



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

PLN-####  
##/##/2019

**Evenson & AT&T Mobility Conditional Use Permit ED20-202 (DRC2019-00225)**

**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 checked="" 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.

Adam Orta

Prepared by (Print)

Signature

Date

Holly Phipps for

On Behalf of

Steve 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:** Request by **Jerry Ambrose and AT&T Mobility** for a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2019-00225) to allow for the construction and operation of a new wireless broadband communications facility consisting of twelve, eight-foot panel antennas, thirty-six remote radio units, four surge suppressors, two microwave antennas, and associated equipment and hardware mounted on an 155-foot tall faux monopine tree. The project also proposes two equipment cabinets, installation of two, 25-foot tall power poles and a standby diesel generator. The proposed monopine and equipment area would be located within a fenced 650-square-foot lease area. The applicant is requesting the following: modification of ordinance limiting a fence to 6.5 feet to allow an 8-foot tall perimeter block wall. The proposed project would result in the disturbance of approximately 723 square feet (including utility trenching) on a 7-acre parcel. The proposed project is within the Rural Residential land use category and is located at 2780 Black Walnut Drive, south of the City of San Luis Obispo. The site is in the San Luis Bay Inland Sub Area of the San Luis Obispo Planning Area.

**ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S):** 076-101-049

**Latitude:** 35° 14' 07.25" N      **Longitude:** 120° 45' 15.10" W      **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #** 3

### B. Existing Setting

**Plan Area:** San Luis Obispo      **Sub:** San Luis Bay Inland      **Comm:** Rural/None

**Land Use Category:** Residential Rural

**Combining Designation:** None

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**Parcel Size:** 7.23acres

**Topography:** Steeply Slopping

**Vegetation:** Scattered Oaks

**Existing Uses:** Undeveloped

**Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:**

**North:** Residential Rural: Undeveloped

**East:** Residential Rural: Single Family Residence

**South:** Rural Lands: Undeveloped

**West:** Residential Rural: Undeveloped

### 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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

CEQA establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide people of the state "with... enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities" (Public Resources Code Section 21001(b)).

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.

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the State Legislature in 1963 with the intention of protecting and enhancing the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors. There are several officially designated state scenic highways and several eligible state scenic highways within the county. State Route 1 is an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway and All-American Road from the City of San Luis Obispo to the northern San Luis Obispo County boundary. A portion of Nacimiento Lake Drive is

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an Officially Designated County Scenic Highway. Portions of Highway 101, Highway 46, Highway 41, Highway 166, and Highway 33 are also classified as Eligible State Scenic Highways – Not Officially Designated.

The County of San Luis Obispo Inland Land Use Ordinance (LUO) establishes regulations for exterior lighting (LUO 22.10.060), height limitations for each land use category (LUO 22.10.090), scenic highway corridor standards (LUO 22.10.095), and other visual resource protection policies. These regulations are intended to help the County achieve its Strategic Growth Principles of preserving scenic natural beauty and fostering distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place as set forth in the County Land Use Element.

The LUO also maps portions of the Salinas River Highway Corridor, the San Luis Obispo Highway Corridor, and the South County Highway Corridor to comply with County highway corridor design standards. These standards include but are not limited to setbacks from highway rights-of-way, guidelines for development along ridgelines, limitations on graded slopes, protection of landmark features, and standards for building height and color (LUO 22.10.095).

The County of San Luis Obispo LUO defines a Sensitive Resource Area (SRA) combining designation that applies to areas having high environmental quality and special ecological or educational significance. These designated areas are considered visual resources by the County and the LUO establishes specific standards for projects located within these areas. These standards include but are not limited to set back distances from public viewpoints, prohibition of development that silhouettes against the sky, grading slope limitations, set back distances from significant rock outcrops, design standards including height limitations and color palette, and landscaping plan requirements.

In addition to policies set forth in the LUO, the County Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) provides guidelines for the appropriate placement of development so that the natural landscape continues to be the dominant view in rural parts of the county and to ensure the visual character contributes to a robust sense of place in urban areas. The COSE provides a number of goals and policies to protect the visual character and identify of the county while protecting private property rights, such as the identification and protection of community separators (rural-appearing land located between separate, identifiable communities and towns), designation of scenic corridors along public roads and highways throughout the county, retaining existing access to scenic vista points, and setting the standard that new development in urban and village areas shall be consistent with the local character, identify, and sense of place.

The proposed project is within the Rural Residential land use category and is located at 2780 Black Walnut Drive, approximately 7 miles southeast of the City of San Luis Obispo. The proposed project is located in rural, agricultural setting. The surrounding visual character consists of small patches of agricultural fields and single-family residences running through the valley of See Canyon surrounded by hills of woodland and coastal scrub. Surrounding parcels consist of moderate to large agricultural and rural residential lots. The topography of the project site and surrounding area consists of gentle to moderate slopes increasing to steep slopes up the declivities of the canyon. The project area has been previously developed and contains agricultural vineyards and agricultural accessory storage infrastructure including a water tank located on the hillside overlooking the project. Aside from the agricultural vegetation, the project area oak woodlands and coastal sage scrub communities. The project site would utilize an existing driveway accessed off of Black Walnut Road, a public roadway. This access is located just above the intersection of Black Walnut Road and See Canyon Road, another public roadway. The project site would be screened from public roads through topography and the presence of oak woodland and vineyards. No nearby roadways have been officially designed as scenic highways.

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

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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:

Locate, design and screen communications facilities, including towers, antennas, and associated equipment and buildings 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?*

The project site has a rural, and agrarian characteristic but is not officially or informally designated as a scenic vista, visually sensitive area, scenic corridor, or an area of high scenic quality. Sighting of the project from public roadways would be mostly screened by existing topography and vegetation. The proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on visual resources as seen from Black Walnut Road, since it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential and agricultural landscape.

The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from key viewing angles Black Walnut Road, and the photo-simulations demonstrate that the facility will be primarily visible from angles Black Walnut Road. However, since the facility is designed to mimic the appearance of a pine tree, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. The lease site would be surrounded by eight-foot concrete walls. 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 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 not located within the viewshed of a designated or eligible state scenic highway and implementation of the project would not result in damage to scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway. Therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

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- (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 project would not be clearly visible from public views of the area; furthermore, the project is designed to resemble a pine tree which would enable it to blend into the existing visual character of the area. However, the proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on visual resources as it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential landscape. The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from viewing angles on See Canyon Road. The photo simulation demonstrates that the facility is designed to resemble a pine tree, a feature common in the surrounding area and therefore, would be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. The proposed structure is in character with the surrounding residential/agrarian setting because the faux pine tree would blend in with the existing foliage of the surrounding areas.

The project would also be required to construct a block wall to shield ground mounted equipment from view. To reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of a pine tree. 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 project does not propose the use or installation of highly reflective materials that would create a substantial source of glare. The project would contain night lighting from permanent fixtures. This lighting would be adequately obscured from public views by existing topography and vegetation. Therefore, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area and potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

### Conclusion

The project is not located within view of a scenic vista and would not result in a substantial change to scenic resources in the area. The project would be consistent with existing policies and standards in the County LUO and COSE related to the protection of scenic resources.

Although the proposed communications facility is not a use that is inherently compatible with the character of the surrounding rural landscape, the proposed project is a stealth design that would blend with existing natural features of the landscape (particularly, the existing tree canopy in the immediate vicinity). Since the proposed facility would visually blend with the landscape, it would 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 the most realistic appearing artificial pine tree structure, with an organic and asymmetrical form and realistic bark texture and foliage colors. In addition, the applicant is



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required to submit material and color test samples of all visual elements of the monopine. These measures 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 monopine shall be designed and constructed to appear as an organic, non-symmetrical form, with varying branch lengths and shapes and “needle” clusters installed in random, seemingly natural-occurring patterns. The branches lengths shall taper up the monopine “trunk” and the longest (lowest) branches shall begin at an elevation no higher than 15 feet above the base of the trunk. Overall branch count density shall be equivalent to at least three branches per foot. Realistic bark texture shall run the entire length of the tree pole.
  - b. The monopine “needles” shall not be all one color. Varying shades of hues shall be used appropriately to replicate a living plant. Monopine colors shall be field matched with the existing on-site mature pine trees.
  - c. Plans, specifications and estimates shall require the submittal of material and color test samples of all visible elements of the monopine to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval. The plans, specifications and estimates and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the test samples prior to preparation of the final plans.
  - d. Antennas shall be hidden and not extend beyond the ends of the artificial branches. Antennas and associated support arms and hardware shall be textured and or colored to blend with the monopine branches and needles.
- AES-2**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the monopine for the construction permit(s). Plans shall not include generic illustrations of a monopine. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. The construction plans and specifications shall be consistent with the plans approved with the land use permit.
- AES-3**      **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the monopine to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval. The faux pine tree shall be constructed of the highest quality, most durable and realistic appearing faux foliage and branches. The color of the faux foliage shall be field matched with the existing trees on site.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.



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### II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p><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></p>				
(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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The County of San Luis Obispo supports a unique, diverse, and valuable agricultural industry that can be attributed to its Mediterranean climate, fertile soils, and sufficient water supply. Wine grapes are regularly the top agricultural crop in the county. Top value agricultural products in the county also include fruit and nuts, vegetables, field crops, nursery products, and animals. The County of San Luis Obispo Agriculture

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Element includes policies, goals, objectives, and other requirements that apply to lands designated in the Agriculture land use category. In addition to the Agriculture Element, in accordance with Sections 2272 and 2279 of the California Food and Agriculture Code, the County Agricultural Commissioner releases an annual report on the condition, acreage, production, pest management, and value of agricultural products within the county. The most recent annual crop report can be found here:

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Agriculture-Weights-and-Measures/All-Forms-Documents/Information/Crop-Report.aspx>.

The California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and current land use. For environmental review purposes under CEQA, the FMMP categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land are considered 'agricultural land'. Other non-agricultural designations include Urban and Built-up Land, Other Land, and Water.

Based on the FMMP, soils at the project site are within the following FMMP designation(s):

- Prime Farmland if Irrigated
- Not Prime Farmland

Onsite soils include:

- Salinas silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- Lopez very shaly clay loam, 30 to 70 percent slopes

The Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agriculture or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The project site does not include land within the Agriculture land use designation and is not within lands subject to a Williamson Act contract.

According to Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Timberland is defined as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. The project site is located in an area supporting a medium, 34 to 75 percent, cover of Coastal Oak Woodland. The project site does not support any timberland.

### 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?*

The project site does contain land classified as Prime Farmland if Irrigated pursuant to the FMMP. The proposed wireless telecommunications facility would not interfere with existing agricultural operations in the area. The site is also located on a section of the parcel not currently or historically used as farmland due to its surrounding topography and poor soils. Therefore, the project would

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not result in the conversion of Farmland to a non-agricultural use and impacts would be less than significant.

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

The project site does not include land within the Agriculture land use designation or land subject to a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract and *no impacts would occur*.

(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))?*

The project site is located in an area supporting a medium, 34 to 75 percent, cover of Coastal Oak Woodland. The proposed wireless communications facility would be located on a developed parcel used for agriculture and would not result in a zoning conflict or rezoning of forest land. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(d) *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

The proposed wireless communications facility would be located on a developed parcel currently used for vineyard operations. The project would involve the removal and replacement of three pine trees. The project would not convert forest land to non-forest use and impacts would be less than significant.

(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?*

The project would not conflict with existing agricultural uses or convert existing forest land. The project would not increase demand on agricultural water supplies or facilities and would not affect proximate agricultural support facilities. Therefore, the project would not result in changes in the existing environment that could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses or forest land to non-forest uses and impacts would be less than significant.

### 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. Potential impacts to agricultural resources would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation

None required.

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### 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

##### Regulatory Agencies and Standards

San Luis Obispo County is part of the South Central Coast Air Basin, (SCCAB) which also includes Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Air quality within the SCCAB is regulated by several jurisdictions including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Air Resources Board (ARB), and the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). Each of these jurisdictions develops rules, regulations, and policies to attain the goals or directives imposed upon them through legislation. The California ARB is the agency responsible for coordination and oversight of state and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) of 1988. The State Department of Public Health established California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) in 1962 to define the maximum amount of a pollutant (averaged over a specified period of time) that can be present without any harmful effects on people or the environment. The California ARB adopted the CAAQS developed by the Department of Public Health in 1969, which had established CAAQS for 10 criteria pollutants: particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfate, carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), visibility reducing particles, lead (Pb), hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), and vinyl chloride.

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) later required the U.S. EPA to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment, and also set deadlines for their attainment. The U.S. EPA has established NAAQS for six criteria pollutants (all of which are also regulated by CAAQS): CO, lead, NO<sub>2</sub>, ozone, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and SO<sub>2</sub>.

California law continues to mandate compliance with CAAQS, which are often more stringent than national standards. However, California law does not require that CAAQS be met by specified dates as is the case with NAAQS. Rather, it requires incremental progress toward attainment. The SLOAPCD is the agency

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primarily responsible for ensuring that NAAQS and CAAQS are not exceeded and that air quality conditions within the county are maintained.

### *SLOAPCD Thresholds*

The SLOAPCD has developed and updated their CEQA Air Quality Handbook (most recently updated with a November 2017 Clarification Memorandum) to help local agencies evaluate project specific impacts and determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result.

The APCD has established thresholds for both short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions. 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. Combustion emissions, such as nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), reactive organic gases (ROG), greenhouse gases (GHG) and diesel particulate matter (DPM), are most significant when using large, diesel-fueled scrapers, loaders, bulldozers, haul trucks, compressors, generators and other heavy equipment. SLOAPCD has established thresholds of significance for each of these contaminants.

Earthwork quantities for the project are expected to include minimal trenching work. The total area of grading or removal of groundcover is expected to be approximately 700 square feet.

Operational impacts are focused primarily on the indirect emissions (i.e., motor vehicles) associated with residential, commercial and industrial development. Certain types of project can also include components that generate direct emissions, such as power plants, gasoline stations, dry cleaners, and refineries (source emissions).

General screening criteria is used by the SLOAPCD to determine the type and scope of air quality assessment required for a particular project (Table 1-1 in the APCD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook). These criteria are based on project size in an urban setting and are designed to identify those projects with the potential to exceed the APCD's significance thresholds. A more refined analysis of air quality impacts specific to a given project is necessary for projects that exceed the screening criteria below or are within ten percent (10%) of exceeding the screening criteria.

### *Air Quality Monitoring*

The county's air quality is measured by a total of 10 ambient air quality monitoring stations, and pollutant levels are measured continuously and averaged each hour, 24 hours a day. The significance of a given pollutant can be evaluated by comparing its atmospheric concentration to state and federal air quality standards. These standards represent allowable atmospheric containment concentrations at which the public health and welfare are protected, and include a factor of safety. The SLOAPCD prepares an Annual Air Quality Report detailing information on air quality monitoring and pollutant trends in the county. The most recent Annual Air Quality Report can be found here: <https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/2017aqrt-FINAL2.pdf>.

In the county of San Luis Obispo, ozone and fine particulates (particulate matter of 10 microns in diameter or smaller; PM<sub>10</sub>) are the pollutants of main concern, since exceedances of state health-based standards for these pollutants are experienced in some areas of the county. Under federal standards, the county has non-attainment status for ozone in eastern San Luis Obispo County.

### *San Luis Obispo County Clean Air Plan*

The SLOAPCD's San Luis Obispo County 2001 Clean Air Plan (CAP) is a comprehensive planning document intended to evaluate long-term emissions and cumulative effects and provide guidance to the SLOAPCD and

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other local agencies on how to attain and maintain the state standards for ozone and PM<sub>10</sub>. The CAP presents a detailed description of the sources and pollutants which impact the jurisdiction's attainment of state standards, future air quality impacts to be expected under current growth trends, and an appropriate control strategy for reducing ozone precursor emissions, thereby improving air quality.

### *Naturally Occurring Asbestos*

Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) is identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Serpentine and other ultramafic rocks are fairly common throughout the county and may contain NOA. If these areas are disturbed during construction, NOA-containing particles can be released into the air and have an adverse impact on local air quality and human health.

The project site is not within an area identified as having the potential for Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA).

### *Sensitive Receptors*

Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, people with asthma or other respiratory illnesses, 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 proposed project is within close proximity to sensitive receptors. Rural residences occur on adjacent parcels in all directions from the project. The closest receptors are to the south, northwest, east, and northeast of the project site at a distance of approximately 555, 590, 820, and 885 feet respectively.

### *Discussion*

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

The Air Pollution Control District (APCD) has developed the CEQA Air Quality Handbook 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 APCD).

As proposed, the project will result in the disturbance of approximately 723 square feet. This will result in the creation of construction dust, as well as short- and long-term vehicle emissions. The project will be moving less than 1,200 cubic yards/day of material and will disturb less than four acres of area, and therefore will be below the general thresholds triggering construction-related mitigation. From an operational standpoint, based on Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012), the project will result in less than 10 lbs/day of pollutants, which is below thresholds warranting any mitigation. Additionally, the project is consistent with the general level of development anticipated and projected in the Clean Air Plan and would therefore not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality plan.

#### *(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?*

### *Construction Impacts*



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Based on the project description, the project will be moving less than 1,200 cubic yards/day of material and will result in a total area of disturbance of 723 square feet. Based on the volume of proposed grading, area of project site disturbance, and the estimated duration of the construction period, the project would not result in the emission of criteria pollutants that would exceed construction-related thresholds established by the SLOAPCD. Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is non-attainment, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

### *Operational Impacts*

The SLOAPCD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook provides operational screening criteria to identify projects with the potential to exceed APCD operational significance thresholds (refer to Table 1-1 of the CEQA Handbook). Based on Table 1-1 of the CEQA Handbook, the project does not propose a use that would have the potential to result in operational emissions that would exceed APCD thresholds. The project would not generate substantial new long-term traffic trips or vehicle emissions and does not propose construction of new direct (source) emissions. Therefore, potential operational emissions would be *less than significant*.

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

The project is located in close proximity (within one quarter mile) to sensitive receptors in the form of residences. Residences may be occupied by sensitive receptors who could be exposed to diesel particulates and fugitive dust from construction activities. As described above in response to (b), the project would not generate significant construction-related or operational emissions and would, therefore, not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Operational emissions would not substantially increase and implementation of standard LUO standards for dust control and compliance with existing regulations that prohibit excessive idling by diesel vehicles would reduce potential construction related emissions. Therefore, the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

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.

Construction could generate odors from heavy diesel machinery, equipment, and/or materials. The generation of odors during the construction period would be temporary, would be consistent with odors commonly associated with construction, and would dissipate within a short distance from the active work area. No long-term operational odors would be generated by the project. Therefore, potential odor-related impacts would be *less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

The project would be consistent with the SLOAPCD's Clean Air Plan and thresholds for construction-related and operational emissions. The project would not result in cumulatively considerable emissions of any criteria pollutant for which the County is in non-attainment and would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or result in other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of



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people. Therefore, potential impacts to air quality would be less than significant and 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.

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### 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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

#### Sensitive Resource Area Designations

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The County of San Luis Obispo Land Use Ordinance (LUO) Sensitive Resource Area (SRA) combining designation applies to areas of the county with special environmental qualities, or areas containing unique or sensitive endangered vegetation or habitat resources. The combining designation standards established in the LUO require that proposed uses be designed with consideration of the identified sensitive resources and the need for their protection.

### *Federal and State Endangered Species Acts*

The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA) provides legislation to protect federally listed plant and animal species. The California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA) ensures legal protection for plants listed as rare or endangered, and wildlife species formally listed as endangered or threatened, and also maintains a list of California Species of Special Concern (SSC). SSC status is assigned to species that have limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. Under state law, the CDFW has the authority to review projects for their potential to impact special-status species and their habitats.

### *Migratory Bird Treaty Act*

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) protects all migratory birds, including their eggs, nests, and feathers. The MBTA was originally drafted to put an end to the commercial trade in bird feathers, popular in the latter part of the 1800s. The MBTA is enforced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and potential impacts to species protected under the MBTA are evaluated by the USFWS in consultation with other federal agencies and are required to be evaluated under CEQA.

### *Oak Woodland Ordinance*

The County of San Luis Obispo Oak Woodland Ordinance was adopted in April 2017 to regulate the clear-cutting of oak woodlands. This ordinance applies to sites located outside of Urban or Village areas within the inland portions of the county (not within the Coastal Zone). “Clear-cutting” is defined as the removal of one acre or more of contiguous trees within an oak woodland from a site or portion of a site for any reason, including harvesting of wood, or to enable the conversion of land to other land uses. “Oak woodland” includes the following species: Blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), valley oak (*Quercus labata*), and California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*). The ordinance applies to clear-cutting of oak woodland only and does not apply to the removal of other species of trees, individual oak trees (except for Heritage Oaks), or the thinning, tree trimming, or removal of oak woodland trees that are diseased, dead, or creating a hazardous condition. Heritage oaks are any individual oak species, as defined in the Oak Woodland Ordinance, of 48 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) or greater, separated from all Stands and Oak Woodlands by at least 500 feet. Minor Use Permit approval is required to remove any Heritage Oak.

The project site does not support oak woodland or Heritage Oaks.

### *Clean Water Act and State Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. These waters include wetland and non-wetland water bodies that meet specific criteria. USACE jurisdiction regulates almost all work in, over, and under waters listed as “navigable waters of the U.S.” that results in a discharge of dredged or fill material within USACE regulatory jurisdiction, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Under Section 404, USACE regulates traditional navigable waters, wetlands adjacent to traditional navigable waters, relatively permanent non-navigable tributaries that have

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a continuous flow at least seasonally (typically 3 months), and wetlands that directly abut relatively permanent tributaries.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) regulate discharges of fill and dredged material in California, under Section 401 of the CWA and the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, through the State Water Quality Certification Program. State Water Quality Certification is necessary for all projects that require a USACE permit, or fall under other federal jurisdiction, and have the potential to impact waters of the State. Based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, the project site does not support wetlands, riparian or deep-water habitats (USFWS 2019).

### *Conservation and Open Space Element*

The intent of the goals, policies, and implementation strategies in the COSE is to identify and protect biological resources that are a critical component of the county's environmental, social, and economic well-being. Biological resources include major ecosystems; threatened, rare, and endangered species and their habitats; native trees and vegetation; creeks and riparian areas; wetlands; fisheries; and marine resources. Individual species, habitat areas, ecosystems and migration patterns must be considered together in order to sustain biological resources. The COSE identifies Critical Habitat areas for sensitive species including California condor, California red legged frog, vernal pool fairy shrimp, La Graciosa thistle, Morro Bay kangaroo rat, Morro shoulderband snail, tiger salamander, and western snowy plover. The COSE also identifies features of particular importance to wildlife for movement corridors such as riparian corridors, shorelines of the coast and bay, and ridgelines.

The project site is not within any designated sensitive resource areas, high priority conservation areas, or undeveloped natural lands subjected to any local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The project site is within a storage area of a vineyard property and that has been previously disturbed. The project site is located approximately 150 feet to the east of See Canyon Creek. Surrounding vegetation consists of coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands. The project will result in the removal of 3 pine trees.

The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was queried for sensitive species within 3 miles of the proposed project. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) identified 32 species as having been previously reported within 3 miles of the project site (see attached General Biological Evaluation, Ace Environmental, LLC, August 2019; and Focused Protocol Survey for the California red-legged frog, August 2019). The assessment recommended mitigation measures to encourage reduce impacts for the proposed improvements. These recommended measures have been added to the project's mitigation measures, as summarized in Exhibit B.

### *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?*

A General Biological Evaluation was carried out by Ace Environmental, LLC in August 2019 along with a Focused Protocol Survey for the California red-legged frog in August 2019. The evaluation found the potential for six special status species to occur on or immediately adjacent to the site. Based on existing site conditions and lack of suitable habitat, and the small project footprint, potential impacts to the four sensitive plant species: dwarf soap root, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and

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mesa horkelia, were determined to be less than significant. To assure avoidance of potential impacts future impacts a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a County approved biologist with approval from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to relocate these species out of harm's way. Therefore potential impacts would be *less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation (BIO-4)*.

The potential for California red-legged frogs to occur in the immediate project vicinity was reviewed through focused surveys. The results of these surveys, taken over the course of the frog's breeding season, concluded that the species is absent in the area; therefore, the project will not impact California red-legged frogs. However, to ensure avoidance and potential future impacts the applicant shall conduct pre-construction surveys with provisions for relocation. Mitigation is proposed to ensure potential impacts would be *less than significant (BIO-3)*. The Western Pond Turtle was reported within the See Canyon Creek 0.5 miles downstream of the project site. The project would occur within existing habitat off the Western Pond Turtle. The project would be conditioned to comply with mitigation to avoid any potential impacts to this special status species. Therefore potential impacts would be *less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation (BIO-2)*.

Therefore, potential impacts to special status species would be less than significant with mitigation.

- (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?*

There are no mapped blue line creeks and no riparian vegetation or other sensitive natural communities within the proposed areas of disturbance. See Canyon Creek is located 150 feet to the west of the project site. The project is not expected to directly impact this riparian habitat and Best Management Practices during construction would avoid potential indirect impacts. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities and *impacts would 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?*

The project site does not support state or federal wetlands or other jurisdictional areas. As previously stated, the project site is in the vicinity of See Canyon Creek; however, indirect impacts would be avoided. Therefore, the project would not result in an adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands and *impacts would 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?*

Based on the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project, the project site is not located in an identified Essential Connectivity Area. Special status nesting bird species have the potential to intermittently occur in the project vicinity. Indirect impacts related to the project's operational noise and lighting may interfere with these species should they occur. Mitigation to avoid impacting nesting birds would reduce impacts to an acceptable level.

Development could potentially affect nesting birds that may be present seasonally in large oak and willow trees which are close to construction activities. Preconstruction surveys will be required to

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ensure if any active nest sites of protected bird species are onsite, appropriate buffers are enforced to avoid direct impacts to nests, eggs, and/or young. Therefore potential impacts would be *less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation (BIO-1)*.

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

The project would not adversely affect sensitive habitats or resources identified in the COSE or native tree species protected under the County Oak Woodland Ordinance.

The project does not include the removal of any oak trees. The plans indicate the removal and replacement of three pine trees. The project is not located within an SRA designated for protection of unique or sensitive endangered vegetation or habitat resources. The proposed area of disturbance does not support sensitive resources that are protected by local policies and plans. Therefore, the project would not result in a conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources and *impacts would be less than significant*.

- (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?*

The project is not located within an area under an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The project is not within areas identified as critical habitat or within the County's San Joaquin Kit Fox standard mitigation ratio area (County of San Luis Obispo 2007). Therefore, the project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted plan and *no impacts would occur*.

### Conclusion

Mitigation Measures BIO-1 address site related impacts and mitigation to nesting birds. BIO-2 will ensure avoidance and potential future impacts Western Pond Turtle will be less than significant. With the incorporation of the proposed mitigation measures, the project's impacts to biological resources would be reduced to less than significant levels.

### Mitigation

**BIO-1 Nesting Birds** – The adjacent woodland, riparian and scrub habitats are very likely be used by nesting birds during the springtime. Due to the potential for birds to nest in the vicinity of this project site, the following specific avoidance measures shall be implemented:

Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permits, complete preconstruction nesting bird survey and submit a report that documents the findings. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting birds within 500 feet of project impact areas, within two weeks before the initiation of construction. During this survey, the qualified biologist shall inspect the impact and buffer areas, and any nests identified will be monitored to determine if they are active. If no active nests are found, construction may proceed. If an active nest is found within 50 feet (500 feet for raptors) of the construction area, the biologist, in consultation with the County and CDFW as needed, shall determine the extent of an appropriate avoidance buffer to be established around the nest. The buffer will be delineated with flagging, and no work shall take place within the buffer area until the young have left the nest, as determined by the qualified biologist. Since golden eagles have been observed in the area, the survey shall assess offsite nesting habitat, to determine if project activities could affect this species' nesting activities.

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**BIO-2 Western Pond Turtle** - Due to the potential for Western Pond Turtle to occur within the project footprint, the following specific avoidance measures shall be implemented:

Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permits, preconstruction surveys for Western Pond Turtle shall be implemented. The survey shall be conducted on foot by a qualified biologist with approval from California Department of Fish and Wildlife to relocate these species out of harm's way. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If these species are found to be present in the work areas, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. Western pond turtle shall be captured by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- b. Construction monitoring shall be required for all new ground-breaking activities located within the mapped potential habitat. Construction monitors shall capture and relocate said species as specified above.
- c. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days of western pond turtle relocation, or as directed by CDFW.
- d. Prior to issuance of grading and/or construction permit and within 30 days prior to initiation of site disturbance and/or construction, all personnel associated with the project shall attend a worker education training program regarding protected and special status species.
- e. No work will occur during any rain events, or within 24 hours after a rain event to minimize impacts to western pond turtles. A rain event is considered any precipitation forecast or resulting in 0.10 inches of rain.

**BIO – 3 CA Red-legged frogs** - The potential for California red-legged frogs to occur in the immediate project vicinity was reviewed through focused surveys. The results of these surveys, taken over the course of the frog's breeding season, concluded that the species is absent in the area.

Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permit the following measures shall be implemented in order to avoid and/or reduce the potential for impacts to California red-legged frogs:

- a. A qualified biologist will perform two surveys occurring the night before and morning of construction. If any life stages of California red-legged frogs are observed within the proposed work area, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be contacted for guidance as to how to proceed. Further, if any California red-legged frogs are observed within the proposed work area, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) will be contacted for guidance as to how to proceed. No work shall occur until approved by the County and the USFWS and/or CDFG.
- b. A qualified biologist shall be present during any clearing or grading work in the project area. The biologist or their designee shall also check under any equipment and stored construction supplies left in the work area overnight prior to the start of construction each day.

**BIO – 4 Plant Species** - Of the list of 32 sensitive species having been reported in the area, six (6) have a potential to occur on or immediately adjacent to the site. Four of these are plants: dwarf soap root, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia.



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Prior to issuance of grading and/or construction permits to assure avoidance of potential impacts future impacts to dwarf soaproot, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a County approved biologist with approval from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to relocate these species out of harm's way. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If these species are found to be present in the work areas, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. A dwarf soaproot, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia survey shall be collected by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- b. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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

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, and immigrant settlers.

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.

The County of San Luis Obispo LUO Historic Site (H) combining designation is applied to areas of the county to recognize the importance of archeological and historic sites and/or structures important to local, state, or national history. Standards are included regarding minimum parcel size and permit processing requirements for parcels with an established structure and Historic Site combining designation. For example, all new structures and uses within an H combining designation require Minor Use Permit approval, and applications for such projects are required to include a description of measures proposed to protect the historic resource identified by the Land Use Element (LUO 22.14.080).

San Luis Obispo County was historically occupied by two Native American tribes: the northernmost subdivision of the Chumash, the Obispeño (after Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa), and the Salinan. However, the precise location of the boundary between the Chumashan-speaking Obispeño Chumash and their northern neighbors, the Hokan-speaking Playanos Salinan, is not known, as those boundaries may have changed over time.

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The COSE identifies and maps anticipated culturally sensitive areas and historic resources within the county and establishes goals, policies, and implementation strategies to identify and protect areas, sites, and buildings having architectural, historical, Native American, or cultural significance. Based on the COSE, the project is not located in a designated Archaeological Sensitive Area or Historic Site.

### Discussion

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

The project site does not contain, nor is it located near, any historic resources identified in the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historic Resources. The project site does not contain a site under the Historic Site (H) combining designation and does not contain other structures of historic age (50 years or older) that could be potentially significant as a historical resource. Therefore, the project would not result in an adverse change in the significance of a historical resources and *no impacts would occur*.

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

Based on a review of past archaeological surveys conducted in the project vicinity, there are no previously identified archaeological resources within 0.5 mile of the project site. In addition, the project site is not located in an area that would be considered culturally sensitive due to lack of physical features typically associated with prehistoric occupation. The project does not propose substantial earthmoving activities that would have the potential to disturb subsurface archaeological resources and has been previously disturbed.

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 known low 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 cemetery, San Luis Cemetery, is located 4 miles to the east of the project site. Based on existing conditions, buried human remains are not expected to be present in the site area. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and LUO 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources) require that no further disturbances shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. With adherence to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and County LUO, impacts related to the unanticipated disturbance of

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archaeological resources and human remains would be reduced to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts would 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.

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.

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### 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 2017).

The County COSE 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. The COSE 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.

In 2010, the EWP established a 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

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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).

The project is located in the County's Renewable Energy Area Combining Designation. The Renewable Energy (RE) Area Combining Designation is used to encourage and support the development of local renewable energy resources, conserving energy resources, and decreasing reliance on environmentally costly energy sources.

### 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 project would not result in a significant energy demand during short-term construction or long-term operations and would not conflict with state or local renewable energy or energy efficiency plans. Therefore, potential impacts related to energy would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation

None required.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.

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### 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:				
(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 type="checkbox"/>



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	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 Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) is a California state law that was developed to regulate development near active faults and mitigate the surface fault rupture potential and other hazards. The Alquist-Priolo Act identifies active earthquake fault zones and restricts the construction of habitable structures over known active or potentially active faults. San Luis Obispo County is located in a geologically complex and seismically active region. The Safety Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan identifies three active faults that traverse through the County and that are currently zoned under the Alquist-Priolo Act: the San Andreas, the Hosgri-San Simeon, and the Los Osos. The San Andreas Fault zone is located along the eastern border of San Luis Obispo County and has a length of over 600 miles. The Hosgri-San Simeon fault system generally consists of two fault zones: the Hosgri fault zone that is mapped off of the San Luis Obispo County coast; and the San Simeon fault zone, which appears to be associated with the Hosgri, and comes onshore near San Simeon Point. Lastly, the Los Osos Fault zone has been mapped generally in an east/west orientation along the northern flank of the Irish Hills.

The County Safety Element also identifies 17 other faults that are considered potentially active or have uncertain fault activity in the County. The Safety Element establishes policies that require new development to be located away from active and potentially active faults. The element also requires that the County enforce applicable building codes relating to seismic design of structures and require design professionals to evaluate the potential for liquefaction or seismic settlement to impact structures in accordance with the Uniform Building Code. There are no active faults within 1 mile of the project.

Groundshaking refers to the motion that occurs in response to local and regional earthquakes. Seismic groundshaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition. Groundshaking can endanger life and safety due to damage or collapse of structures or lifeline facilities. The California Building Code includes requirements that structures be designed to resist a certain minimum seismic force resulting from ground motion.

Liquefaction is the sudden loss of soil strength due to a rapid increase in soil pore water pressures resulting from groundshaking during an earthquake. Liquefaction potential increases with earthquake magnitude and groundshaking duration. Low-lying areas adjacent to creeks, rivers, beaches, and estuaries underlain by unconsolidated alluvial soil are most likely to be vulnerable to liquefaction. The CBC requires the assessment of liquefaction in the design of all structures. Per the County's Land Use View Mapping Application, the project is located in an area with low potential for liquefaction to occur.

Landslides and slope instability can occur as a result of wet weather, weak soils, improper grading, improper drainage, steep slopes, adverse geologic structure, earthquakes, or a combination of these factors. Despite current codes and policies that discourage development in areas of known landslide activity or high risk of landslide, there is a considerable amount of development that is impacted by landslide activity in the County each year. The County Safety Element identifies several policies to reduce risk from landslides and slope instability. These policies include the requirement for slope stability evaluations for development in areas of

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moderate or high landslide risk, and restrictions on new development in areas of known landslide activity unless development plans indicate that the hazard can be reduced to a less than significant level prior to beginning development. Per the County's Land Use View Mapping Application, the project is located in an area with high potential for landslides.

Shrink/swell potential is the extent to which the soil shrinks as it dries out or swells when it gets wet. Extent of shrinking and swelling is influenced by the amount and kind of clay in the soil. Shrinking and swelling of soils can cause damage to building foundations, roads and other structures. A high shrink/swell potential indicates a hazard to maintenance of structures built in, on, or with material having this rating. Moderate and low ratings lessen the hazard accordingly. *Reference the Agricultural Resources section for soil descriptions, state the shrink swell potential and erodibility ratings of soils present within the project site.*

The County LUO identifies a Geologic Study Area (GSA) combining designation for areas where geologic and soil conditions could present new developments and/or their occupants with potential hazards to life and property. All land use permit applicants located within a GSA are required to include a report prepared by a certified engineering geologist and/or registered civil/soils engineer as appropriate, with the exception of construction of one single-story single family residence, agricultural uses not involving a building, agricultural accessory structures, and alterations or additions to any structure which does not exceed 50 percent of the assessed value of the structure. In addition, all uses within a GSA are subject to special standards regarding grading and distance from an active fault within an Earthquake Fault Zone (LUO 22.14.070).

Paleontological resources are fossilized remains of ancient environments, including fossilized bone, shell, and plant parts; impressions of plant, insect, or animal parts preserved in stone; and preserved tracks of insects and animals. Paleontological resources are considered nonrenewable resources under state and federal law. Paleontological sensitivity is defined as the potential for a geologic unit to produce scientifically significant fossils, as determined by rock type, past history of the rock unit in producing fossil materials, and fossil sites that have been recorded in the unit. Paleontological resources are generally found below ground surface in sedimentary rock units. The boundaries of the sedimentary rock unit is used to define the limits of paleontological sensitivity in a given region.

In the county, the Coastal Franciscan domain generally lies along the mountains and hills associated with the Santa Lucia Range. Fossils recorded from the Coastal Franciscan formation include trace fossils (preserved tracks or other signs of the behaviors of animals), mollusks, and marine reptiles. Nonmarine or continental deposits are more likely to contain vertebrate fossil sites. Occasionally vertebrate marine fossils such as whale, porpoise, seal, or sea lion can be found in marine rock units such as the Miocene Monterey Formation and the Pliocene Sisquoc Formations known to occur throughout Central and Southern California. Vertebrate fossils of continental material are usually rare, sporadic, and localized.

The County COSE identifies a policy for the protection of paleontological resources from the effects of development by avoiding disturbance where feasible. Where substantial subsurface disturbance is proposed in paleontologically sensitive units, Implementation Strategy CR 4.5.1 (Paleontological Studies) requires a paleontological resource assessment and mitigation plan be prepared, to identify the extent and potential significance of resources that may exist within the proposed development and provide mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources.

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### 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.*

Based on the California Department of Conservation Earthquake Zone Map, the project site is not located within a mapped Alquist-Priolo earthquake hazard zone (CGS 2018). Based on the County Safety Element Fault Hazards Map, the project site is not located within 1 mile of a known active or potentially active fault. Therefore, the project would not have the potential to result in substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault and impacts would be *less than significant*.

(a-ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

Based on the County Safety Element Fault Hazards Map, the project site is not located within 1 mile of a known active or potentially active fault. However, San Luis Obispo County is located in a seismically active region and there is always a potential for seismic ground shaking. The project would be required to comply with the California Building Code (CBC) and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and techniques. The project does not include unique components that would be particularly sensitive to seismic ground shaking or result in an increased risk of injury or damage as a result of ground shaking. Implementation of the project would not expose people or structures to significant increased risks associated with seismic ground shaking; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

(a-iii) *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*

Based on the County Safety Element Liquefaction Hazards Map, the project site is located in an area with low potential for liquefaction. In addition, the project would be required to comply with CBC seismic requirements to address the site's potential for seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction; therefore, the potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

(a-iv) *Landslides?*

Based on the County Safety Element Landslide Hazards Map is located in an area with high potential for landslide risk due to the presence of steep slopes. The project would not be open to the public and would be unmanned minimizing potential adverse safety effects. Therefore, the project would not create significant adverse effects associated with 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 900 square-feet and does not include substantial vegetation removal or grading. Preparation and approval of an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan is required for all construction and grading projects (LUO 22.52.120) to minimize potential impacts related to erosion, sedimentation, and siltation. The plan would be prepared by a civil engineer to address both temporary and long-term sedimentation and erosion

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impacts. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce potential impacts related to soil erosion and loss of topsoil to *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 located in an area with slopes susceptible to local failure or landslide.

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 and the project is not located within the GSA combining designation. 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?*

Based on the Soil Survey of San Luis Obispo County and Web Soil Survey, the project site is not located within an area known to contain expansive soils as defined in the Uniform Building Code. In addition, all future development would be required to comply with the most recent CBC requirements, which have been developed to properly safeguard structures and occupants from land stability hazards, such as expansive soils. Therefore, potential impacts related to expansive soil would be *less than significant*.

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

The proposed project does not propose the installation of new septic tanks or other on-site wastewater disposal systems; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

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

No known paleontological resources are known to exist in the project area and the project site does not contain any unique geologic features. The project does not include substantial grading or earthwork that would disturb the underlying geologic formation in which paleontological resources may occur. Therefore, potential impacts on paleontological resources would be *less than significant*.

### Conclusion

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.

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### *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.

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### 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

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere, and are different from the criteria pollutants discussed in Section III, Air Quality, above. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and fluorinated gases. These are most commonly emitted through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), agricultural practices, decay of organic waste in landfills, and a variety of other chemical reactions and industrial processes (e.g., the manufacturing of cement).

Carbon dioxide is the most abundant GHG and is estimated to represent approximately 80-90% of the principal GHGs that are currently affecting the earth's climate. According to the ARB, transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHGs in the state.

In March 2012, the SLOAPCD approved thresholds for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission impacts, and these thresholds have been incorporated into the CEQA Air Quality Handbook. The Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 Metric Tons CO<sub>2</sub>/year (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr) is the most applicable GHG threshold for most projects. Table 1-1 in the APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook provides a list of general land uses and the estimated sizes or capacity of those uses expected to exceed the GHG Bight Line Threshold of 1,150 Metric Tons of carbon dioxide per year (MT CO<sub>2</sub>/yr). Projects that exceed the criteria or are within ten percent of exceeding the criteria presented in Table 1-1 are required to conduct a more detailed analysis of air quality impacts.

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.

In October 2008, ARB published its *Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan*, which is the State's plan to achieve GHG reductions in California required by Assembly Bill (AB) 32. This initial Scoping Plan contained the main strategies to be implemented in order to achieve the target emission levels identified in AB 32. The Scoping Plan included ARB-recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of the state's GHG inventory. The largest proposed GHG reduction recommendations were associated with improving emissions standards for light-duty vehicles, implementing the Low Carbon Fuel Standard program, implementation of

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energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances, the widespread development of combined heat and power systems, and developing a renewable portfolio standard for electricity production.

Senate Bill (SB) 32 and Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 extended the State's GHG reduction goals and require ARB to regulate sources of GHGs to meet a state goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The initial Scoping Plan was first approved by ARB on December 11, 2008 and is updated every five years. The first update of the Scoping Plan was approved by the ARB on May 22, 2014, which looked past 2020 to set mid-term goals (2030-2035) toward reaching the 2050 goals. The most recent update released by ARB is the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, which was released in November 2017. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan incorporates strategies for achieving the 2030 GHG-reduction target established in SB 32 and EO S-3-05.

The County Energy Wise Plan (EWP; 2011) identifies ways in which the community and County government can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their various sources. Looking at the four key sectors of energy, waste, transportation, and land use, the EWP incorporates best practices to provide a blueprint for achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the unincorporated towns and rural areas of San Luis Obispo County by 15% below the baseline year of 2006 by the year 2020. The EWP includes an Implementation Program that provides a strategy for actions with specific measures and steps to achieve the identified GHG reduction targets including, but not limited to, the following:

- Encourage new development to exceed minimum Cal Green requirements;
- Require a minimum of 75% of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris generated on site to be recycled or salvaged;
- Continue to implement strategic growth strategies that direct the county's future growth into existing communities and to provide complete services to meet local needs;
- Continue to increase the amount of affordable housing in the County, allowing lower-income families to live closer to jobs and activity centers, and providing residents with greater access to transit and alternative modes of transportation;
- Reduce potable water use by 20% in all newly constructed buildings by using the performance methods provided in the California Green Building Code;
- Require use of energy-efficient equipment in all new development;
- Minimize the use of dark materials on roofs by requiring roofs to achieve a minimum solar reflectivity index of 10 for high-slope roofs and 68 for low-slope roofs; and
- Use light-colored aggregate in new road construction and repaving projects adjacent to existing cities.

In 2016 the County published the EnergyWise Plan 2016 Update, which describes the progress made toward implementing measures in the 2011 EWP, overall trends in energy use and emissions since the baseline year of the inventory (2006), and the addition of implementation measures intended to provide a greater understanding of the County's emissions status.



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### Discussion

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

Based on the nature of the proposed project and Table 1-1 of the SLOAPCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook, the project would generate less than the SLOAPCD Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 metric tons of GHG emissions. The project's construction-related and operational GHG emissions and energy demands would be minimal. Therefore, the project's potential direct and cumulative GHG emissions would be less than significant and less than a cumulatively considerable contribution to regional GHG emissions.

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 ARB (or other regulatory agencies) and will be regulated by standards implemented by the ARB, the federal government, or other regulatory agencies. 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. As a result, even the emissions that result from projects that produce fewer emissions than the threshold will be subject to emission reductions. Therefore, potential impacts associated with the generation of greenhouse gas emissions would be *less than significant*.

- (b) *Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

The proposed project would be required to comply with existing state regulations, which include increased energy conservation measures, reduced potable water use, increased waste diversion, and other actions adopted to achieve the overall GHG emissions reduction goals identified in SB 32 and EO S-3-05. The project would not conflict with the control measures identified in the CAP, EWP, or other state and local regulations related to GHG emissions and renewable energy. The project would be generally consistent with the property's existing land use and would be designed to comply with the California Green Building Code standards. Therefore, the project would be consistent with applicable plans and programs designed to reduce GHG emissions and potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

### Conclusion

The project would not generate significant GHG emissions above existing levels and would not exceed any applicable GHG thresholds, contribute considerably to cumulatively significant GHG emissions, or conflict with plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, potential impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation

None required.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.

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### 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"/>
(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"/>

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### Setting

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code section 65962.5 requires the California EPA to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. The California Department of Toxic Substance Control's (DTSC's) EnviroStor database tracks DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination, such as federal superfund sites, state response sites, voluntary cleanup sites, school cleanup sites, school investigation sites, and military evaluation sites. The State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB's) GeoTracker database contains records for sites that impact, or have the potential to impact, water in California, such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites, Department of Defense sites, and Cleanup Program Sites. The remaining data regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the "Cortese List" requirements can be located on the CalEPA website: <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>. The project site is not located within close proximity to any site included on the Cortese List, EnviroStor database, or GeoTracker database.

The California Health and Safety Code provides regulations pertaining to the abatement of fire related hazards and requires that local jurisdictions enforce the California Building Code, which provides standards for fire resistive building and roofing materials, and other fire-related construction methods. The County Safety Element provides a Fire Hazard Zones Map that indicates unincorporated areas in the County within moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones. The project is located within a very high fire hazard severity zone, and, based on the County's response time map, it will take approximately 10-15 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety. For more information about fire-related hazards and risk assessment, see Section XX. Wildfire.

The County also has adopted general emergency plans for multiple potential natural disasters, including the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, County Emergency Operations Plan, Earthquake Plan, Dam and Levee Failure Plan, Hazardous Materials Response Plan, County Recovery Plan, and the Tsunami Response Plan.

### 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 transport, use or disposal of hazardous substances. Any commonly-used hazardous substances within the project site (e.g., cleaners, solvents, oils, paints, etc.) would be transported, stored, and used according to regulatory requirements and existing procedures for the handling of hazardous materials. No impacts associated with the routine transport of hazardous materials would occur.

- (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?*

The project does not propose the handling or use of hazardous materials or volatile substances that would result in a significant risk of upset or accidental release conditions. 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. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety

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laws for the handling of hazardous materials, including response and clean-up requirements for any minor spills. Therefore, potential 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 project site is not located within 3 miles of an existing or proposed school facility; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

- (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?*

Based on a search of the California Department of Toxic Substance Control's EnviroStar database, the State Water Resources Control Board's Geotracker database, and CalEPA's Cortese List website, there are no hazardous waste cleanup sites within the project site. Therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

- (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 site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

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

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant temporary or permanent impact on any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. No breaks in utility service or road closures would occur as a result of project implementation. Any construction-related detours would include proper signage and notification and would be short-term and limited in nature and duration. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

- (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. The project would not be accessible to the public. The project would be required to comply with all applicable fire safety rules and regulations including the California Fire Code and Public Resources Code prior to issuance of building permits; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### *Conclusion*

The project does not propose the routine transport, use, handling, or disposal of hazardous substances. It is not located within proximity to any known contaminated sites and is not within close proximity to populations that could be substantially affected by upset or release of hazardous substances. Project implementation would not subject people or structures to substantial risks associated with wildland fires and would not impair implementation or interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Therefore, potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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"/>
(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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### *Setting*

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) thresholds for waterbodies within the County. A TMDL establishes the allowable amount of a particular pollutant a waterbody can receive on a regular basis and still remain at levels that protect beneficial uses designated for that waterbody. A TMDL also establishes proportional responsibility for controlling the pollutant, numeric indicators of water quality, and measures to achieve the allowable amount of pollutant loading. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to maintain a list of bodies of water that are designated as “impaired”. A body of water is considered impaired when a particular water quality objective or standard is not being met.

The RWQCB’s Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan; 2017) describes how the quality of surface water and groundwater in the Central Coast Region should be managed to provide the highest water quality reasonably possible. The Basin Plan outlines the beneficial uses of streams, lakes, and other water bodies for humans and other life. There are 24 categories of beneficial uses, including, but not limited to, municipal water supply, water contact recreation, non-water contact recreation, and cold freshwater habitat. Water quality objectives are then established to protect the beneficial uses of those water resources. The Regional Board implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements to individuals, communities, or businesses whose discharges can affect water quality.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), through Section 404 of the CWA, regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. Waters of the U.S. are typically identified by the presence of an ordinary high water mark (OHWM) and connectivity to traditional navigable waters or other jurisdictional features. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine RWQCBs regulate discharges of fill and dredged material in California, under Section 401 of the CWA and the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, through the State Water Quality Certification Program. State Water Quality Certification is necessary for all projects that require a USACE permit, or fall under other federal jurisdiction, or have the potential to impact waters of the State. Waters of the State are defined by the Porter-Cologne Act as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.

The project is not located within a groundwater basin.

Water for urban uses in the County is obtained from either surface impoundments such as Santa Margarita Lake, Whale Rock, and Lopez reservoirs, or from natural underground basins (aquifers). In October 2015, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution which established the Countywide Water Conservation Program (CWWCP) in response to the declining water levels in the Nipomo Mesa subbasin of the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin, Los Osos Groundwater Basin, and the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (PRGWB). A key strategy of the CWWCP is to ensure that all new construction or new or expanded agriculture will be required to offset its predicted water use by reducing existing water use on other properties within the same water basin. Each of the three groundwater basin areas have specific policies that apply.

The County LUO dictates which projects are required to prepare a drainage plan, including any project that would, for example, change the runoff volume or velocity leaving any point of the site, result in an impervious surface of more than 20,000 square feet, or involve hillside development on slopes steeper than 10 percent. Preparation of a drainage plan is not required where grading is exclusively for an exempt agricultural structure, crop production, or grazing.



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The County LUO also dictates that an erosion and sedimentation control plan is required year-round for all construction and grading permit projects and site disturbance activities of one-half acre or more in geologically unstable areas, on slopes steeper than 30 percent, on highly erodible soils, or within 100 feet of any watercourse.

Per the County's Stormwater Program, the Public Works Department is responsible for ensuring that new construction sites implement best management practices during construction, and that site plans incorporate appropriate post-construction stormwater runoff controls. Construction sites that disturb 1.0 acre or more must obtain coverage under the SWRCB's Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to minimize on-site sedimentation and erosion. There are several types of projects that are exempt from preparing a SWPPP, including routine maintenance to existing developments, emergency construction activities, and projects exempted by the SWRCB or RWQCB. Projects that disturb less than 1.0 acre must implement all required elements within the site's erosion and sediment control plan as required by the San Luis Obispo County LUO.

For planning purposes, the flood event most often used to delineate areas subject to flooding is the 100-year flood. The County Safety Element establishes policies to reduce flood hazards and reduce flood damage, including but not limited to prohibition of development in areas of high flood hazard potential, discouragement of single road access into remote areas that could be closed during floods, and review of plans for construction in low-lying areas. All development located in a 100-year flood zone is subject to Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) regulations. The County Land Use Ordinance designates a Flood Hazard (FH) combining designation for areas of the County that could be subject to inundation by a 100-year flood or within coastal high hazard areas. Development projects within this combining designation are subject to FH permit and processing requirements, including, but not limited to, the preparation of a drainage plan, implementation of additional construction standards, and additional materials storage and processing requirements for substances that could be injurious to human, animal or plant life in the event of flooding. The project site is not located within a Flood Hazard combining designation. The project site is located approximately 150 feet to the east of See Canyon Creek.

### Discussion

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

The proposed project would result in the disturbance of approximately 723 square feet (including utility trenching). The project shall be subject to standard County requirements for drainage, sedimentation and erosion control for construction and permanent use.

The project site is within 150 feet of See Canyon creek. The project is located just outside of the 100-year Flood Hazard Designation. The small scale of the project and the distance to the creek make indirect adverse impacts due to project construction or operation unlikely. The project would follow Best Management Practices to minimize potential impacts.

Implementation of the project would not substantially change the volume or velocity of runoff leaving any point of the site or result in a significant increase in impervious surface area. The project site is generally flat and does not pose a risk to downslope runoff, sedimentation, erosion, or runoff. The project would not substantially affect surface water or groundwater quality. 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.

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Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project is not located within a groundwater basin designated as Level of Severity III per the County's Resource Management System or in severe decline by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The project would not substantially increase water demand, deplete groundwater supplies, or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge; therefore, the project would not interfere with sustainable management of the groundwater basin. Potential impacts associated with groundwater supplies 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 site is within 150 feet of See Canyon creek. The project would result in less than 1 acre of site disturbance. 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*.

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

The project site has been previously disturbed and would not substantially increase the amount of impervious surface area or the rate and volume of surface runoff in a manner that could result in flooding on- or off-site. Based on the nature and size of the project, changes in surface hydrology would be negligible. Therefore, potential impacts related to increased surface runoff resulting in flooding 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?*

The project would not substantially increase the amount of impervious surface area or the rate and volume of surface runoff in a manner that could exceed the capacity of existing stormwater or drainage systems. Based on the nature and size of the project, changes in surface hydrology would be negligible. Therefore, potential impacts related to increased surface runoff exceeding stormwater capacity would be *less than significant*.

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

Based on the County Flood Hazard Map, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone. The project would be subject to standard County requirements for drainage, sedimentation, and erosion control for construction and operation. Therefore, *impacts would be less than significant*.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

Based on the County Safety Element, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone or within an area that would be inundated if dam failure were to occur. Based on the San Luis Obispo County Tsunami Inundation Maps, the project site is not located in an area with potential for inundation by a tsunami (DOC 2019). The project site is not located within close proximity to a standing body of water with the potential for a seiche to occur. Therefore, the project site has no potential to release pollutants due to project inundation and *no impacts would occur*.

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

The project is not located within a groundwater basin designated as Level of Severity III per the County's Resource Management System or in severe decline by SGMA. The project would not substantially increase water demand, deplete groundwater supplies, or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. The project would not conflict with the Central Coastal Basin Plan, SGMA, or other local or regional plans or policies intended to manage water quality or groundwater supplies; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

### Conclusion

The project site is not within the 100-year flood zone and does not include existing drainages or other surface waters. The project would not substantially increase impervious surfaces and does not propose alterations to existing water courses or other significant alterations to existing on-site drainage patterns. 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.

Therefore, potential impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation

None required.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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 LUO was established to guide and manage the future growth in the County in accordance with the General Plan, to regulate land use in a manner that will encourage and support orderly development and beneficial use of lands, to minimize adverse effects on the public resulting from inappropriate creation, location, use or design of buildings or land uses, and to protect and enhance significant natural, historic, archeological, and scenic resources within the county. The LUO is the primary tool used by the County to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of the County General Plan.

The County Land Use Element (LUE) provides policies and standards for the management of growth and development in each unincorporated community and rural areas of the county and serves as a reference point and guide for future land use planning studies throughout the county. The LUE identifies strategic growth principles to define and focus the county's pro-active planning approach and balance environmental, economic, and social equity concerns. Each strategic growth principle correlates with a set of policies and implementation strategies that define how land will be used and resources protected. The LUE also defines each of the 14 land use designations and identifies standards for land uses based on the designation they are located within. The project parcel and adjacent parcels to the east and west are located in the Residential Rural designation. Adjacent parcels to the north and south are located in the Rural Lands designation.

The inland LUE also contains the area plans of each of the four inland planning areas: Carrizo, North County, San Luis Obispo, and South County. The area plans establish policies and programs for land use, circulation, public facilities, services, and resources that apply "areawide", in rural areas, and in unincorporated urban areas within each planning area. Part three of the LUE contains each of the 13 inland community and village plans, which contain goals, policies, programs, and related background information for the County's unincorporated inland urban and village areas. The project is located within the San Luis Obispo Planning Area and San Luis Bay Inland Sub Area North.

#### Discussion

##### (a) Physically divide an established community?

The proposed project is located on an existing parcel and would not involve any components that would physically divide the rural community. The project would utilize the existing circulation system

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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and onsite roads for access and would not require the construction of offsite infrastructure. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- (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 would be an allowable use consistent with the property's land use designation of residential rural and the guidelines and policies for development within the applicable area plan, inland LUO, and the COSE. The project is consistent with existing surrounding developments and does not contain sensitive on-site resources; therefore, the project would not conflict with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. The project would be consistent with existing land uses and designations for the proposed site and, therefore, would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. *Impacts would be less than significant.*

### Conclusion

The project would be consistent with local and regional land use designations, plans, and policies and would not divide an established community. Therefore, potential impacts related to land use and planning would be less than significant and 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.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires that the State Geologist classify land into mineral resource zones (MRZ) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of the land (Public Resources Code Sections 2710–2796).

The three MRZs used in the SMARA classification-designation process in the San Luis Obispo-Santa Barbara Production-Consumption Region are defined below (California Geological Survey 2011a):

- **MRZ-1:** Areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant mineral resources.
- **MRZ-2:** Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists. This zone shall be applied to known mineral deposits or where well-developed lines of reasoning, based upon economic-geologic principles and adequate data, demonstrate that the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is high.
- **MRZ-3:** Areas containing known or inferred aggregate resources of undetermined significance.

The County LUO provides regulations for development in delineated Energy and Extractive Resource Areas (EX) and Extractive Resource Areas (EX1). The EX combining designation is used to identify areas of the county where:

1. Mineral or petroleum extraction occurs or is proposed to occur;
2. The state geologist has designated a mineral resource area of statewide or regional significance pursuant to PRC Sections 2710 et seq. (SMARA); and,
3. Major public utility electric generation facilities exist or are proposed.

The purpose of this combining designation is to protect significant resource extraction and energy production areas identified by the County LUE from encroachment by incompatible land uses that could

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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hinder resource extraction or energy production operations, or land uses that would be adversely affected by extraction or energy production.

### 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?*

The project is not located within a designated mineral resource zone or within an Extractive Resource Area combining designation. There are no known mineral resources in the project area; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

- (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?*

There are no known or mapped mineral resources in the project area and the likelihood of future mining of important resources within the project area is very low. Therefore *no impacts would occur*.

### Conclusion

No impacts to mineral resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation

None required.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.



## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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"/>
(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 San Luis Obispo County Noise Element of the General Plan provides a policy framework for addressing potential noise impacts in the planning process. The purpose of the Noise Element is to minimize future noise conflicts. The Noise Element identifies the major noise sources in the county (highways and freeways, primary arterial roadways and major local streets, railroad operations, aircraft and airport operations, local industrial facilities, and other stationary sources) and includes goals, policies, and implementation programs to reduce future noise impacts. Among the most significant policies of the Noise Element are numerical noise standards that limit noise exposure within noise-sensitive land uses, and performance standards for new commercial and industrial uses that might adversely impact noise-sensitive land uses.

Noise sensitive uses that have been identified by the County include the following:

- Residential development, except temporary dwellings
- Schools – preschool to secondary, college and university, specialized education and training
- Health care services (e.g., hospitals, clinics, etc.)
- Nursing and personal care
- Churches
- Public assembly and entertainment
- Libraries and museums
- Hotels and motels

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- Bed and breakfast facilities
- Outdoor sports and recreation
- Offices

All sound levels referred to in the Noise Element are expressed in A-weighted decibels (dB). A-weighting de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequencies of sound in a manner similar to the human ear.

The existing ambient noise environment of the project site is characterized by light traffic on Black Walnut Road as well as agricultural operations. The closest noise sensitive receptors are rural residences to the south, northwest, east, and northeast of the project site at a distance of approximately 555, 590, 820, and 885 feet respectively. The project site is not located within an Airport Review Area.

### 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 County of San Luis Obispo LUO establishes acceptable standards for exterior and interior noise levels and describe how noise shall be measured. Exterior noise level standards are applicable when a land use affected by noise is one of the sensitive uses listed in the Noise Element. Exterior noise levels are measured from the property line of the affected noise-sensitive land use.

**Table 3. Maximum allowable exterior noise level standards<sup>(1)</sup>**

Sound Levels	Daytime 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	Nighttime <sup>(2)</sup>
Hourly Equivalent Sound Level (L <sub>eq</sub> , dB)	50	45
Maximum level, dB	70	65

(1) When the receiving noise-sensitive land use is outdoor sports and recreation, the noise level standards are increased by 10 db.

(2) Applies only to uses that operate or are occupied during nighttime hours

Project construction would result in a temporary increase in noise levels associated with construction activities, equipment, and vehicle trips. Construction noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in nature and duration. The County LUO requires that construction activities be conducted during daytime hours to be able to utilize County construction noise exception standards and that construction equipment be equipped with appropriate mufflers recommended by the manufacturer. Compliance with these standards would ensure short-term construction noise would be less than significant.

The proposed project would introduce noise generating equipment into a relatively quiet rural area. 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. Additionally, the generator would be located approximately 170 feet from the

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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nearest off-site residence, and the noise from the generator would attenuate considerably by the time it reaches the residence.

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 (County Code Section 22.10.120.A).

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?*

The project does not propose substantial grading/earthmoving activities, pile driving, or other high impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Construction equipment has the potential to generate minor groundborne noise and/or vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration and are not likely to be perceptible from adjacent areas. The project does not propose a use that would generate long-term operational groundborne noise or vibration. Therefore, impacts related to exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels would be *less than significant*.

(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 site is not located within or adjacent to an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impact would occur*.

### Conclusion

Short-term construction activities would be limited in nature and duration and conducted during daytime periods per County LUO standards. No long-term operational noise or ground vibration would occur as a result of the project. The project shall be maintained in compliance with the County Noise Element (including emergency generators). Therefore, there would be *no impact* to people residing or working in the project area from excessive air traffic related noise levels.

### 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.

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### 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

The County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Housing Element recognizes the difficulty for residents to find suitable and affordable housing within San Luis Obispo County. The Housing Element includes an analysis of vacant and underutilized land located in urban areas that is suitable for residential development and considers zoning provisions and development standards to encourage development of these areas. Consistent with State housing element laws, these areas are categorized into potential sites for very low- and low-income households, moderate-income households, and above moderate-income households.

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

The project area includes scattered rural residences.

#### 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 project does not include the construction of new homes or businesses or the extension or establishment of roads, utilities, or other infrastructure that would induce development and population growth in new areas. The project would not generate a substantial number of new employment opportunities that would encourage population growth in the area. Therefore, the project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial growth and *no impacts would occur*.

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

The project would not displace existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

### *Conclusion*

No impacts to population and housing would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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:				
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"/>
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

Fire protection services in unincorporated San Luis Obispo County are provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), which has been under contract with the County of San Luis Obispo to provide full-service fire protection since 1930. Approximately 180 full-time state employees operate the County Fire Department, supplemented by as many as 100 state seasonal fire fighters, 300 County paid-call and reserve fire fighters, and 120 state inmate fire fighters. CAL FIRE responds to emergencies and other requests for assistance, plans for and takes action to prevent emergencies and to reduce their impact, coordinates regional emergency response efforts, and provides public education and training in local communities. CAL FIRE has 24 fire stations located throughout the county. The project would be served by County Fire Station #62 – Avila Valley, located approximately 3.6 miles to the southeast of the project site. Based on the County's response time map, it will take approximately 10-15 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety.

Police protection and emergency services in the unincorporated portions of the county are provided by the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office Patrol Division responds to calls for service, conducts proactive law enforcement activities, and performs initial investigations of crimes. Patrol personnel are deployed from three stations throughout the county, the Coast Station in Los Osos, the North Station in Templeton, and the South Station in Oceano. The nearest sheriff station is the Oceano substation, located approximately 12 miles to the southeast of the project site.

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San Luis Obispo County has a total of 12 school districts that currently enroll approximately 34,000 students in over 75 schools. The project is within the San Luis Unified Coastal Unified School District.

Within the County's unincorporated areas, there are currently 23 parks, three golf courses, four trails/staging areas, and eight Special Areas that include natural areas, coastal access, and historic facilities currently operated and maintained by the County. The project is not in the vicinity of any trail corridors or County maintained parks.

Public facilities fees, Quimby fees, and developer conditions are several ways the County currently funds public services. A public facility fee program (i.e., development impact fee program) has been adopted to address impacts related to public facilities (county) and schools (State Government Code 65995 et seq.). The fee amounts are assessed annually by the County based on the type of proposed development and the development's proportional impact and are collected at the time of building permit issuance. Public facility fees are used as needed to finance the construction of and/or improvements to public facilities required to serve new development, including fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, and roads.

### 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 would be required to comply with all fire safety rules and regulations including the California Fire Code and Public Resources Code prior to issuance of building permits. Based on the limited nature of development proposed, the project would not result in a significant increase in demand for fire protection services. The project would be served by existing fire protection services and would not result in the need for new or altered fire protection services or facilities. In addition, the project would be subject to development impact fees to offset the project's contribution to demand for fire protection services. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

#### *Police protection?*

The project does not propose a new use or activity that would require additional police services above what is normally provided for similar surrounding land uses. The project would not result in a significant increase in demand for police protection services and would not result in the need for new or altered police protection services or facilities. In addition, the project would be subject to development impact fees to offset the project's contribution to demand on law enforcement services. Therefore, impacts related to police services would be *less than significant*.

#### *Schools?*

As discussed in Section XIV. Population and Housing, the project would not induce an increase in population growth and would not result in the need for additional school services or facilities to serve new student populations. Therefore, potential impacts would be *no impact*.

#### *Parks?*

As discussed in Section XIV. Population and Housing, the project would not induce an increase in population growth and would not result in the need for additional parks or recreational services or facilities to serve new populations. Therefore, potential impacts would be *no impact*.



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### *Other public facilities?*

As discussed above, the proposed project would be subject to applicable fees to offset negligible increased demands on public facilities; therefore, impacts related to other public facilities would be *less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

The project does not propose development that would substantially increase demands on public services and would not induce population growth that would substantially increase demands on public services. The project would be subject to payment of development impact fees to reduce the project's negligible contribution to increased demands on public services and facilities. Therefore, potential impacts related to public services would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### 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"/>

#### 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.

Public facilities fees, Quimby fees, and developer conditions are several ways the County currently funds public parks and recreational facilities. Public facility fees are collected upon construction of new residential units and currently provide funding for new community-serving recreation facilities. Quimby Fees are collected when new residential lots are created and can be used to expand, acquire, rehabilitate, or develop community-serving parks. Finally, a discretionary permit issued by the County may condition a project to provide land, amenities, or facilities consistent with the Recreation Element.

The County Bikeways Plan identifies and prioritizes bikeway facilities throughout the unincorporated area of the county, including bikeways, parking, connections with public transportation, educational programs, and funding. The Bikeways Plan is updated every 5 years and was last updated in 2016. The plan identifies goals, policies, and procedures geared towards realizing significant bicycle use as a key component of the transportation options for San Luis Obispo County residents. The plan also includes descriptions of bikeway design and improvement standards, an inventory of the current bicycle circulation network, and a list of current and future bikeway projects within the county.

#### 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 would not result in any growth within the area and would not increase demand on any proximate existing neighborhood or regional park or other recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact.

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- (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 project does not include the construction of new recreational facilities and would not result in a substantial increase in demand or use of parks and recreational facilities. Implementation of the project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; therefore, *no impacts would occur.*

### *Conclusion*

The project would not result in the significant increase in use, construction, or expansion of parks or recreational facilities. Therefore, potential impacts related to recreation would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### 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"/>
(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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The County Department of Public Works maintains updated traffic count data for all County-maintained roadways. In addition, Traffic Circulation Studies have been conducted within several community areas using traffic models to reasonably simulate current traffic flow patterns and forecast future travel demands and traffic flow patterns. These community Traffic Circulation Studies include the South County Circulation Study, Los Osos Circulation Study, Templeton Circulation Study, San Miguel Circulation Study, Avila Circulation Study, and North Coast Circulation Study. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) maintains annual traffic data on state highways and interchanges within the county. The project site would utilize an existing driveway access on Black Walnut Road.

In 2013, Senate Bill 743 was signed into law with the intent to “more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions” and required the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to identify new metrics for identifying and mitigating transportation impacts within CEQA. As a result, in December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. The revisions included new requirements related to the implementation of Senate Bill 743 and identified vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis under CEQA (as detailed in Section 15064.3 [b]). Beginning July 1, 2020, the newly adopted VMT criteria for determining significance of transportation impacts must be implemented statewide.

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) holds several key roles in transportation planning within the county. As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), SLOCOG is responsible for conducting a comprehensive, coordinated transportation program, preparation of a Regional

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Transportation Plan (RTP), programming of state funds for transportation projects, and the administration and allocation of transportation development act funds required by state statutes. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), SLOCOG is also responsible for all transportation planning and programming activities required under federal law. This includes development of long-range transportation plans and funding programs, and the approval of transportation projects using federal funds.

The 2019 RTP, adopted June 5, 2019, is a long-term blueprint of San Luis Obispo County's transportation system. The plan identifies and analyzes transportation needs of the region and creates a framework for project priorities. SLOCOG represents and works with the County of San Luis Obispo as well as the Cities within the county in facilitating the development of the RTP.

The County Department of Public Works establishes bicycle paths and lanes in coordination with the RTP, which outlines how the region can establish an extensive bikeway network. County bikeway facilities are funded by state grants, local general funds, and developer contributions. The RTP also establishes goals and recommendations to develop, promote, and invest in the public transit systems, rail systems, air services, harbor improvements, and commodity movements within the county in order to meet the needs of transit-dependent individuals and encourage the increasing use of alternative modes by all travelers that choose public transportation. Local transit systems are presently in operation in the cities of Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo, and South County services are offered to Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, and Oceano. Dial-a-ride systems provide intra-community transit in Morro Bay, Atascadero, and Los Osos. Inter-urban systems operate between the City of San Luis Obispo and South County, Los Osos, and the North Coast.

The County's Framework for Planning (Inland), includes the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the County's General Plan. The Framework establishes goals and strategies to meet pedestrian circulation needs by providing usable and attractive sidewalks, pathways, and trails to establish maximum access and connectivity between land use designations. There are no bus stops within 1 mile of the project site, and there are no proximate bike or pedestrian facilities.

### *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. The project does not propose uses that would interfere or conflict with applicable policies related to circulation, transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian systems or facilities. The project would be consistent with the County Framework for Planning (Inland) and consistent with the projected level of growth and development identified in the 2019 RTP. As a result, the proposed project would have *less than significant* long-term impact on existing road service or traffic safety levels.

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

The County of San Luis Obispo has not yet identified an appropriate model or method to estimate vehicle miles traveled for proposed land use development projects. Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) states that if existing models or methods are not available to estimate the vehicle miles traveled for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may analyze the project's vehicle miles traveled qualitatively.

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The project would result in the establishment of a new unmanned wireless telecommunications facility. Based on the nature and location of the project, an unmanned telecommunication facility, the project would not generate a significant increase in construction-related or operational traffic trips or vehicle miles traveled.

The project would not substantially change existing land uses and would not result in the need for additional new or expanded transportation facilities. 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*.

- (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 not change roadway design and does not include geometric design features that would create new hazards or an incompatible use. Therefore, *no impacts would occur*.

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

The project would not result in road closures during short-term construction activities or long-term operations. Individual access to adjacent properties would be maintained during construction activities and throughout the project area. Project implementation would not affect long-term access through the project area and sufficient alternative access exists to accommodate regional trips. 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

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.

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### 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"/>
(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, 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.



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- 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.

Recognizing that tribes have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

AB 52 consultation letters were sent to four tribes on October 18, 2019: Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Salinan Tribe of San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties, Xolon Salinan Tribe, and yak tit'yu tit'yu yak tiłhini. No responses were received as of October 19, 2020.

### 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)?*

The County has provided notice of the opportunity to consult with appropriate tribes per the requirements of AB 52 and the project site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources that have been listed or been found eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1. Potential impacts associated with the inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources would be subject to LUO 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources), which requires that in the event resources are encountered during project construction, construction activities shall cease, and the County Planning and Building Department shall be notified of the discovery so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and the disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law. Therefore, impacts related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural 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.*

The project site does not contain any resources determined by the County to be a potentially significant tribal cultural resource. Impacts associated with potential inadvertent discovery would be minimized through compliance with existing standards and regulations (LUO 22.10.040). Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

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### *Conclusion*

No tribal cultural resources are known or expected to occur within or adjacent to the project site. In the event unanticipated sensitive resources are discovered during project activities, adherence with County LUO standards and State Health and Safety Code procedures would reduce potential impacts to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant and 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.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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 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 the serve new development.

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There are three landfills in San Luis Obispo County: Cold Canyon Landfill, located near the City of San Luis Obispo, Chicago Grade Landfill, located near the community of Templeton, and Paso Robles Landfill, located east of the City of Paso Robles.

### Discussion

- (a) *Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications 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 would not result in other new or relocated telecommunications facilities. No other off-site infrastructure is required. The associated utility trenching is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts, as the trenching would be located adjacent 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?*

- (e) *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. 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

The project would not result in significant increased demands on water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure and facilities. 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*.

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### *Mitigation*

No mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### 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

In central California, the fire season usually extends from roughly May through October, however, recent events indicate that wildfire behavior, frequency, and duration of the fire season are changing in California. Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) are defined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) based on the presence of fire-prone vegetation, climate, topography, assets at risk (e.g., high population centers), and a fire protection agency's ability to provide service to the area (CAL FIRE 2007). FHSZs throughout the County have been designated as "Very High," "High," or "Moderate." In San Luis Obispo County, most of the area that has been designated as a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" is located in the Santa Lucia Mountains, which extend parallel to the coast along the entire length of San Luis Obispo County. The Moderate Hazard designation does not mean the area cannot experience a damaging fire; rather, it indicates that the probability is reduced, generally because the number of days a year that the area has "fire weather" is less than in high or very high fire severity zones.

The project is located within a very high fire hazard severity zone, and, based on the County's response time map, it will take approximately 10-15 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety.

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Topography influences wildland fire to such an extent that slope conditions can often become a critical wildland fire factor. Conditions such as speed and direction of dominant wind patterns, the length and steepness of slopes, direction of exposure, and/or overall ruggedness of terrain influence the potential intensity and behavior of wildland fires and/or the rates at which they may spread (Barros et al. 2013).

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 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.

Implementation strategies for this policy include identifying high risk areas, the development and implementation of mitigation efforts to reduce the threat of fire, requiring fire resistant material to be used for building construction in fire hazard areas, and encouraging applicants applying for subdivisions in fire hazard areas to cluster development to allow for a wildfire protection zone.

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 building 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 project site has abundant fuel, especially in the summer months when vegetation is dryer, and it has gentle to steep sloping topography in some areas, all of which exacerbate fire risk. All these conditions have resulted in the project site being classified in a very 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 unmanned facility, and employees would only be onsite for limited period maintenance. Therefore, potential impacts 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?*

The project proposes the use of existing roadways, with some alterations required by Cal Fire to meet current fire safety standards. In addition to road improvements, Cal Fire requires the maintenance of defensible space within 30 feet of development for fire protection purposes. 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*.

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- (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?*

The risk to structures from runoff or drainage changes would be low due to the project's small footprint, low liquefaction risk, location outside a 100-year flood zone, and distance from nearby streams. The project site does contain gentle to steep slopes within a high landslide risk area and a very high fire severity zone.

As stated earlier, employees would rarely be onsite after completion of construction of the project. The project would not be manned and does not include any design elements that would expose people or structures to significant risks from landslides. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

With the implementation of the Fire Safety Plan, the project would not expose people or structures to new or exacerbated wildfire risks and would not require the development of new or expanded infrastructure or maintenance to reduce wildfire risks. Therefore, potential impacts associated with wildfire would be less than significant.

### *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.



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### 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"/>

#### 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?*

The project has the potential to impact Aesthetics and Biological Resources. Mitigation measures have been placed within each of these sections to address potential impacts and their implementation would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

Compliance with mitigation measures 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.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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- (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 impacts to the aesthetic nature of the area as well as to biological resources. With the inclusion of mitigation measures AES-1 through AES-3 and BIO-1 through BIO-4, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant.

### Mitigation

See mitigation measures AQ-1 – AQ-3 which would reduce aesthetic impacts to less than significant.

See mitigation measures BIO-1 – BIO-4, which would reduce biological resource impacts to less than significant.

### Sources

See Exhibit B – Mitigation Measures

## 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 type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Transportation	Not Applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Services District	Not Applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <u>Building Division</u>	In File
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <u>Native American Consultation</u>	In File

\*\* "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"/> <u>County Documents</u>	<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"/> <u>Other Documents</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation & Open Space Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Transportation Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uniform Fire Code
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise Element	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> CA Natural Species Diversity Database
<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy Wise Plan	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> San Luis Bay Inland Sub Area/San Luis Obispo Planning Area	

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

Barros, Ana M.G., Jose M.C. Pereira, Max A. Moritz, and Scott L. Stephens. 2013. Spatial Characterization of Wildfire Orientation Patterns in California. *Forests* 2013, 4; Pp 197-217." 2013.

Biological Evaluation, ACE Environmental, LLC. Prepared for 2780 Black Walnut Road. San Luis Obispo County, CA. August 8, 2019

CAL FIRE. 2007. "Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas." Available at <[http://frap.fire.ca.gov/webdata/maps/san\\_luis\\_obispo/fhszl06\\_1\\_map.40.pdf](http://frap.fire.ca.gov/webdata/maps/san_luis_obispo/fhszl06_1_map.40.pdf)>

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

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

California State Water Resources Control Board. 2012. Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems. June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

2015. Geotracker. Available at: <<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>>

2018. Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTUS Policy) Fact Sheet. August 2018.

County of San Luis Obispo. 2007. San Joaquin Kit Fox Standard Mitigation Ratio Areas. Available at: <<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/getattachment/2c0fc293-eb37-4a0c-af22-5e0992efd025/Kit-Fox-Habitat-Area.aspx>>

2016. Emergency Operation Plan. December 2016.

2018. San Luis Obispo County Parks & Recreation Group Day Use & Facilities. Available at: <<https://slocountyparks.com/day-use-parks/>>

County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building. 2018. Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Local Agency Management Program. January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Department of Conservation (DOC). 2019. San Luis Obispo County Tsunami Inundation Maps. Available at: <<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/tsunami/maps/San-Luis-Obispo>>.

Dills, Charles E. 1987. Archaeological Potential of Your Bridge Project, See Canyon. Matvlich 1987, #57974 (A001218) 1987.

Pacific Coast Ecology. Results of 2019 California Red-legged Frog Survey AT&T Telecommunications Facility CSL02626 for 2780 Black Walnut Road. Avila Beach, California. August 5, 2019

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). 2019. Delivering Low-Emission Energy. Available at: <[https://www.pge.com/en\\_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page](https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page)>.

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG). 2019. Responsibilities. Available at:

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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<<https://slocog.org/about/responsibilities>>.

United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2019. Areas of Land Subsidence in California. Available at: <[https://ca.water.usgs.gov/land\\_subsidence/california-subsidence-areas.html](https://ca.water.usgs.gov/land_subsidence/california-subsidence-areas.html)>

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

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### 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 monopine shall be designed and constructed to appear as an organic, non-symmetrical form, with varying branch lengths and shapes and “needle” clusters installed in random, seemingly natural-occurring patterns. The branches lengths shall taper up the monopine “trunk” and the longest (lowest) branches shall begin at an elevation no higher than 15 feet above the base of the trunk. Overall branch count density shall be equivalent to at least three branches per foot. Realistic bark texture shall run the entire length of the tree pole.
- b. The monopine “needles” shall not be all one color. Varying shades of hues shall be used appropriately to replicate a living plant. Monopine colors shall be field matched with the existing on-site mature pine trees.
- c. Plans, specifications and estimates shall require the submittal of material and color test samples of all visible elements of the monopine to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval. The plans, specifications and estimates and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the test samples prior to preparation of the final plans.
- d. Antennas shall be hidden and not extend beyond the ends of the artificial branches. Antennas and associated support arms and hardware shall be textured and or colored to blend with the monopine branches and needles.

**AES-2**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the monopine for the construction permit(s). Plans shall not include generic illustrations of a monopine. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. The construction plans and specifications shall be consistent with the plans approved with the land use permit.

**AES-3**      **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the monopine to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval. The faux pine tree shall be constructed of the highest quality, most durable and realistic appearing faux foliage and branches. The color of the faux foliage shall be field matched with the existing trees on site.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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**BIO-1 Nesting Birds** – The adjacent woodland, riparian and scrub habitats are very likely be used by nesting birds during the springtime. Due to the potential for birds to nest in the vicinity of this project site, the following specific avoidance measures shall be implemented:

Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permits, complete preconstruction nesting bird survey and submit a report that documents the findings. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting birds within 500 feet of project impact areas, within two weeks before the initiation of construction. During this survey, the qualified biologist shall inspect the impact and buffer areas, and any nests identified will be monitored to determine if they are active. If no active nests are found, construction may proceed. If an active nest is found within 50 feet (500 feet for raptors) of the construction area, the biologist, in consultation with the County and CDFW as needed, shall determine the extent of an appropriate avoidance buffer to be established around the nest. The buffer will be delineated with flagging, and no work shall take place within the buffer area until the young have left the nest, as determined by the qualified biologist. Since golden eagles have been observed in the area, the survey shall assess offsite nesting habitat, to determine if project activities could affect this species' nesting activities.

**BIO-2 Western Pond Turtle** - Due to the potential for WPT to occur within the project footprint, the following specific avoidance measures shall be implemented:

Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permits, preconstruction surveys for Western Pond Turtle shall be implemented. The survey shall be conducted on foot by a qualified biologist with approval from California Department of Fish and Wildlife to relocate these species out of harm's way. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If these species are found to be present in the work areas, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. Western pond turtle shall be captured by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- b. Construction monitoring shall be required for all new ground-breaking activities located within the mapped potential habitat. Construction monitors shall capture and relocate said species as specified above.
- c. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days of western pond turtle relocation, or as directed by CDFW.
- d. Prior to issuance of grading and/or construction permit and within 30 days prior to initiation of site disturbance and/or construction, all personnel associated with the project shall attend a worker education training program regarding protected and special status species.
- e. No work will occur during any rain events, or within 24 hours after a rain event to minimize impacts to western pond turtles. A rain event is considered any precipitation forecast or resulting in 0.10 inches of rain.



## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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**BIO – 3 Red-legged frogs -** The potential for California red-legged frogs to occur in the immediate project vicinity was reviewed through focused surveys. The results of these surveys, taken over the course of the frog's breeding season, concluded that the species is absent in the area. Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permit the following measures shall be implemented in order to avoid and/or reduce the potential for impacts to California red-legged frogs:

- a. A qualified biologist will perform two surveys occurring the night before and morning of construction. If any life stages of California red-legged frogs are observed within the proposed work area, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be contacted for guidance as to how to proceed. Further, if any California red-legged frogs are observed within the proposed work area, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) will be contacted for guidance as to how to proceed. No work shall occur until approved by the County and the USFWS and/or CDFG.
- b. A qualified biologist shall be present during any clearing or grading work in the project area. The biologist or their designee shall also check under any equipment and stored construction supplies left in the work area overnight prior to the start of construction each day.

**BIO – 4 Plant Species -** Of the list of 32 sensitive species having been reported in the area, six (6) have a potential to occur on or immediately adjacent to the site. Four of these are plants: dwarf soap root, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia.

Prior to issuance of grading and/or construction permits to assure avoidance of potential impacts future impacts to dwarf soaproot, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a County approved biologist with approval from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to relocate these species out of harm's way. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If these species are found to be present in the work areas, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. A dwarf soaproot, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia survey shall be collected by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- b. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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**REVISED DEVELOPER'S STATEMENT FOR  
EVENSON & AT&T MOBILITY  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT DRC2019-00225**

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:

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

- a. The monopine shall be designed and constructed to appear as an organic, non-symmetrical form, with varying branch lengths and shapes and "needle" clusters installed in random, seemingly natural-occurring patterns. The branches lengths shall taper up the monopine "trunk" and the longest (lowest) branches shall begin at an elevation no higher than 15 feet above the base of the trunk. Overall branch count density shall be equivalent to at least three branches per foot. Realistic bark texture shall run the entire length of the tree pole.
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**Monitoring: (Visual Recourse Measures AES-1 to AES-3)** Required at the time of application for construction permits. Compliance will be verified by the County Department of Planning and Building.

**BIO-1 Nesting Birds** – The adjacent woodland, riparian and scrub habitats are very likely be used by nesting birds during the springtime. Due to the potential for birds to nest in the vicinity of this project site, the following specific avoidance measures shall be implemented:

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- b. Construction monitoring shall be required for all new ground-breaking activities located within the mapped potential habitat. Construction monitors shall capture and relocate said species as specified above.
- c. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days of western pond turtle relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

- d. Prior to issuance of grading and/or construction permit and within 30 days prior to initiation of site disturbance and/or construction, all personnel associated with the project shall attend a worker education training program regarding protected and special status species.
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**BIO – 3 Red-legged frogs** - The potential for California red-legged frogs to occur in the immediate project vicinity was reviewed through focused surveys. The results of these surveys, taken over the course of the frog's breeding season, concluded that the species is absent in the area. Prior to issuance of construction and/or grading permit the following measures shall be implemented in order to avoid and/or reduce the potential for impacts to California red-legged frogs:

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- b. A qualified biologist shall be present during any clearing or grading work in the project area. The biologist or their designee shall also check under any equipment and stored construction supplies left in the work area overnight prior to the start of construction each day.

**BIO – 4 Plant Species** - Of the list of 32 sensitive species having been reported in the area, six (6) have a potential to occur on or immediately adjacent to the site. Four of these are plants: dwarf soap root, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia.

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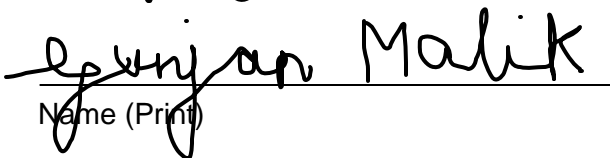
- a. A dwarf soaproot, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia survey shall be collected by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- b. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

**Monitoring: (Visual Recourse Measures BIO-1 to BIO-4)** 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)

10/21/20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

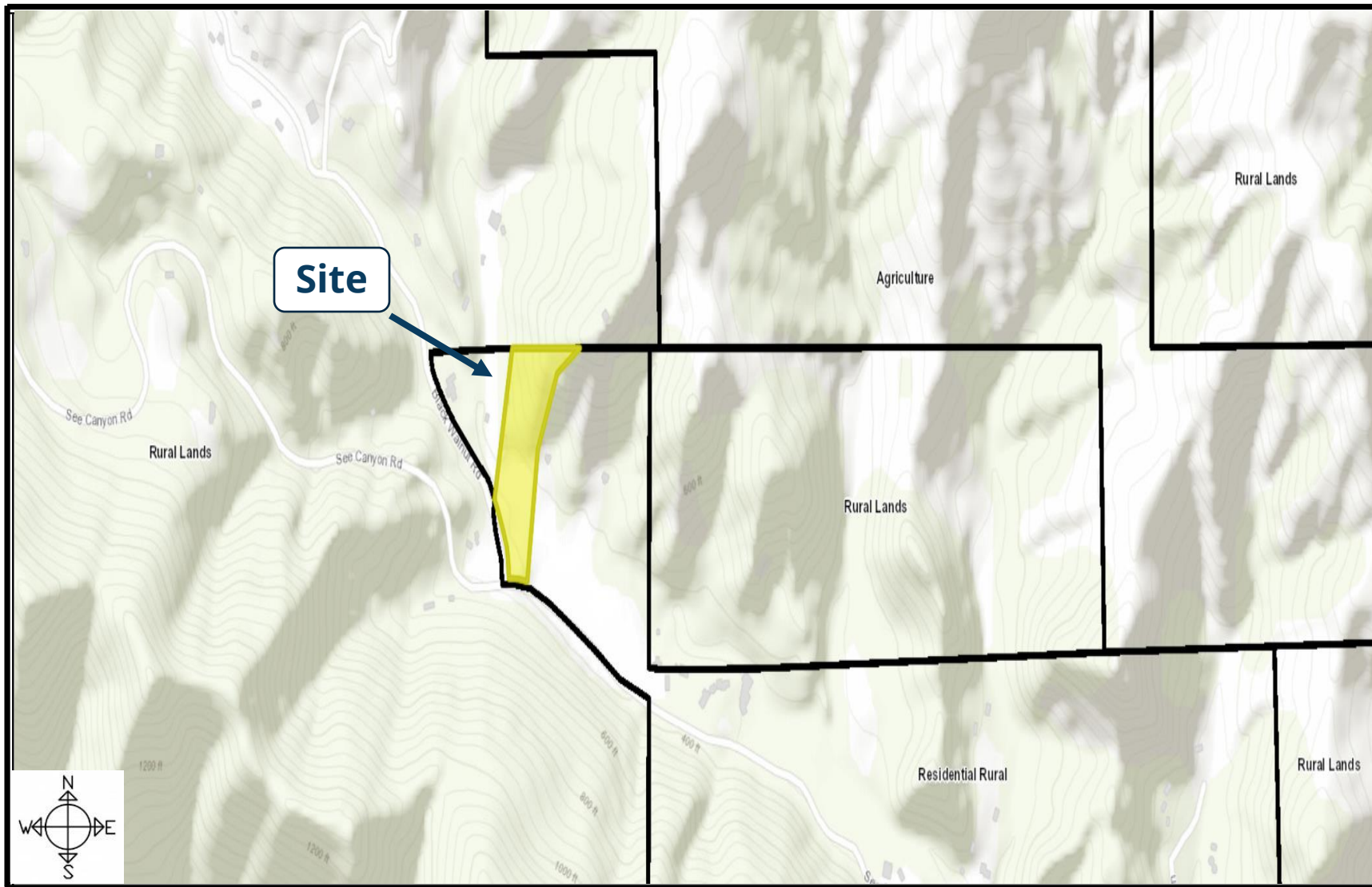
  
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Name (Print)



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Vicinity Map  
DRC2019-00225





COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

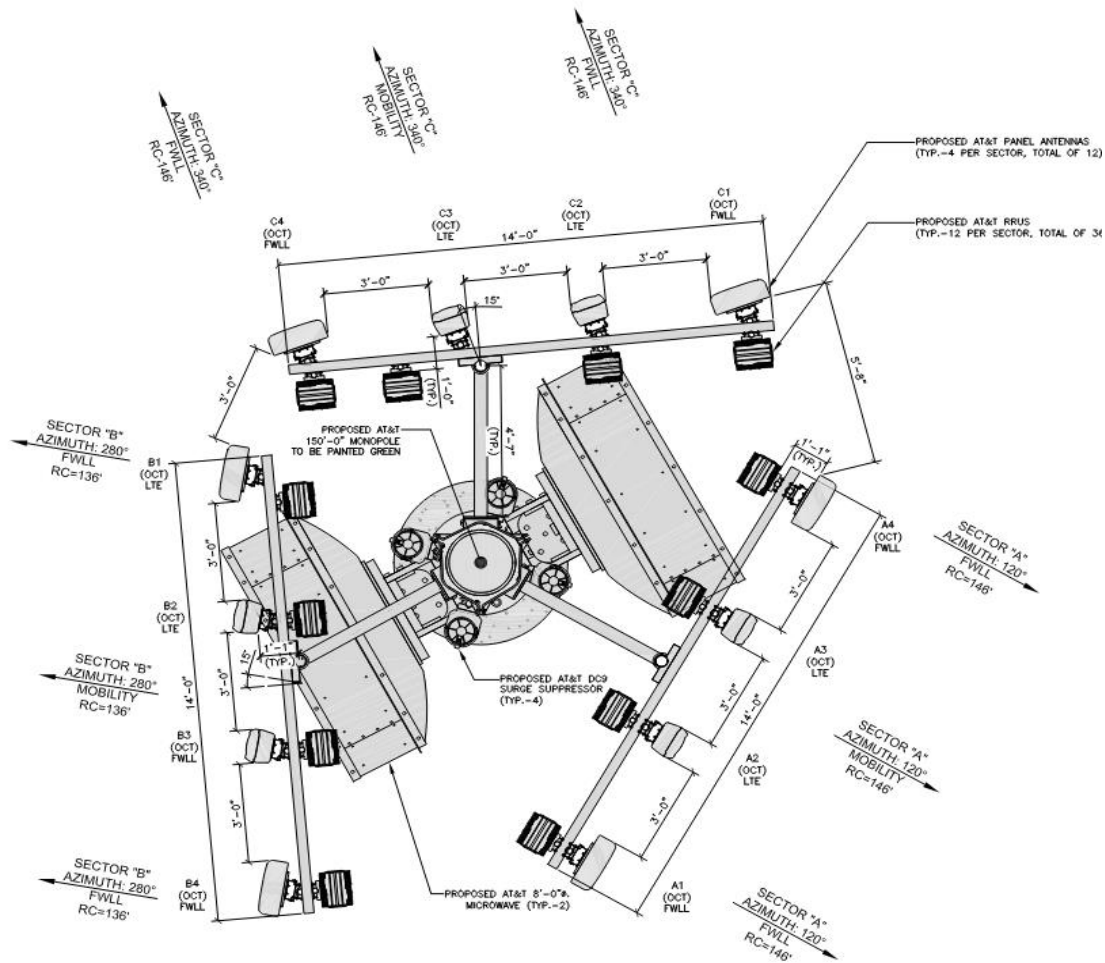
Land Use Category Map  
DRC2019-00225





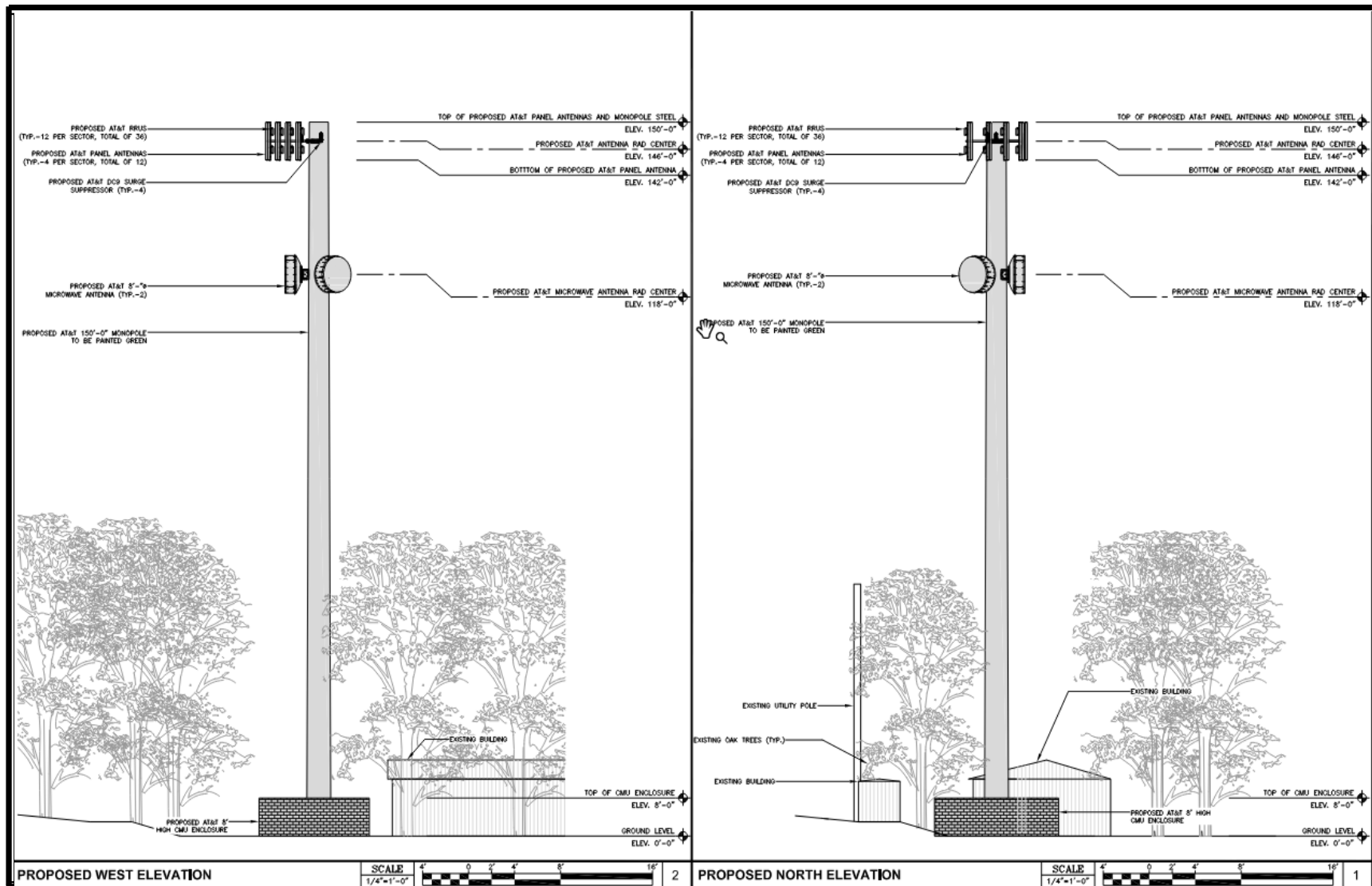


SCALE NOTE:  
IF DIMENSIONS SHOWN ON PLAN DO NOT  
SCALE CORRECTLY, CHECK FOR REDUCTION  
OR ENLARGEMENT FROM ORIGINAL PLANS.



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Antenna Layout  
DRC2019-00225



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

West and North Elevations  
 DRC2019-00225



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

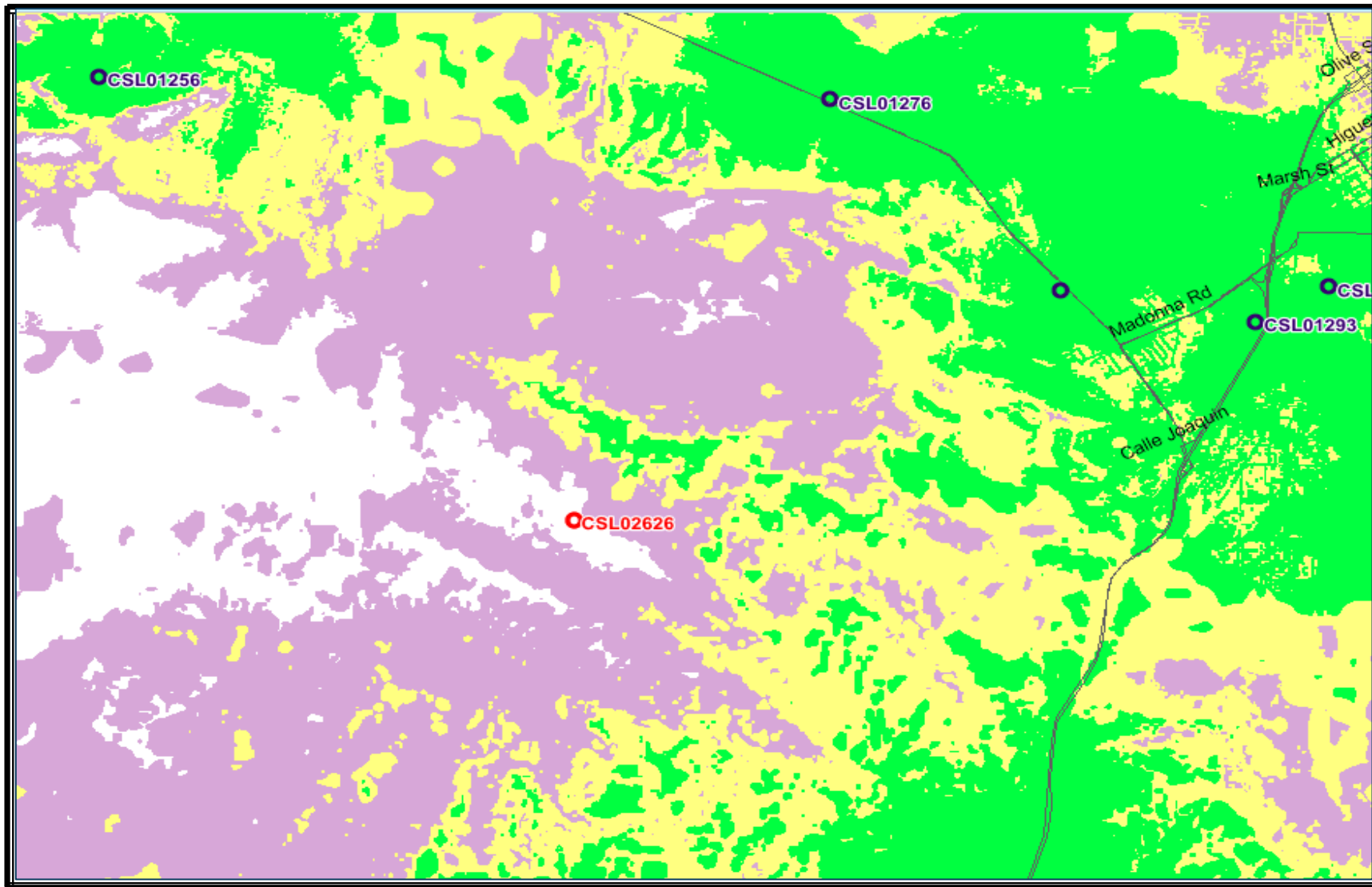
**Photo simulations**  
**Looking East from Black Walnut Rd.**  
**DRC2019-00225**





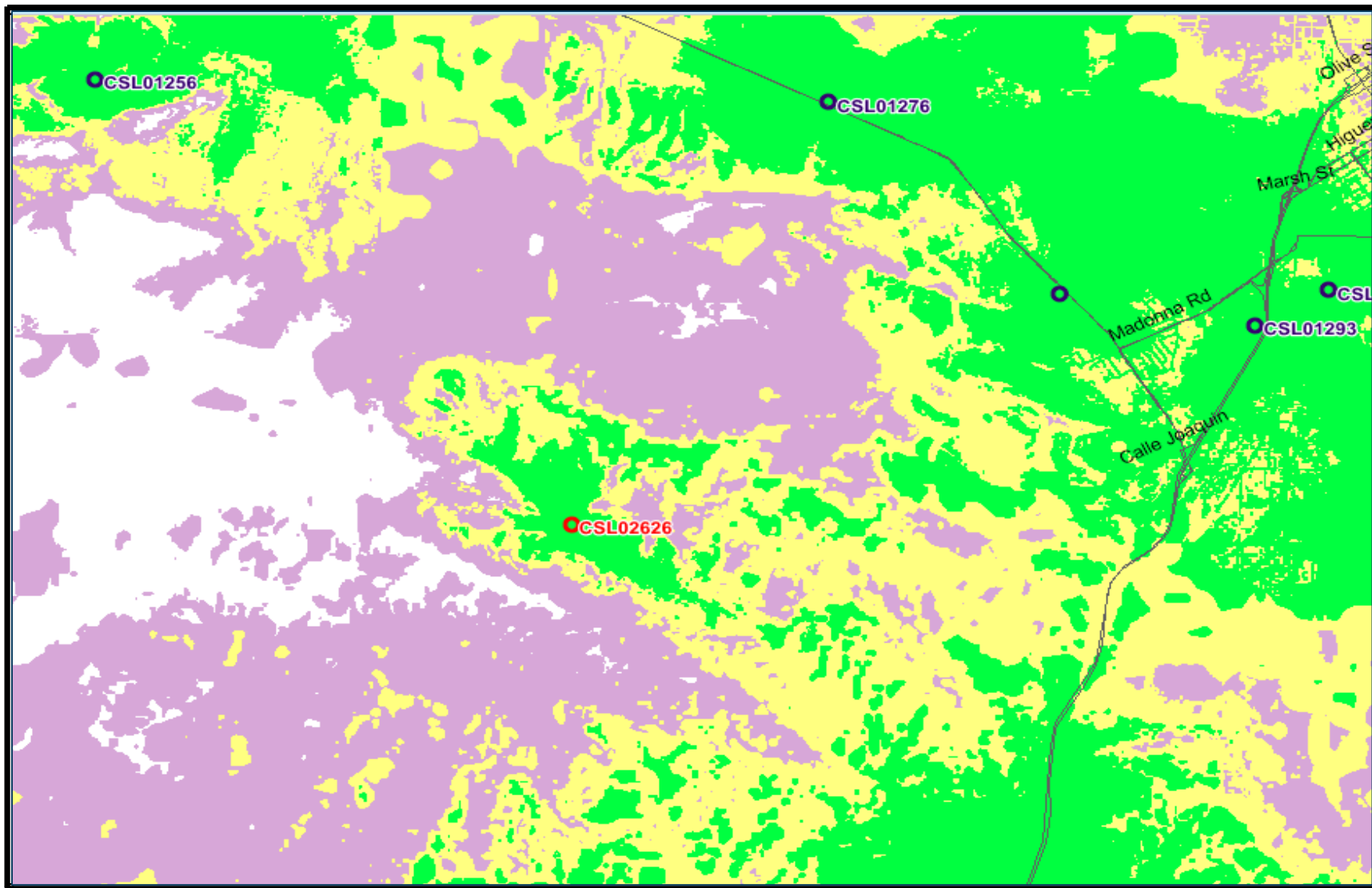
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

**Photo Simulations**  
**Looking South East on Black Walnut Rd.**  
**DRC2019-00225**



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Propagation Map  
(Existing Coverage)  
DRC2019-00225



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Propagation Map  
(Proposed Coverage)  
DRC2019-00225