salinan.

Potential for the presence or regular activities of the Native American increases in close proximity to reliable water sources. The project parcel is within 300 feet of a blue line creek, however the area proposed for grading and development is not within the 300-foot buffer.

As noted in Section V. Cultural Resources, the Cultural Resources Survey prepared by EBI Consulting concluded that known prehistoric or historic resources were not present within the proposed project vicinity.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

(a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in 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:*

(a-i) *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 5020.1(k)?*

As noted in Section V. Cultural Resources, the Cultural Resources Survey prepared by EBI Consulting concluded that known prehistoric or historic resources were not present within the proposed project vicinity. There are no known historical resources within the project area; therefore, impacts to historical resources and tribal historical resources would be *less than significant*.

(a-ii) *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.*

As noted in Section V. Cultural Resources, the Cultural Resources Survey prepared by EBI Consulting concluded that known prehistoric or historic cultural resources were not present within the proposed project area. A literature search and pedestrian survey further confirmed the absence of known archaeological sites near the study area. Further, per AB 52, no tribal cultural resources were identified by any of the four tribes that received notice.

In the unlikely event resources are uncovered during grading activities, implementation of Land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources) would be required, which states:

In the event archeological resources are unearthed or discovered during any construction activities, the following standards apply:

A. Construction activities shall cease, and the Department shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.

B. In the event archeological resources are found to include human remains, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the County Coroner shall be notified in addition to the Department so proper disposition may be accomplished.

There are no known tribal cultural resources within the project area. Therefore, impacts are expected to be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

No historical or significant resources have been found or recorded on site or within close proximity to the site. Should any materials be unearthed during project construction, Land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.040 requires that work must stop until the discovered resource is analyzed and adequately mitigated before work may continue.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed project is an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility which does not propose any use which would require wastewater disposal or water supply connections. The project does propose connection

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

to existing electrical and trenching for such connections has been incorporated into site disturbance calculations.

A fee program has been adopted to address impacts related to public facilities (county) and schools (State Government Code 65995 et seq.). Fees are assessed annually by the County based on the type of proposed development and proportional impact and collected at the time of building permit issuance. Fees are used for the construction as needed to finance the facilities required to serve new development.

Discussion

- (a) *Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

The proposed project would not result in the necessity of new or expanded water, wastewater, natural gas, or telecommunications connections or facilities. While the proposed project is the installation of a new telecommunications facility, the project will not result in other new or relocated telecommunications facilities. No other offsite infrastructure is required. The associated utility trenching is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts, as the trenching would be located within the existing access road and equipment staging area. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

The proposed project would not result in the usage of water and therefore would result in *no impact*.

- (c) *Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

Operation of the proposed project would not result in the production of wastewater. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on wastewater treatment and storage facilities.

- (d) *Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?*

Operation of the project would not result in solid waste generation. Any waste generated from the construction of the proposed facility would be removed by the contractor and disposed of. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

- (e) *Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

Operation of the proposed project would not result in the production of solid waste and therefore would comply with all federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Impacts with regards to solid waste compliance with statutes and regulations would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

No significant impacts related to utilities and service systems is expected to occur, and therefore mitigation is not required.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Mitigation

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XX. WILDFIRE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</i>				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed project site is located in a state responsibility area, and is located approximately 5 minutes from the closest Cal Fire / County Fire station. The project is located in an area that is considered a high fire risk area and on-site conditions are considered prime for acceleration of wildfire. The topography of the project parcel is gently to moderately sloping. Steep slopes can accelerate the spread of wildfire. Two other factors which can affect fire spread rate are weather conditions and fuel types. Higher wind speeds and temperatures can lead to drier conditions which are more conducive to wildfire spread.

The County of San Luis Obispo Safety Element establishes goals, policies, and programs to reduce the threat to life, structures, and the environment caused by fire. Policy S-13 identifies that new development should be

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

carefully located, with special attention given to fuel management in higher fire risk areas, and that new development in fire hazard areas should be configured to minimize the potential for added danger.

The California Fire Code provides minimum standards for many aspects of fire prevention and suppression activities. These standards include provisions for emergency vehicle access, water supply, fire protection systems, and the use of fire-resistant buildings materials.

Discussion

(a) *Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

The project would not conflict with any regional emergency response or evacuation plan because the project would be located on an existing parcel and would not alter or prohibit access to the local circulation system. The structures proposed have a small footprint and would be unlikely to pose a significant obstacle during emergency response. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(b) *Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

The proposed project site is located in an area of moderate wind (Weather Spark 2018). The project site has abundant fuel, especially during the summer months when vegetation is drier, and has gently to moderately sloping topography in some areas, all of which exacerbate fire risk. All of these conditions have resulted in the project site being classified in a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The proposed project would have the highest fire risk during construction as construction vehicles have the ability to spark wildfires when operating machinery around dry vegetation. The project proponent would be required to adhere to a Fire Safety Plan prepared by County Fire/Cal Fire to lessen fire risk within the project site. The project would be an unmanned facility, and employees would only be onsite for limited period maintenance. Therefore, fire-related impacts to project occupants would be *less than significant*.

(c) *Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

Existing local roads and onsite access roads would be used for access and new roads would not be constructed. The proposed project site would require power to be routed underground, south of the equipment lease area to an existing utility pole. Due to the underground location of the conduit, fire risk would be low. Fire-related impacts due to installation of new infrastructure would be *less than significant*.

(d) *Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

As stated earlier, employees would rarely be onsite after completion of construction of the project. The risk to structures would be low due to the low landslide and liquefaction risk, location outside a 100-year flood zone, and distance from nearby streams. Therefore, there would be a *less than significant* impact to people and structures in regard to flooding and landslides from post-fire slope instability.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Conclusion

With the implementation of the Fire Safety Plan, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to wildlife.

Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) 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 or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

- (a) *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 or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

As discussed in each resource section above, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to biological or cultural resources and would not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Additionally, compliance with mitigation measures AES-1 through AES-3 identified in Exhibit B – Mitigation Summary Table would ensure impacts to aesthetic resources as a result of the proposed project would be less than significant. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

- (b) *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?*

The potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project have been analyzed within the discussion of each environmental resource area above. Cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project would be *less than significant*.

- (c) *Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Environmental impacts that may have an adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly, are analyzed in each environmental resource section above. Environmental impacts that could cause substantial adverse effects of human beings would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The proposed project has the potential to have significant impacts to the aesthetic nature of the area. However, with the inclusion of mitigation measures AES-1 through AES-3, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant.

Mitigation

See mitigation measures AES-1 – AES-3, which will reduce aesthetic impacts to less than significant.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Exhibit A - Initial Study References and Agency Contacts

The County Planning Department has contacted various agencies for their comments on the proposed project. With respect to the subject application, the following have been contacted (marked with an ☒) and when a response was made, it is either attached or in the application file:

Contacted	Agency	Response
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Public Works Department	In File**
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Environmental Health Services	In File**
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Agricultural Commissioner's Office	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Airport Manager	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Airport Land Use Commission	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Pollution Control District	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Sheriff's Department	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional Water Quality Control Board	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Coastal Commission	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife	Not Applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	None
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Transportation	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Services District	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	Not Applicable

** "No comment" or "No concerns"-type responses are usually not attached

The following checked ("☒") reference materials have been used in the environmental review for the proposed project and are hereby incorporated by reference into the Initial Study. The following information is available at the County Planning and Building Department.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project File for the Subject Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Design Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Documents	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Resource Summary Report
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Framework for Planning (Coastal/Inland)	<input type="checkbox"/> Circulation Study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Plan (Inland/Coastal), includes all maps/elements; more pertinent elements:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Documents
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation & Open Space Element	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Transportation Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uniform Fire Code
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Element	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Resources Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation Element/Project List	<input type="checkbox"/> Area of Critical Concerns Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Element	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Biological Importance Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use Ordinance (Inland/Coastal)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CA Natural Species Diversity Database
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building and Construction Ordinance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Hazard Severity Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Facilities Fee Ordinance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flood Hazard Maps
<input type="checkbox"/> Real Property Division Ordinance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for SLO County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing Fund	<input type="checkbox"/> GIS mapping layers (e.g., habitat, streams, contours, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Airport Land Use Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Wise Plan	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> South County Area Plan/South County sub area	

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

In addition, the following project-specific information and/or reference materials have been considered as a part of the Initial Study:

California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2019. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program - DLRP Important Farmland Finder. Accessed on: June 14, 2019. Available at: <<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>>

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2018. CDFW Lands Viewer. Accessed on July 1, 2019. Available at: < <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/lands/>>

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2019. California Natural Diversity Database BIOS Viewer. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: < <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/bios/?bookmark=327>>

California State Water Resources Control Board. 2019. Geotracker. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov>>

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2019. EnviroStor. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>>

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2008. Scenic Highway Guidelines. October 2008.

California Department of Conservation (DOC). California Geological Survey Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification. 2019. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at <<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/mlc/>>

CalRecycle. May 14, 2019. SWIS Facility Detail. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/swfacilities/Directory/40-AA-0008>>

County of San Luis Obispo. 2011. EnergyWise Plan. Available at <<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Energy-and-Climate/Energy-Climate-Reports/EnergyWise-Plan.aspx>> Accessed on: June 3, 2019.

EBI Consulting. December 20, 2018. Radio Frequency – Electromagnetic Energy (RF-EME) Compliance Report.

EBI Consulting. December 27, 2018. Cultural Resource Survey.

EBI Consulting. June 27, 2019. Biological Assessment

San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). 2012. CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Accessed on June 14, 2019. Available at: < https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/CEQA_Handbook_2012_v2%20%28Updated%20Map2019%29_LinkedwithMemo.pdf>

San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). 2017. CEQA Air Quality Handbook Clarification Memo. Accessed on June 14, 2019. Available at: < https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/FINAL_Clarification%20Memorandum%2020172.pdf>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019. National Wetlands Inventory Surface Waters and Wetlands. June 5, 2019. Available at: <<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>>

Weather Spark. 2018. Average Weather in Templeton, California. Access on November 21, 2019. Available at:

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

< <https://weatherspark.com/y/1290/Average-Weather-in-Templeton-California-United-States-Year-Round>

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary

The applicant has agreed to incorporate the following measures into the project. These measures become a part of the project description and therefore become a part of the record of action upon which the environmental determination is based. All development activity must occur in strict compliance with the following mitigation measures. These measures shall be perpetual and run with the land. These measures are binding on all successors in interest of the subject property.

- AES-1** **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:
- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.
 - b. All of the antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
 - c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.
- AES-2** **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.
- AES-3** **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.

**DEVELOPER'S STATEMENT FOR
BRYDEN & AT&T CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT
DRC2018-00038**

The applicant agrees to incorporate the following measures into the project. These measures become a part of the project description and therefore become a part of the record of action upon which the environmental determination is based. All development activity must occur in strict compliance with the following mitigation measures. These measures shall be perpetual and run with the land. These measures are binding on all successors in interest of the subject property.

Note: The items contained in the boxes labeled "Monitoring" describe the County procedures to be used to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures.

The following mitigation measures address impacts that may occur as a result of the development of the project.

Aesthetics

AES-1 **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:

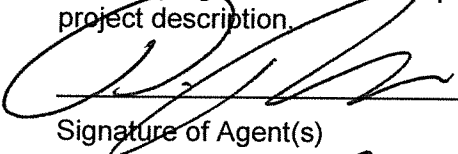
- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.
- b. All of the antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
- c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.

AES-2 **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.

AES-3 **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.

Monitoring: (Visual Recourse Measures VR-1 to VR-3) Required at the time of application for construction permits. Compliance will be verified by the County Department of Planning and Building.

The applicant understands that any changes made to the project description subsequent to this environmental determination must be reviewed by the Environmental Coordinator and may require a new environmental determination for the project. By signing this agreement, the owner(s) agrees to and accepts the incorporation of the above measures into the proposed project description.



Signature of Agent(s)

11/21/19

Date

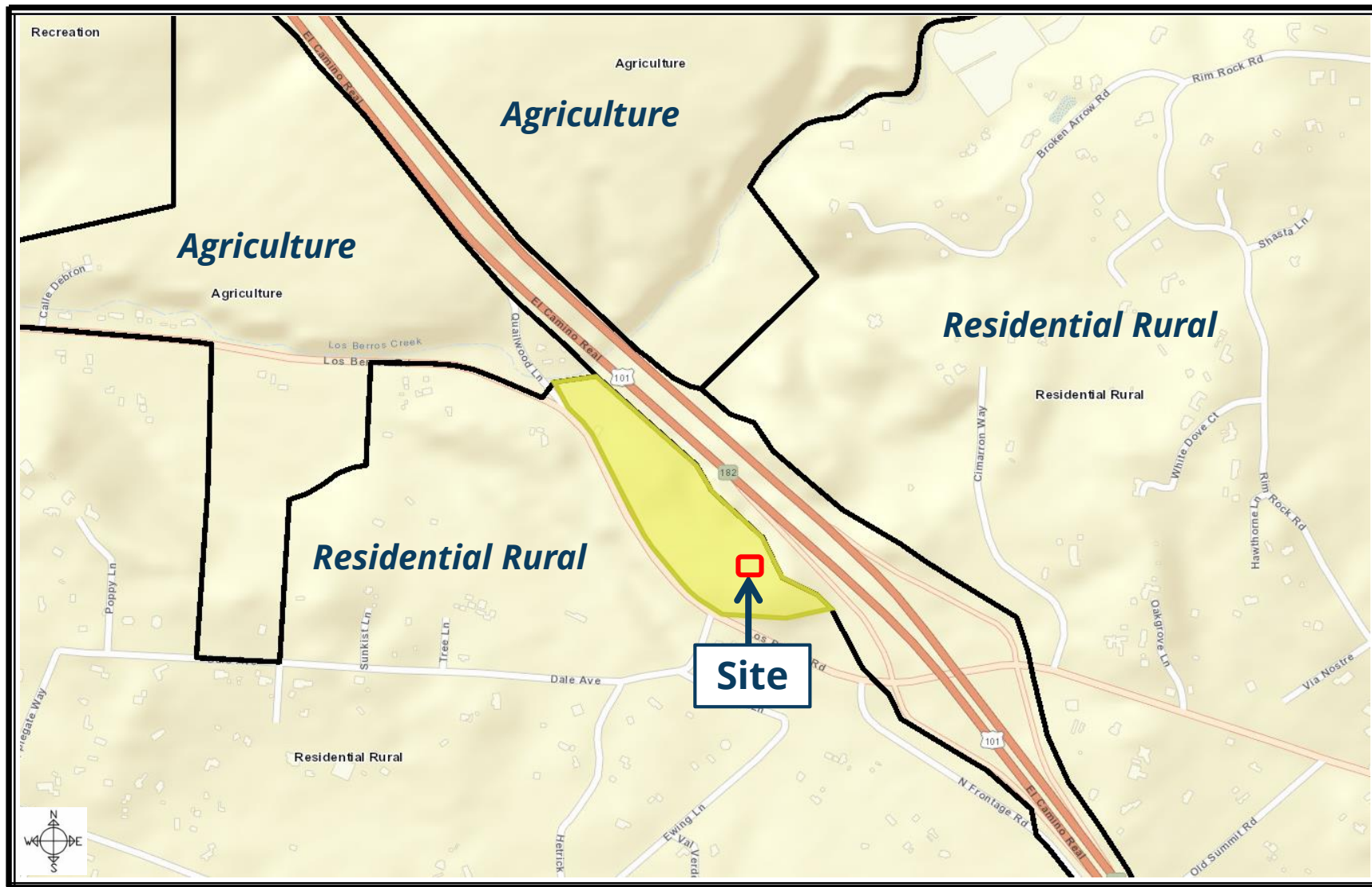
DAVID BAZZALCANI

Name (Print)



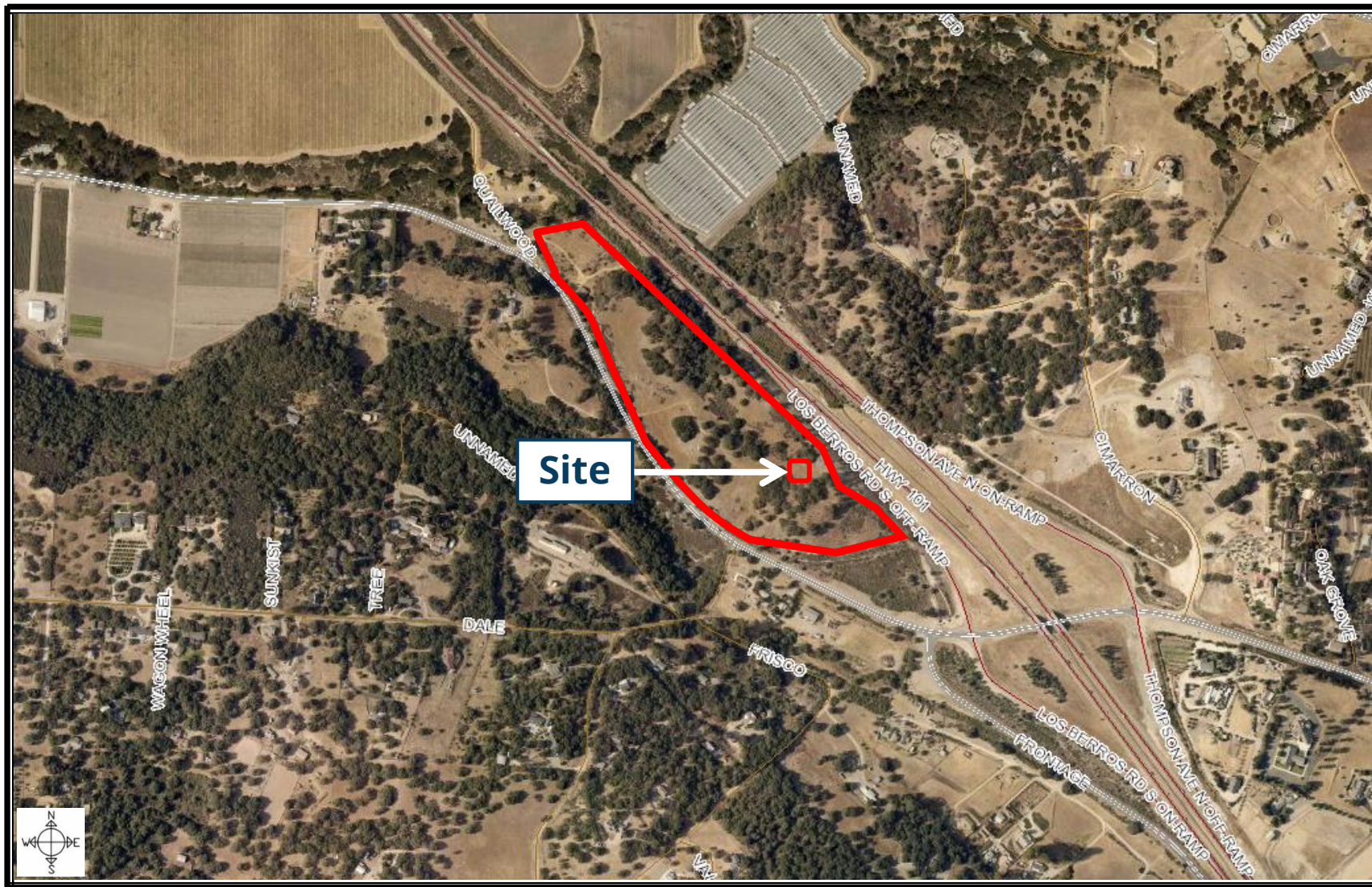
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Vicinity Map
DRC2018-00038



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Land Use Category Map
DRC2018-00038



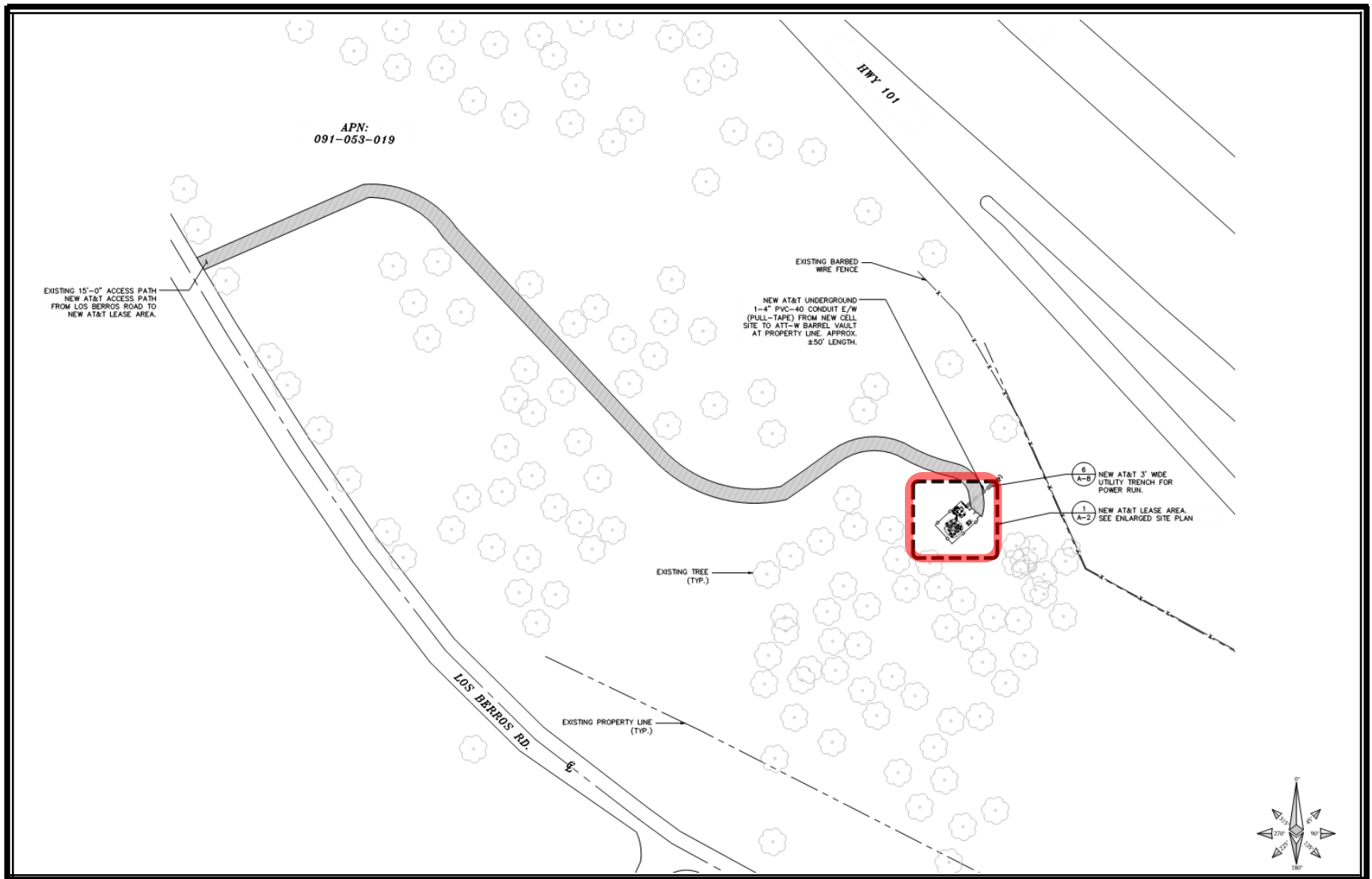
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Aerial - Overall Site
DRC2018-00038



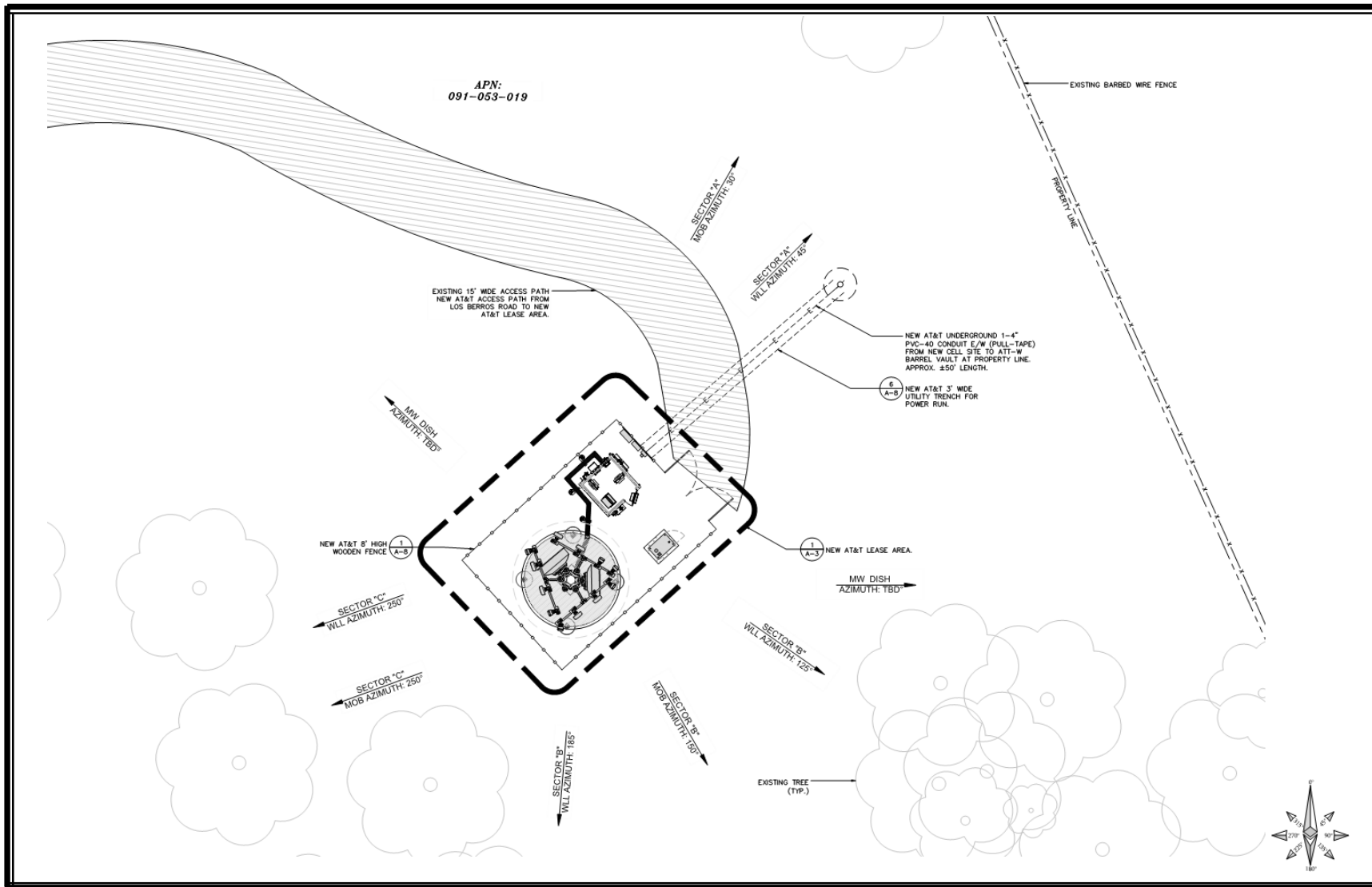
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Aerial – Site Enlarged
DRC2018-00038



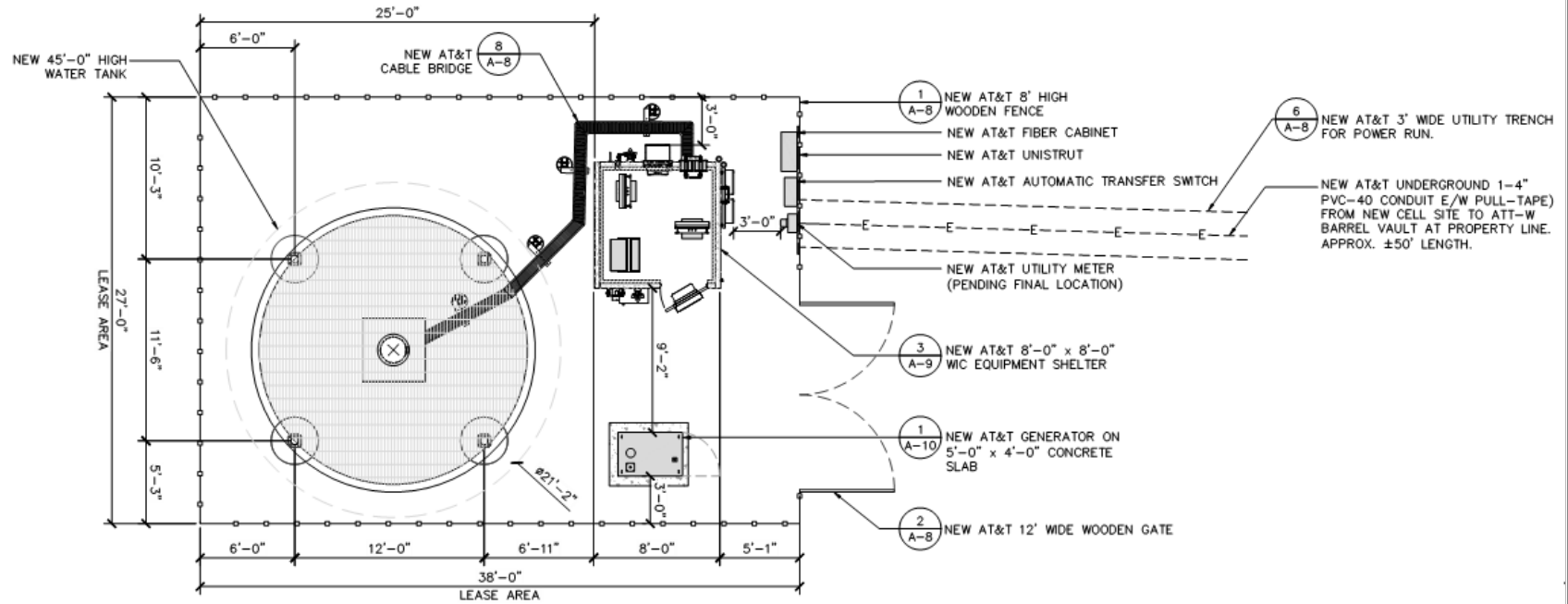
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Overall Site Plan
DRC2018-00038



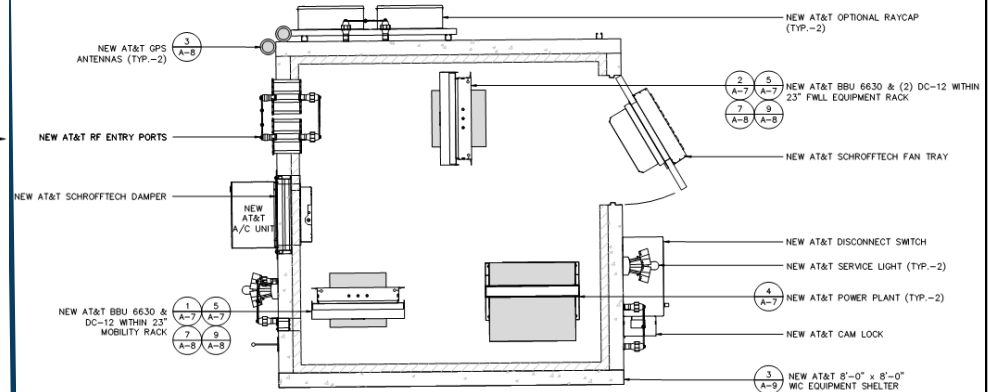
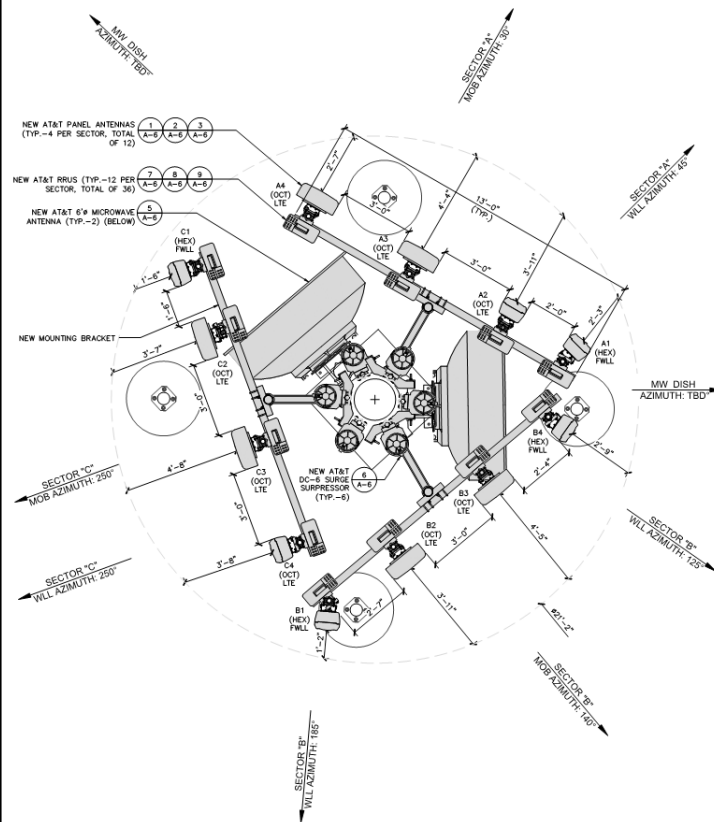
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

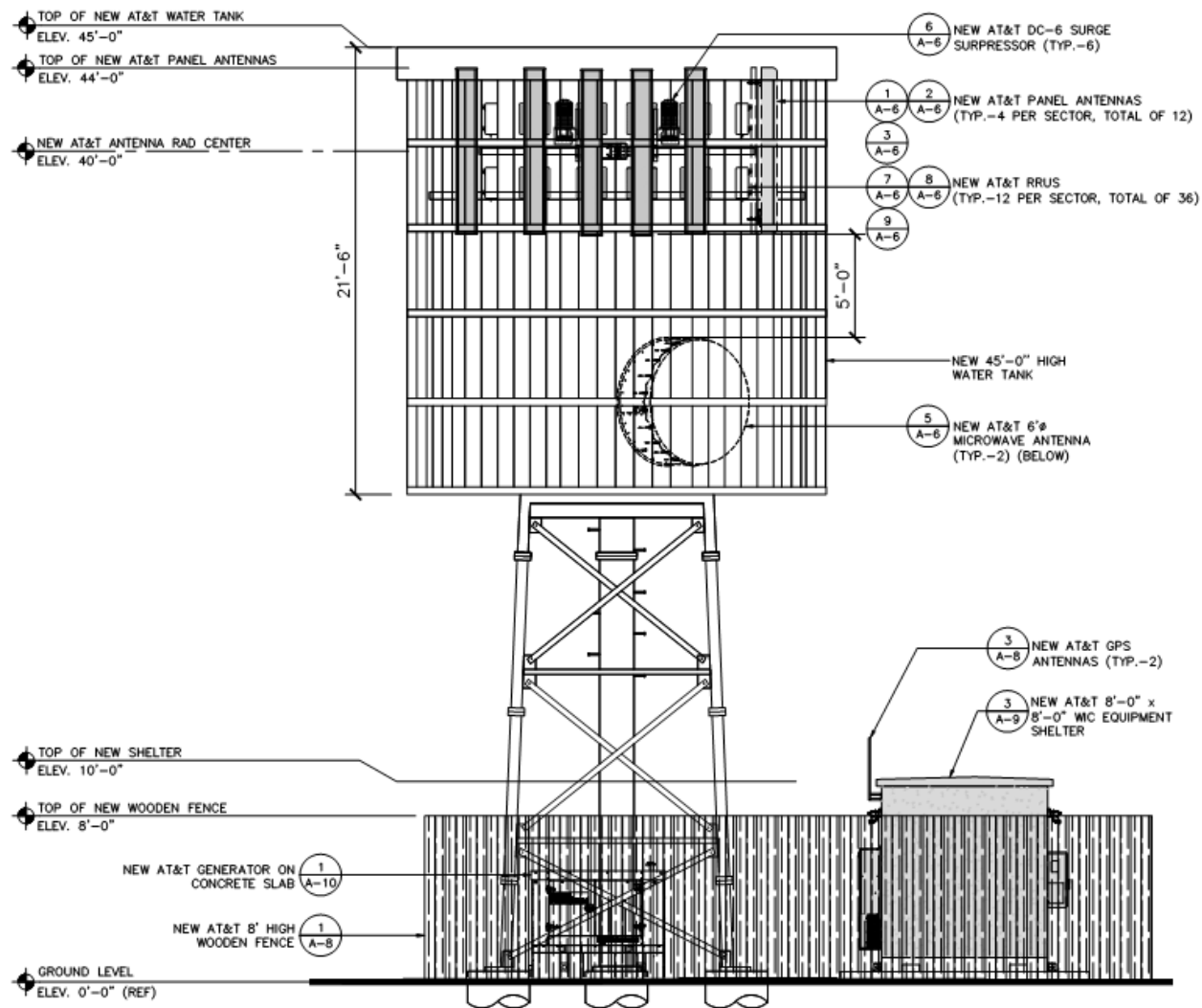
Enlarged Site Plan
DRC2018-00038



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

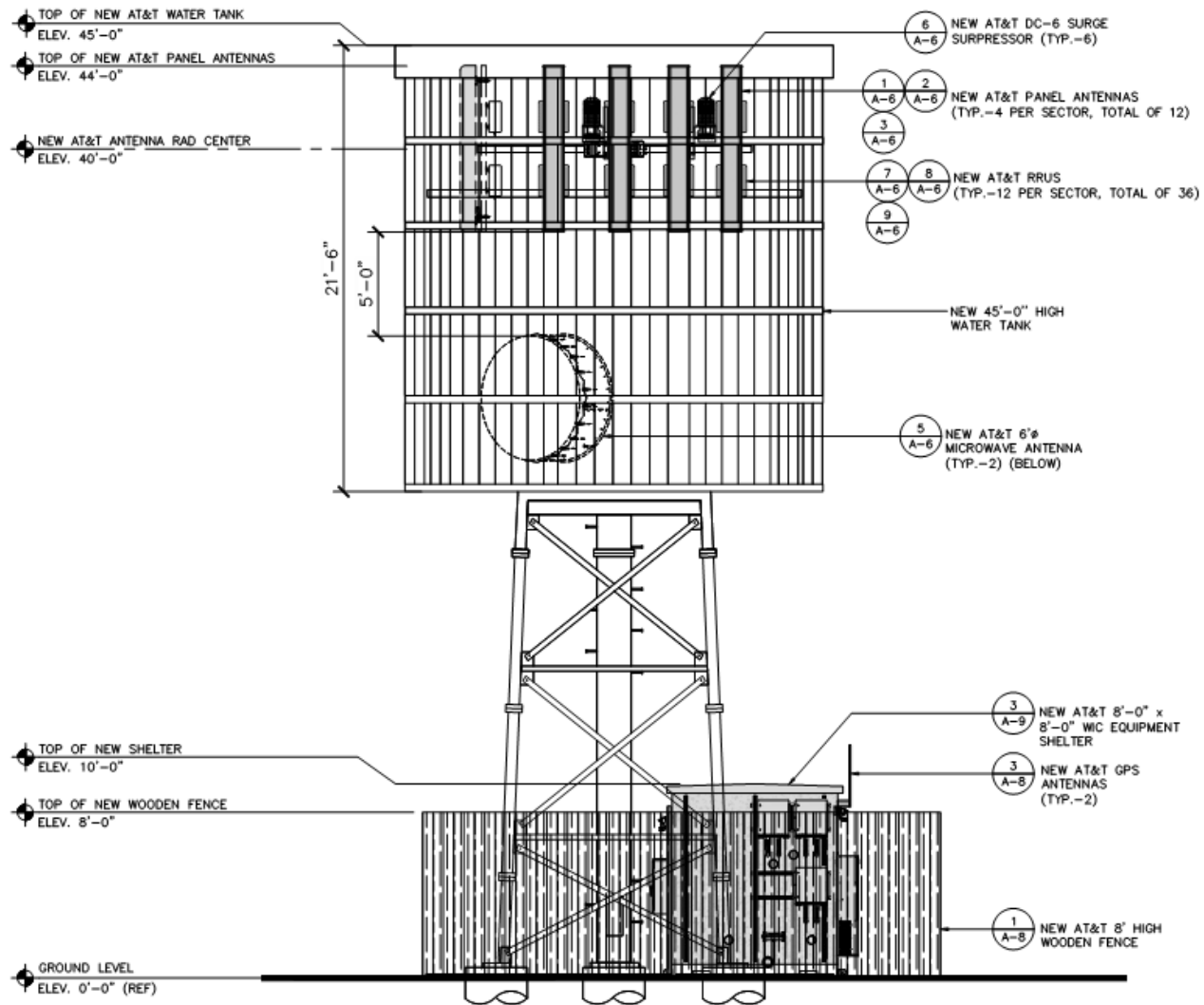
Equipment Layout Plan





COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Proposed Southeast
Elevation



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Proposed Northeast
Elevation

Existing



View 1

Looking northeast from Los Berros Rd.
Toward subject site.



Photosimulation



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

**Photo-Simulation
(Looking Northeast
from Los Berros Road)**

Existing



View 2

Looking north from Los Berros Rd.
toward subject site.



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

**Photo-Simulation
(Looking North from
Los Berros Road)**

Existing



View 3

Looking west from across 101 freeway toward subject site.



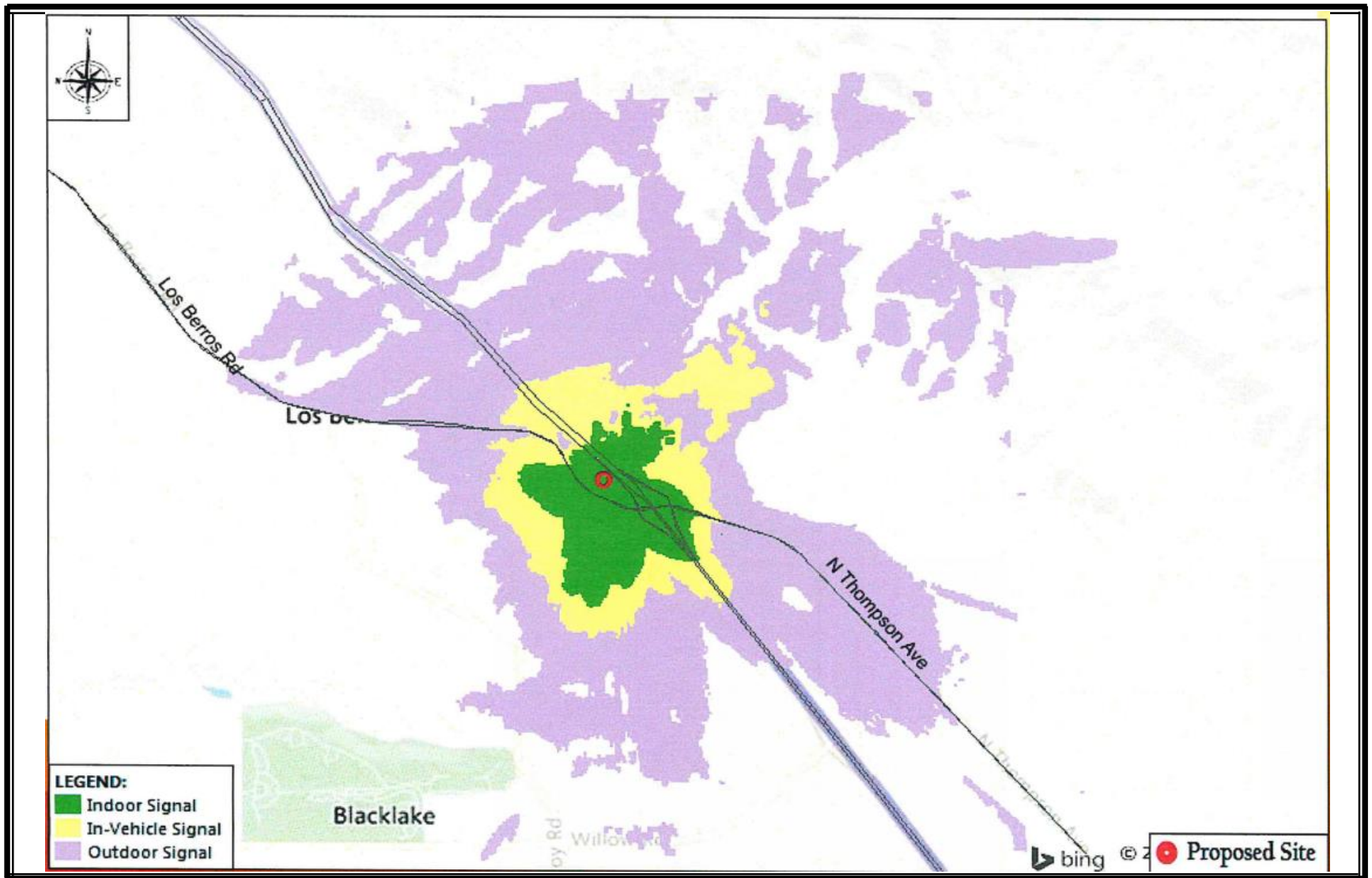
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

**Photo-Simulation
(Looking West from
Highway 101)**



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Propagation Map
(Coverage Before)



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Propagation Map
(Coverage After)