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October 18, 2023

TO: Utilities Advisory Committee (UAC)

FROM: Ron Munds, General Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 4 – Water Resiliency Intertie Project Initial Study/Mitigate Negative Declaration

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file report

DISCUSSION

Background

In September 2021, the Board directed staff to investigate alternative water resiliency supply projects to address the current and future water demands of the District. Since that time, staff narrowed the search down to an intertie project with Chorro Valley State Water Project. Wallace Group provided a preliminary alternative pipeline alignment technical memorandum which had three options for the pipeline routing. A preferred alignment was then identified and a detailed cost estimation for the alternative was developed by Wallace Group.

In September 2022, the Board approved moving forward with the environmental work on the preferred pipeline alignment. After a competitive solicitation process, the District contracted with SWCA Environmental Consultants to perform the work. In July 2023, SWCA completed the Preliminary Environmental Constraint Analysis which did not identify any constraints that would make the project infeasible to construct. SWCA was then directed to complete the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) which is before the committee.

The IS/MND provides a detailed description, required discretionary approvals and evaluation of the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction of the proposed project. The environmental checklist and environmental evaluation include the following factors that potentially could be affected:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning Noise Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Most identified impacts are associated with the actual construction of the project. Details for each of these along with mitigation measures can be found in Section 2 of the document.

The overarching environmental determination is, that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions and mitigation measures in the project have

been made by or agreed to by the District. The mitigation measures can be found at the end of each factor (list of factors are above).

Next Steps

The required public comment period for the IS/MND began on September 27th and will end on October 27th. The comment period has been advertised in the Tribune and is posted on the District's website along with the complete document. After the close of the comment period, staff and SWCA will need to develop responses to the comments received and include those in the final document to be presented to the Board for certification. It is anticipated that the IS/MND will go to the Board at their December meeting. Staff will bring this item back to the UAC at the November meeting.

If the IS/MND is certified by the Board, staff will request direction from the Board to continue the project which will include looking for funding alternatives, developing a request for proposal (RFP) for design services, working with the County and the City of Morro Bay on pipeline related permits and working on securing water agreement(s) for the delivery of water to Los Osos.

Attachments

Section 1 and the Environmental Checklist and Environmental Evaluation
(The complete IS/MND can be found on the District's website at www.losososcsd.org)

Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Los Osos Community Services District Resiliency Intertie Project, Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County, California

SEPTEMBER 2023

PREPARED FOR

Los Osos Community Services District

PREPARED BY

SWCA Environmental Consultants

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE LOS OSOS COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT RESILIENCY INTERTIE PROJECT, LOS OSOS, SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for

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SWCA Project No. 80090

September 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD) is considering the Water Supply Resiliency Intertie (project) to allow delivery of potable water to the LOCSD's water distribution system, which would reduce the amount of local groundwater pumping from the Los Osos Groundwater Basin and provide further protection against seawater intrusion.

The intertie location and pipeline alignment were evaluated through a *Preliminary Environmental Constraints Analysis* (SWCA Environmental Consultants [SWCA] 2023) to analyze potential environmental constraints associated with construction and operation of the proposed pipeline and tie-in. SWCA has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) at the request of LOCSD.

1.1 Project Location

The project alignment consists of an approximately 2.5-mile segment of South Bay Boulevard, Quintana Road, and Highway 1 (Figure 1). The intertie (to the Chorro Valley Pipeline) would be constructed to the north of the southbound lane of Highway 1 and the proposed pipeline alignment would begin at this location, cross under Highway 1 and extend south toward Quintana Road, west along Quintana Road toward South Bay Boulevard, south along South Bay Boulevard, and would terminate at the LOCSD's basin at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard (Figure 2). The entire project would be located within the public right-of-way (ROW) and within the unincorporated San Luis Obispo county, under the jurisdiction of the County of San Luis Obispo (County), except for the portion of the project beginning approximately 600 feet north of the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead parking lot/turnout to approximately 1,200 feet south of the South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road intersection, which would be located in Morro Bay city under the jurisdiction of the City of Morro Bay (City). The entire project alignment and intertie location is located within the California Coastal Zone and portions of the alignment are located within original and appellate jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission (CCC). Additionally, the project would be classified as a "Major Public Works Project" and would be appealable to the CCC based on the type of development being proposed.

1.2 Environmental Setting

The proposed intertie would be located adjacent to Highway 1 in a location that primarily consists of gently to moderately rolling hills, annual grassland and freshwater emergent wetland habitat. The pipeline alignment is primarily characterized by flat, paved roadways that are surrounded by primarily by bare soils, annual grassland, weedy plants, coastal dune scrub, manzanita, and willow thickets. The potential booster pump station location is in a disturbed area surrounded by riparian and freshwater marsh habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets, on the east side of South Bay Boulevard and ruderal and coastal scrub habitat on the west side of South Bay Boulevard.

Figure 1. Project location map.

Figure 2. Project site plan.

1.3 Project Description

The project would involve the construction of an intertie to the Chorro Valley Pipeline (CVP), which would be located approximately 0.25 mile east of the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Highway 1, and installation of an approximately 2.5-mile pipeline that would extend from the proposed intertie south under Highway 1, southwest along Quintana Road, and south along South Bay Boulevard to the LOCSD water distribution system tie-in location near the LOCSD's basin located at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard. The pipeline alignment would be primarily under South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road, entirely within the public ROW. The portion of the alignment through Quintana Road may be constrained due to various existing pipelines and utilities, including pipelines for the City's Water Reclamation Facility. For this reason, the pipeline may need to be placed elsewhere within the ROW, such as under the roadway shoulder. Installation of the pipeline would require three crossings along South Bay Boulevard, at Chorro Creek/unnamed drainage and Los Osos Creek.

The purpose of the intertie to the CVP is to provide an alternative source of potable for the LOCSD. During wet years and based on supply, the LOCSD could receive unused allocations of State Water Project water through the CVP to offset pumping in the Los Osos Groundwater Basin or for an emergency water reserve. It is anticipated that state water could provide up to 200 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water supply. The intertie is anticipated to enhance the reliability and resiliency of the LOCSD's water supply and guarantee a dependable and robust supply, especially in the face of climate change and persistent drought conditions. The proposed intertie would consist of a vault with piping, meter, valves, and may also consist of a booster pump station that would facilitate a controlled and metered flow of potable water to the LOCSD. The booster pump station, if constructed, would be located south of the Blue Heron Terrace Mobile Home Park, on the east side of South Bay Boulevard, at the dirt parking area/pullout for the Chorro Flats Sediment Capture and Wetlands Restoration Project. The metering vault would include a check valve to safeguard against the potential to introduce water back into the CVP.

Construction of the pipeline and intertie is anticipated to being sometime in 2025 and be operational by 2026. Potential staging and material stockpile areas have been identified at the north side of the Turri Road northbound right turn lane, where there is an existing dirt parking/turnout area; at the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trail parking and/or pullout area; and/or at the terminus of South Bay Boulevard at Teresa Road.

1.3.1 *Construction*

Construction of the intertie and pipeline would likely involve the use of a backhoe, water truck with shaker table and desanders, dump truck, drilling rig, boring machine, and pipe trailer, though actual equipment would be selected by the project contractor. The construction sequence would include the following:

1. **Site preparation.** Minimal grading is anticipated for construction activities at the intertie and potential booster pump station locations. Temporary construction fencing, silt fencing, and tree protection fencing would be installed at the start of construction at these locations and removed at completion of construction.
2. **Aboveground facilities.** Permanent aboveground facilities would include a concrete vault (buried with vault lid several inches above ground surface), approximately 40 square feet in area and approximately 8 feet deep, that would include piping, meter, and valves. No electrical service to the intertie vault is anticipated. If a booster station is needed, the booster pump station would include a small electrical/utility building to house the electrical equipment, pumps, valves, and other miscellaneous equipment. New electrical service would be required for the potential booster

pump station and would likely include a 100 square-foot pad mount transformer. Construction of these facilities would last approximately 3 to 4 months. An existing LOCSD drainage basin located at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard would be utilized for intertie pipeline discharges. No physical improvements to the drainage basin are proposed, and a discharge pipe (with air gap separation between discharge pipe and high-water level in the basin) would be constructed from the pipeline to the edge of the drainage basin to convey water discharges.

3. **Pipeline construction.** The proposed pipeline alignment would begin at the intertie location, cross under Highway 1 and extend south toward Quintana Road, west along Quintana Road toward South Bay Boulevard, south along South Bay Boulevard, and would terminate at the LOCSD's basin at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard.

   The pipeline alignment would be located in the existing asphalt ROW and would require approximately 13,000 LF of 12-inch-diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) C900 Class 235 pipe. The pipeline would be constructed using traditional open-trench methods, which would involve excavation with a backhoe of an approximately 3-foot-wide by 4-foot-deep trench, installation of the new pipe, backfilling of the trench with the removed material, and pavement to County and City standards depending on location. Construction of the pipeline at the Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek/unnamed drainage crossings would either include crossing the creeks on the existing bridge structures or boring under the creek by horizontal directional drilling methods[1]. Horizontal directional drilling or jack and bore (casing) would also be used to install the pipeline under Highway 1 between the intertie location and Quintana Road. At the bridge crossings and in the vault the pipeline would be ductile iron, and at the horizontal directional drilling crossing the pipeline would likely be pressure class 200 high-density polyethylene pipe. The alignment would require partial lane closures to South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road and would require a Traffic Control Plan to be submitted and reviewed by the County and City in conjunction with encroachment permits. Construction of the pipeline would be expected to last 4 to 5 months.

1.3.2 *Operation*

It is assumed that the intertie could operate at a uniform rate 24 hours per day, 48 weeks out of the year, accounting for an assumed 4-week period each fall when State Water Project pipeline is shut down for maintenance.

When the intertie is not used for periods at a time, stagnant water in the pipeline would need to be purged prior to subsequent use. A single pipe volume would contain approximately 75,000 gallons that would need to be purged and discharged each time the intertie use is initiated after sitting. The LOCSD proposes to use its existing basin at South Bay Boulevard and Santa Ysabel Avenue to receive purge water from the pipeline flushing; this discharged water would be recharged to the groundwater basin. The conveyance pipeline would include valves and controls to purge water to the basin prior to entry into the LOCSD water system, which is located at the Santa Ysabel basin.

Depending on the amount of water received by the intertie, pumping would be reduced at other LOCSD wells in the Los Osos Groundwater Basin to mitigate seawater intrusion. The exact well locations that pumping would be reduced at and the amount of reduction would vary based on variability of production.

[1] The existing Los Osos Creek bridge is scheduled to be replaced by the County. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2025 and the replacement bridge would be located slightly east of the existing alignment. It is anticipated that the new bridge would support the proposed pipeline for this project; however, given the uncertainty of completion of the replacement bridge, horizontal directional drilling along the west side of the existing bridge is considered in this analysis.

Existing LOCSD staff would perform annual inspections and start up and closure activities (opening and closing of the valves) of the intertie and daily inspections of the potential booster pump station when the intertie is in operation. Infrequent maintenance activities would be expected to occur once a year or less.

1.4 Required Discretionary Approvals

Per the County's Local Coastal Program (LCP), "Pipelines and Transmission Lines" and "Public Utility Facilities" uses require Development Plan approval by the County on property without a Public Facilities land use designation. This is due to the fact that Table O of the County's LCP identifies "Pipelines and Transmission Lines" and "Public Utility Facilities" as a "special use" (S-13) in all land use categories except for areas designated Public Facilities, where it is a "principally permitted use." Section 23.01.023(c)(4) of the *County of San Luis Obispo Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance* (CZLUO) states that any uses that are not principally permitted (P) uses are appealable to the CCC. The pipeline would be on unincorporated property in the county with Open Space and Agriculture land use designations. Additionally, Section 23.01.043(c)(5) of the CZLUO states that "[a]ny development that constitutes a Major Public Works Project or Major Energy Facility [is appealable to the CCC]. "Major Public Works Project" or "Major Energy Facility" shall mean any proposed public works project or energy facility exceeding $100,000 in estimated construction cost, pursuant to Section 13012, Title 14 of the California Administrative Code." The project would require a Coastal Development Permit for work located within the unincorporated county.

Per the City's LCP, all projects within the City that are within the Coastal Zone are required to obtain a Coastal Development Permit. While there are several exceptions to this requirement, pipelines and booster pump stations are not included in the list of exceptions. The project would require a Coastal Development Permit for work located within city limits.

The pipeline alignment that runs through Los Osos Creek falls under the jurisdiction of the CCC Original Permit. According to Coastal Act Section 30601.3, if the local government, applicant, and CCC all agree, a consolidated coastal development permit application can be processed. This process simplifies the review process by having only the CCC review and approve the permit, instead of having separate permits from multiple jurisdictions. The Coastal Act regulates the entire project, while the LCP provides guidance for review. This approach eliminates the need for preparing and processing multiple permit applications and avoiding a potential appeal process associated with the local government's permit action. If conflicts arise with LCP policies, they can be addressed pursuant to Coastal Act policies instead of processing an LCP amendment. The consolidated development permits undergo the same CCC review, noticing, and hearing procedures as standard permits.

Encroachment permits would be required from the County for work within the South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road alignments, from the City for work within a portion of the South Bay Boulevard alignment, and from Caltrans for work under Highway 1.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

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.

☒ Aesthetics	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Public Services
☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☐ Recreation
☒ Air Quality	☒ Hydrology and Water Quality	☒ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Land Use and Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☒ Utilities and Service Systems
☐ Energy	☒ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☐ Geology and Soils	☐ Population and Housing	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that 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 measure 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.

☐ I find that 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.

Date: September 26, 2023 **Signed:**

Ron Munds, General Manager

I. Aesthetics

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (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 [PRC] Section 21001(b)).

The California 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. Within the county's Coastal Zone, there is one officially designated state scenic highway and several eligible state scenic highways. Highway 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. Portions of U.S. Route (US) 101, Highway 46, Highway 41, Highway 166, and a southern portion of Highway 1 are also classified as Eligible State Scenic Highways – Not Officially Designated. Highway 1 is also a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road.

The CZLUO establishes regulations for visual resources that apply to all projects that are visible from the shoreline, public beaches, the Morro Bay estuary, and any of the roads specified in the applicable planning area standards for Critical Viewsheds, Scenic Corridors or Sensitive Resource Areas (SRAs) intended to protect visual resources (CZLUO 23.04.210). Structures that are not visible from these locations or agricultural structures that are 600 sf or less in area or other minor agriculturally related development are exempt from these standards. The CZLUO also includes a section detailing standards for all outdoor night-lighting sources, with the exception of streetlights located within public rights-of-way and all uses established in the Agriculture land use category (CZLUO 23.04.320).

The *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan 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. County 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 designation of scenic corridors along public roads and highways, retaining existing access to scenic vista points, and

ensuring that new development in Urban and Village areas are consistent with the local character, identity, and sense of place. Policies in the County COSE supplement CZLUO policies, except when the County COSE policies conflict with CZLUO policies, for which the County CZLUO policies would control (COSE 9.2).

The *City of Morro Bay General Plan/LCP Coastal Land Use Plan* (together known as Plan Morro Bay) contains policies that protect the city's visual resources. The waterfront and Embarcadero are designated as scenic view areas in Plan Morro Bay. Morro Rock, the sand spit, the harbor, and navigable waterways are all considered significant scenic resources.

Plan Morro Bay identifies several policies and goals related to protecting and enhancing views within the city. Public views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas shall be protected and enhanced, and alteration of natural landforms shall be minimized. Additionally, development in visually prominent settings, including all development seen from Highway 1, is required to be sited and designed to avoid blocking or having a significant adverse impact on public views. New development is also prohibited on top of, within at least 300 feet horizontally, or within at least 100 feet vertically of visually prominent ridgelines, whichever is more restrictive.

The proposed intertie location would be located adjacent to Highway 1 in a location that primarily consists of gently to moderately rolling hills, annual grassland and freshwater emergent wetland habitat. The pipeline alignment is primarily characterized by flat, paved roadways that are surrounded by primarily by bare soils, annual grassland, weedy plants, coastal dune scrub, manzanita, and willow thickets. The potential booster pump station location is in a disturbed area surrounded by riparian and freshwater marsh habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets, on the east side of South Bay Boulevard and ruderal and coastal scrub habitat on the west side of South Bay Boulevard.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

A scenic vista is generally defined as a high-quality view displaying good aesthetic and compositional values that can be seen from public viewpoints. Some scenic vistas are officially or informally designated by public agencies or other organizations. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista would occur if the project would significantly degrade the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads or other public areas. A project's potential effect on a scenic vista is largely dependent on 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.

According to Plan Morro Bay and the County COSE, there are no officially designated scenic vistas in the project alignment, though views northward toward Morro Rock, southward toward Morro Bay Estuary and the sandspit, southward toward Los Osos and the Irish Hills, and northward toward Cayucos both along the coastline and looking northeast toward the hills, serve as informal scenic vistas. The visible portions of the project include the proposed intertie and potential booster pump station locations. Views of the proposed intertie location (looking north from US 101 and Quintana Road) are not designated as a scenic vista or a scenic corridor. Views of the potential booster pump station location (looking east from South Bay Boulevard) are backgrounded by Chorro Creek and its vegetation, which are not designated as a scenic vista or a scenic corridor. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California State Scenic Highway System Map, this portion of Highway 1 is an officially designated state scenic highway. According to the County COSE, the segment of South Bay Boulevard between Santa Ysabel Avenue to Highway 1 is a suggested scenic corridor. In addition, the County's Estero Area Plan identifies policies to maintain South Bay Boulevard in accordance with the high scenic values of Morro Bay, the marshlands, and the hills and peaks of the Morros. Additionally, Plan Morro Bay identifies South Bay Boulevard as a street providing scenic view.

A scenic resource is a specific feature or element with a high degree of memorability or landmark characteristics that contribute to the high visual quality of the corridor. In general, coastal scenic resources along Highway 1 include the Pacific Ocean, the rugged cliffs and shoreline, rock outcroppings and inland hills, vegetated creek ways, and patterns of mature native vegetation. Morro Rock is among the most memorable and iconic natural features and coastal scenic resources as seen from Highway 1 through Morro Bay and the coastal communities of northern San Luis Obispo county. The project would result in a significant impact if it were to damage or have a substantial negative effect on views of any of the specific resources identified above, as seen from Highway 1.

The project would result in the construction of an approximately 2.5-mile underground pipeline and an intertie consisting of a primarily buried vault with piping, meter, valves, and may include a pump station as necessary. The intertie would be constructed to the north of the southbound lane of Highway 1 and the proposed pipeline alignment would begin at this location, extend south toward Quintana Road, west along Quintana Road toward South Bay Boulevard, and south along South Bay Boulevard, terminating at the LOCSD's basin at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard. Following construction, viewers along Highway 1 may briefly glimpse the meters, pumps, or housing associated with the proposed intertie, depending on materials and height of the structure. However, the majority of the project would be underground, and the site would be returned to pre-construction conditions.

Mitigation Measure AES-1 has been identified to mitigate potential impacts to the inland hills as viewed from Highway 1 and requires that any above-ground components of the intertie be screened with vegetation as viewed from Highway 1. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

c) In non-urbanized areas, would the project 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?

South Bay Boulevard, Santa Ysabel, Quintana Road, and Highway 1 are considered the primary public viewing areas that could be affected by construction of the proposed project. Construction activity of the intertie, potential booster pump station, and pipeline alignment would be seen by the public traveling on South Bay Boulevard, Quintana Road, and Highway 1. Construction of the proposed project could result in a temporary change to public viewing areas. Temporary changes would likely include but are not limited to the staging of construction equipment and construction-related signage. Construction activity would be temporary in nature, and the completed project would be consistent with other development on the roadways and is not expected to significantly degrade existing views of the area. Additionally, any disturbance within the public ROW would be returned to preconstruction conditions.

Following construction, viewers along Highway 1 may briefly glimpse the meters, pumps, or the potential pumphouse associated with the proposed intertie, depending on materials and height of the structure. However, the majority of the project would be underground, and the pipeline alignment would be returned to preconstruction conditions.

As discussed above, based on the final design of the intertie features, the project may have the potential to impact the view associated with Highway 1. The above ground infrastructure associated with the intertie would not silhouette against any visually prominent ridgelines. The potential booster pump station would be located in proximity to Chorro Creek and the associated creek vegetation. Chorro Creek is considered a navigable waterway, which is a significant scenic resource per Plan Morro Bay, and aboveground features of the potential booster pump station may have the potential to impact views associated with this resource. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1 to provide screening, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

d) Would the project 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 any permanent lighting features that could create a new source of light or glare from the project site. Construction activity would occur during daylight hours, though some trenching for the pipeline along South Bay Boulevard may take place at nighttime to avoid disruptions to commuters travelling between Morro Bay and Los Osos. Nighttime construction would require temporary nighttime lighting. Temporary nighttime lighting would be used for illumination purposes, directed onto the project site, have minimal light intensity, and would be shielded away from surrounding properties in compliance with CZLUO 23.04.320 and City Zoning Code 17.52.080. Nighttime lighting would be temporary in nature and would comply with existing policies; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

AES-1 Screening. Within 30 days of completion of construction or prior to operation of the intertie, whichever occurs first, the Los Osos Community Services District shall implement the following measures for above-ground infrastructure at the intertie location visible from Highway 1 and at the booster pump station, if construction, visible from South Bay Boulevard.

- Above-ground infrastructure shall be muted, earth-toned colors to blend with the surrounding vegetative landscape, where possible.

- Vegetative screening shall be installed to provide for screening of 75% of above-ground infrastructure as seen from Highway 1 and South Bay Boulevard. Screening shall be achieved within 5 years of landscape planting.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California 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:				
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

San Luis Obispo county 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 General Plan Agriculture Element* includes policies, goals, objectives, and other guides or 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/Crop-Report-Current/Crop-Report-2019.pdf.

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) 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 in the project alignment are designated as Urban and Built-Up Land, Other Land, and Farmland of Local Potential (DOC 2022).

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 that are much lower than normal because they are based on farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The project alignment is not within lands subject to a Williamson Act contract. A portion of the pipeline alignment adjacent to Blue Heron Terrance Mobile Home Park is within the unincorporated county with a land use designation of Agriculture.

According to the Natural Resource Conservation Survey (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2021), the project alignment is underlain by these 10 soil types:

- **Baywood fine sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand.

- **Baywood fine sand, 9 to 15 percent slopes.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand.

- **Diablo clay, 5 to 9 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 15.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff and a depth to restrictive feature of 40 to 59 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soil profile consists of clay and bedrock.

- **Gaviota sandy loam, 50 to 75 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 15.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 8 to 16 inches to lithic bedrock. The typical soil profile consists of sandy loam and unweathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 30 to 50 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Salinas silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 14.** This well drained soil has a negligible runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of silty clay loam and very fine sandy loam.

- **Corducci and Typic Xerofluvents, 0 to 5 percent slopes, occasionally flooded, Major Land Resources Area 14.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a

depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand, sand, and coarse sand.

According to PRC Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10% 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, that 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 alignment does not support any forest land or timberland.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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 alignment does not contain any Important Farmland classifications. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to convert prime farmland to non-agricultural uses and there would be *no impact*.

b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The project alignment is not subject to a Williamson Act contract and is not engaged in active agricultural activities. A portion of the alignment has a land use designation of Agriculture by the County; however, the project in this location is limited to pipeline within the existing paved ROW of South Bay Boulevard. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to conflict with zoning for agricultural uses or Williamson Act contracts and there would be *no impact.*

c) Would the project 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 alignment does not have a designation for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to convert land designated for forest use to non-forest designations and there would be *no impact.*

d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Forest land is defined by PRC Section 12220(g) 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." The project alignment does not contain more than 10% native tree coverage and is not considered forest land. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of trees or convert forest land to non-forest use and there would be *no impact*.

e) Would the project 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 alignment is entirely located within public ROW with no existing agricultural uses. Portions of the pipeline alignment and the proposed intertie are located adjacent to agricultural lands; however, none of the project components would impact these features. Therefore, the project would not result in changes in the existing environment that could result in the conversion of Important Farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use and therefore there would be *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

III. Air Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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:				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Regulatory Authorities

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 (USEPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), 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 Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) required the USEPA to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and also sets deadlines for their attainment. The CARB 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 and establishment of California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The SLOAPCD is the agency 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 in 2023) 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 SLOAPCD 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 (NOx), 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 significant for construction operations for each of these contaminants.

Operational impacts are focused primarily on the indirect emissions (i.e., motor vehicles) associated with residential, commercial and industrial development. General screening criteria used by the SLOAPCD to determine the type and scope of projects requiring an air quality assessment, and/or mitigation, is presented in Table 1-1, which can be found here: https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/UpdatedTable1-1_Final-Nov2017.pdf. 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. Table 1-1 is based on ozone precursor and GHG emissions and is not comprehensive. It should be used for general guidance only. This table is not applicable for projects that involve heavy-duty diesel activity and/or fugitive dust emissions. 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 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 San Luis Obispo county, ozone and fine particulates (particulate matter of 10 microns in diameter or smaller [PM_{10}]) 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.

County Clean Air Plan

The 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 other local agencies on how to attain and maintain the state standards for ozone and PM_{10}. The CAP presents a detailed description of the sources and pollutants which impact the jurisdiction, 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 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. Main areas within the county known to have NOA include areas along the coast from Ragged Point to Nipomo, and near the Highway 41 and Highway 46 junction in the eastern part of the county. According to the SLOAPCD NOA Map, the northern portion of the project alignment, beginning approximately 1,200 feet south of the South Bay Boulevard and Morro Bay State Park Road intersection, is located in an area where there is potential for NOA to occur.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. There are residences located along portions of the pipeline alignment near the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard and the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

In order to be considered consistent with the 2001 CAP, a project must be consistent with the land use planning and transportation control measures and strategies outlined in the CAP (SLOAPCD 2012). Adopted land use planning strategies include, but are not limited to, planning compact communities with higher densities, providing for mixed land use, and balancing jobs and housing. The project does not include development of retail or commercial uses that would be open to the public, therefore, land use planning strategies such as mixed-use development and planning compact communities are generally not applicable.

Operation of the proposed project would require maintenance trips by existing LOCSD employees and would not generate new employment opportunities that could facilitate population growth in the area. Further, the project does not propose new buildings, public facilities, or infrastructure that would facilitate direct or indirect population growth in the area. Outside of construction, operation of the intertie would require minimal trips per month for maintenance activities. Construction activities would result in temporary traffic controls that could temporarily impede sidewalk access, bicycle paths, or existing roads; however, operation of the project would not impede or restrict the existing pedestrian circulation system. Implementation of the project is not expected to result in features that would be inconsistent with the 2001 CAP; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project 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 Emissions

Construction of the intertie, potential booster pump station, and trenching for the pipeline would result in particulate matter emissions (PM_{10}) in addition to DPM, ROG, and NOx emissions from the construction equipment. The surrounding area consists primarily of open space uses, with residential uses near the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard and the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road. Residential units are considered sensitive receptors and may be affected by construction-related emissions. Construction emissions would be temporary in nature and similar to other projects within the county and city. While exact earthwork quantities are not known at this time, the SLOAPCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook provides thresholds of significance for construction related emissions. The SLOAPCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook also provides preliminary screening construction emission rates based on the proposed volume of soil to be moved and the anticipated area of disturbance and clarifies that any project that would require grading of 4.0 acres or more can exceed the 2.5-ton PM_{10} quarterly threshold. The proposed project would not require grading in excess of 4.0 acres and is not expected to exceed the SLOAPCD quarterly PM_{10} threshold. However, due to the project's location near sensitive receptor locations, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 have been identified to implement idling restrictions and dust control measures to reduce unnecessary emissions during construction activities.

Operation-Related Emissions

Operational features of the project consist of operation of the intertie and potential booster pump station and maintenance trips. The intertie and potential booster pump station would be electric, which would not result in criteria pollutant emissions. The only vehicle trips associated with the operation of the project would be from periodic maintenance and inspection. Air emissions from operational features would not exceed SLOAPCD thresholds and impacts would be less than significant.

Operational components of the project are not expected to exceed SLOAPCD thresholds for criteria pollutant emissions. However, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would restrict diesel idling and require dust control measures during project construction to reduce unnecessary emissions near sensitive receptor locations. Therefore, impacts related to criteria pollutants would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

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.

Surrounding land uses of the project site are primarily open space uses and there are residences located along portions of the pipeline alignment near the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard and the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road. Construction activities would be limited in nature and consistent with other projects within the county and city; however, construction activity would be located in close proximity to residential units and associated emissions have the

potential to affect the nearby sensitive receptors. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would ensure project emissions are reduced to a level that would not adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

The north portion of the project alignment, beginning approximately 1,200 feet north of the South Bay Boulevard and Morro Bay State Park Road intersection, is located in an area identified as containing NOA by the SLOAPCD. The majority of the project would be located in previously disturbed roadway alignment containing non-native fill (e.g., road base) and a small portion of the project would require disturbance in native soils (i.e., intertie and potential booster pump station). However, these areas would require minimal grading and would not result in significant NOA emissions. The LOCSD would be required to comply with CARB Airborne Toxic Control Measures (ATCMs), which require prior to any grading activities a geologic evaluation be conducted to determine if NOA is present within the area that will be disturbed. If NOA is not present, an exemption request form, along with a copy of the geologic report, must be filed with the SLOAPCD. If NOA is found at the site, the LOCSD must comply with all requirements outlined in the Asbestos ATCM.

The project does not propose to burn any on-site vegetative materials and would be subject to SLOAPCD restrictions on developmental burning of vegetative material; therefore, the project would not result in substantial air pollutant emissions from such activities. 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. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 During all construction activities and use of diesel vehicles, the Los Osos Community Services District shall implement the following idling control techniques. All measures shall be printed on construction plans.

1. Idling Restrictions Near Sensitive Receptors for Both On- and Off-Road Equipment.
    a. Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors if feasible;
    b. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors shall not be permitted;
    c. Use of alternative-fueled equipment shall be used whenever possible; and
    d. Signs that specify the no idling requirements shall be posted and enforced at the construction site.
2. California Diesel Idling Regulations. On-road diesel vehicles shall comply with Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations. This regulation limits idling from diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of more than 10,000 pounds and licensed for operation on highways. It applies to California- and non-California based vehicles. In general, the regulation specifies that drivers of said vehicles:

a. Shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than 5 minutes at any location, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation; and
b. Shall not operate a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system (APS) to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on that vehicle during sleeping or resting in a sleeper berth for greater than 5 minutes at any location when within 1,000 feet of a restricted area, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation.

Signs must be posted in the designated queuing areas and job sites to remind drivers of the 5-minute idling limit. The specific requirements and exceptions in the regulation can be reviewed at the following website: www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/truck-idling/2485.pdf.

AQ-2 During all construction and ground-disturbing activities, the Los Osos Community Services District shall implement the following particulate matter control measures and detail each measure on the project construction plans:

1. Reduce the amount of disturbed area where possible.
2. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site and from exceeding SLOAPCD's limit of 20% opacity for no greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Increased watering frequency shall be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour (mph) and cessation of grading activities during periods of winds over 25 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water is to be used in all construction and dust-control work.
3. All dirt stockpile areas (if any) shall be sprayed daily and covered with tarps or other dust barriers as needed.
4. Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project revegetation and landscape plans shall be implemented as soon as possible, following completion of any soil-disturbing activities.
5. Exposed grounds that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than 1 month after initial grading shall be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established.
6. All disturbed soil areas not subject to revegetation shall be stabilized using approved chemical binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the SLOAPCD.
7. All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
8. Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site.
9. All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or shall maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 23114.

10. Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site. Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads.
11. Water sweepers shall be used with reclaimed water where feasible. Roads shall be pre-wetted prior to sweeping when feasible.
12. All required mitigation measures for particulate matter with diameter of 10 microns or less (PM_{10}) shall be shown on grading and building plans.
13. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the fugitive dust emissions and enhance the implementation of the measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints, reduce visible emissions below the SLOAPCD's limit of 20% opacity for no greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the SLOAPCD Compliance Division prior to the start of any grading, earthwork, or demolition.

IV. Biological Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Sensitive Resource Area and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area Designations

The County CZLUO SRA combining designation identifies areas of San Luis Obispo County with special environmental qualities, or areas containing unique, sensitive, or endangered vegetation or habitat resources. The County CZLUO establishes specific standards for all uses requiring a land use permit that are located within an SRA combining designation. These standards include requirements for initial submittal of the land use permit application, application content, environmental determination, final permit requirements and processing, required findings, and minimum site design and development standards (23.07.162, 164, 166). These design and development standards include the prohibition of surface mining onsite, setback distances on ocean, lake, and streambank shoreline development, prevention of degradation of lakes, ponds, wetlands, or perennial watercourses, setback distances from geological features visible from offsite, and prevention of disturbance of specific vegetation when the SRA designation is applied because of its presence.

The County CZLUO also includes special provisions for any development proposed within or adjacent to an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA). The California Coastal Act defines an ESHA as any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their

special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments (CZLUO 23.07170).

Plan Morro Bay establishes an ESHA overlay to provide information about where requirements related to known and mapped ESHA are implemented in the city. Section 17.14.080 of the City Zoning Code establishes specific policies and standards for all development occurring in ESHA. These include requirements for initial site surveys to establish the presence of wetlands, sensitive habitat, vegetation, or wildlife species and the preparation of comprehensive biological site assessments when the initial site survey indicates potential for sensitive habitat or wildlife species. The standards also establish protective buffers from development to ESHA, limit land uses to those that are dependent upon the ESHA resource, and establish required findings that the approval body must make before approving a project.

Federal and State Endangered Species Acts

The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA) provides legislation to protect federally listed plant and animal species. If there is no federal nexus (e.g., federal funding, federal permitting, or other federal authorization), impacts to federally listed species must be mitigated via FESA Section 10 with a Habitat Conservation Plan. 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 is empowered to review projects for their potential to impact special-status species and their habitats. Under CESA, CDFW reserves the right to request the replacement of lost habitat that is considered important to the continued existence to CESA-protected species.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (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.

Clean Water Act and State Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Waters of the United States are typically identified by the presence of an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) and connectivity to traditional navigable waters or other jurisdictional features. Section 404 requires a permit for these activities under separate regulations by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and USEPA unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g., certain farming and forestry activities).

A Water Quality Certification is also required under Section 401 of the CWA before a Section 404 permit can be issued. Section 401 of the CWA and its provisions ensure that federally permitted activities comply with the federal CWA and state water quality laws. Section 401 is implemented through a review process that is conducted by the RWQCB and is triggered by the Section 404 permitting process. The RWQCB certifies via the Section 401 process that a proposed project complies with applicable effluent limitations, water quality standards, and other conditions of California law. Evaluating the effects of the proposed project on both water quality and quantity falls under the jurisdiction of the RWQCB.

Los Osos Communitywide Habitat Conservation Plan and Incidental Take Permit

The County of San Luis Obispo has adopted a Communitywide Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the community of Los Osos. The purpose of the HCP is to "authorize the covered activities while conserving the covered species and their habitats. Implementation of a programmatic, multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan, rather than a species-by-species or project-by-project approach, will maximize the benefits of conservation measures for covered species and eliminate potentially expensive and time-consuming efforts associated with processing individual incidental take permits for each project within the proposed Habitat Conservation Plan area." (County of San Luis Obispo 2021b)

As part of the HCP and ITP coverage, the County is required to mitigate the effects of the covered activities on the covered species through implementation of the LOHCP conservation program—a comprehensive program designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of the covered activities to the maximum extent practicable.

Participation in the HCP is voluntary and projects resulting in ground disturbance have other options for compliance with the local, state, and federal permitting requirements that are addressed through this plan. Upon issuance of the ITP by USFWS, establishment of a contract between the Implementing Entity and the County, and achievement of success criteria for the initial 15 acres of required "jump start" mitigation, the Implementing Entity will have the ability to extend take coverage to proponents of eligible projects once the initial habitat management project has achieved the performance criteria established in the LOHCP Adaptive Management and Monitoring Plan (County of San Luis Obispo 2021).

Project Setting

SWCA conducted a reconnaissance survey in July 2023 along the proposed pipeline alignment, proposed staging areas, potential booster pump station, and proposed intertie location. Prior to conducting the survey, SWCA queried the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) to gain insight into which special-status species and sensitive natural communities have been documented in the Los Osos and Morro Bay areas. The survey and CNDDB data provided information regarding biological resources occurring or potentially occurring in and adjacent to the proposed project alignment and the associated constraints the resources may have on the proposed project. The findings of the survey and the background review are provided below. Due to the diversity of species, habitats, and natural communities present within the project alignment, the project alignment has been described in 18 individual segments. A summary of the habitat types and species occurrences present in each segment is provided in Table 1.

S-1 to S-2

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins on the west side of South Bay Boulevard, south of Santa Ysabel Avenue at S-1 and extends approximately 175 feet west to the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard at S-2 (Figure 3). This segment includes bare soil, landscaping, and ruderal vegetation on the north shoulder of Santa Ysabel Avenue, grassland habitat composed of veldt grass (Ehrharta calycina) on the south shoulder of Santa Ysabel Avenue, and ice plant mats on both the north and south shoulders of Santa Ysabel Avenue. This segment is within MSS critical habitat and MSS are known to occur in patches of ice plant and veldt grass in this area. Occurrences of Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), southern curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata ssp. Sinuate*), San Luis Obispo owl's clover (*Castilleja densiflora var. obispoensis*), and Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) are reported within this segment. Occurrences of Morro Bay kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys heermanni morroensis*) are reported adjacent to this segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-2 to S-3

This segment begins at the southernmost end of the proposed pipeline alignment at S-2 on the corner of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 460 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-3 (Figure 3). The segment is largely landscaping, ice plant patches, and bare soil with minimal occurrences of weedy plants, including veldt grass, spiny sow thistle (*Sonchus asper*), and mayweed chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*) on the east shoulder of South Bay Boulevard. Coastal dune scrub is present on the west shoulder of South Bay Boulevard. The coastal dune scrub is part of the Elfin Forest and is managed for native habitat by the Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest (FEMEF). This segment is within MSS critical habitat and MSS are known to occur in the coastal scrub habitats west of South Bay Boulevard. Occurrences of MSS, California legless lizard, tidewater goby, obscure bumblebee (*Bombus caliginosus*), Morro manzanita, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Morro Bay kangaroo rat, southern curly-leaved monardella, Morro Bay blue butterfly (*Icaricia icarioides moroensis*), and Cooper's hawk are reported within this segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-3 to S-4

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-3 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 900 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-4 (Figure 3). This project segment on both the east of west side of South Bay Boulevard is composed of grassland and coastal dune scrub habitat, which includes species such as mock heather (*Ericameria ericoides*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), California croton (*Croton setigerus*), and coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*). This segment is within MSS critical habitat and MSS are known to occur in coastal dune scrub along South Bay Boulevard. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya (*Dudleya abramsii ssp. Bettinae*), California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*), and Cooper's hawk are reported within this segment however the species was not observed in this segment during the reconnaissance survey. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-4 to S-5

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-4 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 335 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-5 (Figure 3). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay Boulevard is composed of coastal dune scrub habitat, grassland, and ice plant mats. This segment is within critical habitat for MSS. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California black rail, California brackish snail (*Tryonia imitator*), and Cooper's hawk are reported within this segment. Eight Morro manzanita (*Arctostaphylos morroensis*) were observed approximately 55 feet north of S-4 on the west side of South Bay Boulevard. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-5 to S-6

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-5 (Figure 3) on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 200 feet north along South Bay Boulevard, over Los Osos Creek bridge. This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay Boulevard is composed of coastal dune scrub, riparian, and salt marsh habitat, which includes species such as California gray rush (Juncus patens), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and California bulrush (*Schoenoplectus californicus*). The project alignment crosses Los Osos Creek which drains into the Morro Bay State Estuary and Marine Reserve and is considered Waters of the United States and Waters of the State.

This segment is within critical habitat for MSS, South central California coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus)*, and tidewater goby. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California black rail, California brackish snail, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-6 to Possible Staging Area 1

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-6 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 450 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to the first possible staging/stockpile area (Figure 3, Figure 4). This project segment is composed of bare soil and ruderal vegetation within the staging area on the east side of South Bay Boulevard and coastal dune scrub and grassland adjacent to the staging area on both the east and west side of South Bay Boulevard. This segment is within critical habitat for MSS. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California black rail, California brackish snail, Morro manzanita, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

Possible Staging Area 1 to S-7

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at Possible Staging Area 1 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 930 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-7 (Figure 4). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes a freshwater seasonal wetland and coastal scrub habitat. This segment is within critical habitat for MSS and adjacent to California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) (CRLF) critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California brackish snail, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. Soil found at this site is primarily clay and rocky. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-7 to S-8

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-7 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 360 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-8 (Figure 4). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes grassland and coastal scrub habitat. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-8 to S-9

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-8 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 670 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-9 (Figure 4). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes grassland habitat. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-9 to S-10

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-9 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 0.3 miles north along South Bay Boulevard to S-10 (Figure 4, Figure 5). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes grassland and coastal scrub habitat.

This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-10 to Possible Staging Area 2

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-10 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 360 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to Possible Staging Area 2 (Figure 5). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes freshwater marsh habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets, as well as ruderal and bare soil within the staging area. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, MSS, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae),* and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

Possible Staging Area 2 to S-11

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at Possible Staging Area 2 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 750 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-11 (Figure 5, Figure 6). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes ruderal, coastal scrub, and grassland habitat. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, MSS, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California black rail, and Cooper's hawk are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-11 to S-12

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-11 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 430 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-12 (Figure 6). This project segment includes coastal scrub habitat on the east side of South Bay boulevard and salt marsh habitat on the west side of South Bay boulevard. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California seablite (*Suaeda californica*), and Oso manzanita (*Arctostaphylos osoensis*) are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-12 to S-13

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-12 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 0.2 miles north along South Bay Boulevard to S-13 (Figure 6). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes coastal scrub habitat. This segment is adjacent to California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, California seablite, California black rail, and Oso manzanita are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-13 to S-14

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-13 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 0.25 miles north along South Bay Boulevard to S-14 (Figure 6, Figure 7). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes freshwater marsh and riparian habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets. The project alignment crosses Chorro Creek which drains

into the Morro Bay State Estuary and Marine Reserve and is considered Waters of the United States and Waters of the State.

This segment is within California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, tidewater goby, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya, and Oso manzanita are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-14 to S-15

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-14 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 0.5 miles north along South Bay Boulevard to S-15 (Figure 7, Figure 8). This project segment includes riparian and freshwater marsh habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets, on the east side of South Bay Boulevard and ruderal and coastal scrub habitat on the west side of South Bay. This segment is within California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of obscure bumblebee, tidewater goby, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, steelhead, monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus pop. 1*), and Oso manzanita are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-15 to S-16

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-15 on South Bay Boulevard and extends approximately 215 feet north along South Bay Boulevard to S-16 on the corner of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road (Figure 8). This project segment on the east and west side of South Bay boulevard includes freshwater marsh and riparian habitat, composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets. This segment is within California red-legged frog critical habitat. Occurrences of Blochman's dudleya are reported within the segment. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-16 to S-17

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-16 on the corner of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road and extends approximately 0.35 miles east along Quintana Road to S-17 (Figure 8). This project segment includes freshwater marsh, riparian habitat, and freshwater emergent wetland habitat composed primarily of arroyo willow thickets, on the south side of Quintana Road and ruderal and coastal dune scrub habitat on the north side of Quintana Road. This segment is within California red-legged frog critical habitat. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

S-17 to S-18

This segment of the proposed pipeline alignment begins at S-17 on Quintana Road and extends 290 feet north across Highway 1 to S-18 (Figure 8). This project segment includes freshwater marsh and coastal scrub habitat on the south side of Highway 1 and grassland and freshwater emergent wetland habitat on the north side of Highway 1. This segment is within California red-legged frog critical habitat. No special status species were observed within this project segment during the reconnaissance survey.

Table 1. Summary of Habitat Types and Species Occurrences Along the Project Alignment

Segment	Habitat Present	Critical Habitat	CNDDB Occurrences	Suitable Habitat
S-1 to S-2	Bare soil Landscaping Ruderal vegetation Grassland	MSS	Northern California legless lizard tidewater goby southern curly-leaved monardella San Luis Obispo owl's clover Cooper's hawk	MSS Northern California legless lizard southern curly-leaved monardella San Luis Obispo owl's clover
S-2 to S-3	Landscaping Ice plant mats Bare soil Coastal dune scrub	MSS	MSS California legless lizard tidewater goby obscure bumblebee Morro manzanita San Luis Obispo owl's clover Morro Bay kangaroo rat southern curly-leaved monardella Morro Bay blue butterfly Cooper's hawk	MSS California legless lizard obscure bumblebee Morro manzanita San Luis Obispo owl's clover southern curly-leaved monardella Morro Bay blue butterfly
S-3 to S-4	Grassland Coastal dune scrub	MSS	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California black rail Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya
S-4 to S-5	Coastal dune scrub Grassland Ice plant mats	MSS	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California black rail California brackish snail Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya
S-5 to S-6	Coastal dune scrub Riparian Salt marsh	MSS	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya California black rail California brackish snail Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover, Betty's dudleya California black rail California brackish snail
S-6 to Possible Staging Area 1	Bare soil Ruderal vegetation Coastal dune scrub Grassland	MSS tidewater goby	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California black rail California brackish snail Morro manzanita Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Morro manzanita
Possible Staging Area 1 to S-7	Salt marsh Coastal scrub	MSS CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California brackish snail Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover California brackish snail Cooper's hawk
S-7 to S-8	Grassland Coastal scrub	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover
S-8 to S-9	Grassland	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee	obscure bumblebee

Segment	Habitat Present	Critical Habitat	CNDDB Occurrences	Suitable Habitat
			San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Cooper's hawk	San Luis Obispo owl's clover
S-10 to S-11	Grassland Coastal scrub	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover
S-11 to Possible Staging Area 2	Freshwater marsh Ruderal Bare soil	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee MSS San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Blochman's dudleya Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Cooper's hawk
Possible Staging Area 2 to S-12	Ruderal Coastal scrub Grassland	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee MSS San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California black rail Cooper's hawk	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover
S-12 to S-13	Coastal scrub Salt marsh	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California seablite Oso manzanita	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover California seablite Oso manzanita
S-13 to S-14	Coastal scrub	CRLF (adjacent)	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya California seablite California black rail Oso manzanita	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover California seablite Oso manzanita
S-14 to S-15	Freshwater marsh Riparian	CRLF	obscure bumblebee tidewater goby San Luis Obispo owl's clover Betty's dudleya Oso manzanita	tidewater goby
S-15 to S-16	Riparian Freshwater marsh Ruderal Coastal scrub	CRLF	obscure bumblebee tidewater goby San Luis Obispo owl's clover steelhead - south-central California coast DPS monarch butterfly Oso manzanita	obscure bumblebee San Luis Obispo owl's clover steelhead - south-central California coast DPS monarch butterfly Oso manzanita
S-16 to S-17	Freshwater marsh Riparian	CRLF	Blochman's dudleya	N/A
S-17 to S-18	Freshwater marsh Riparian	CRLF	N/A	N/A
S-18 to S-19	Freshwater marsh Coastal scrub	CRLF	N/A	N/A

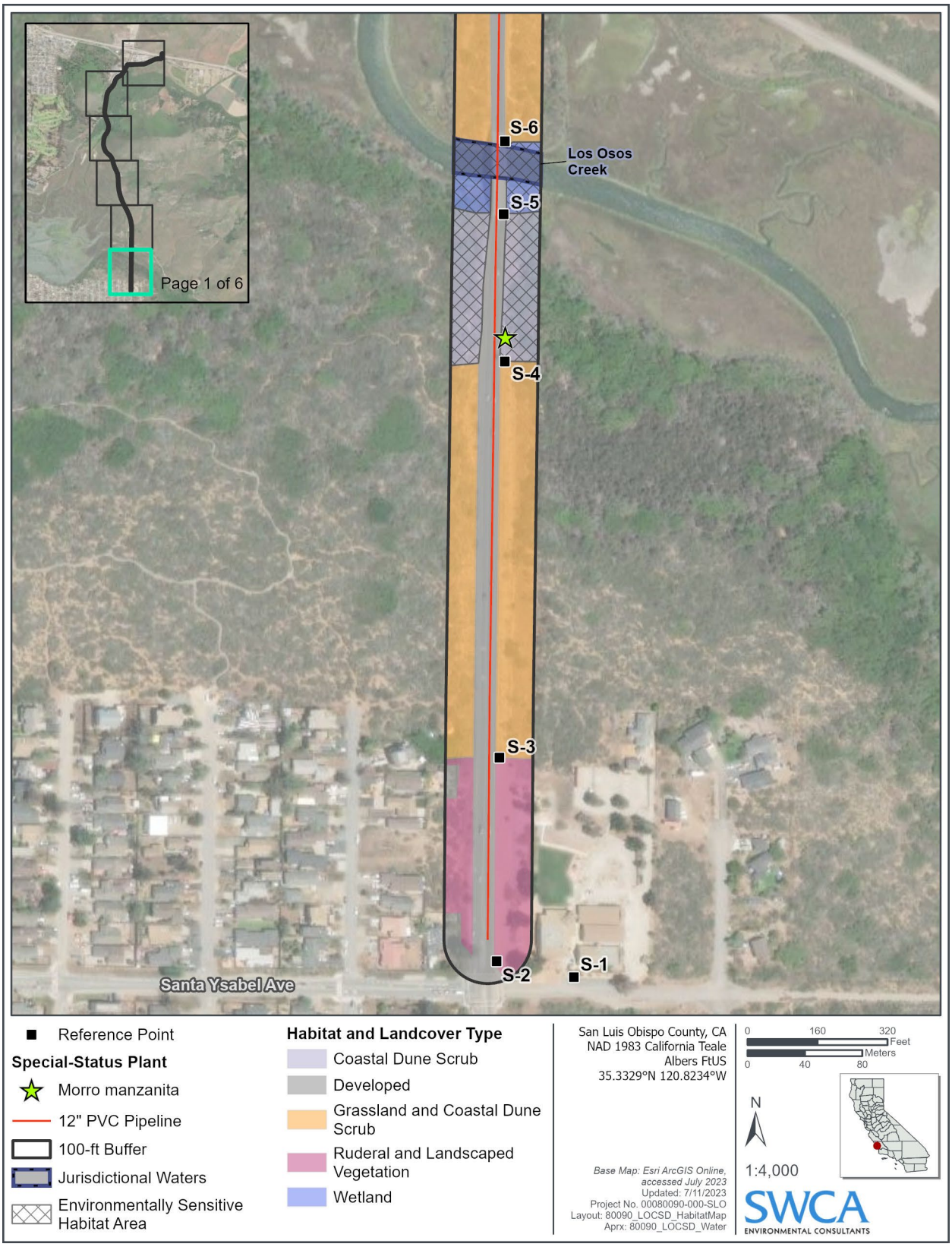

Figure 3. Habitat map of project alignment S-1 to S-6

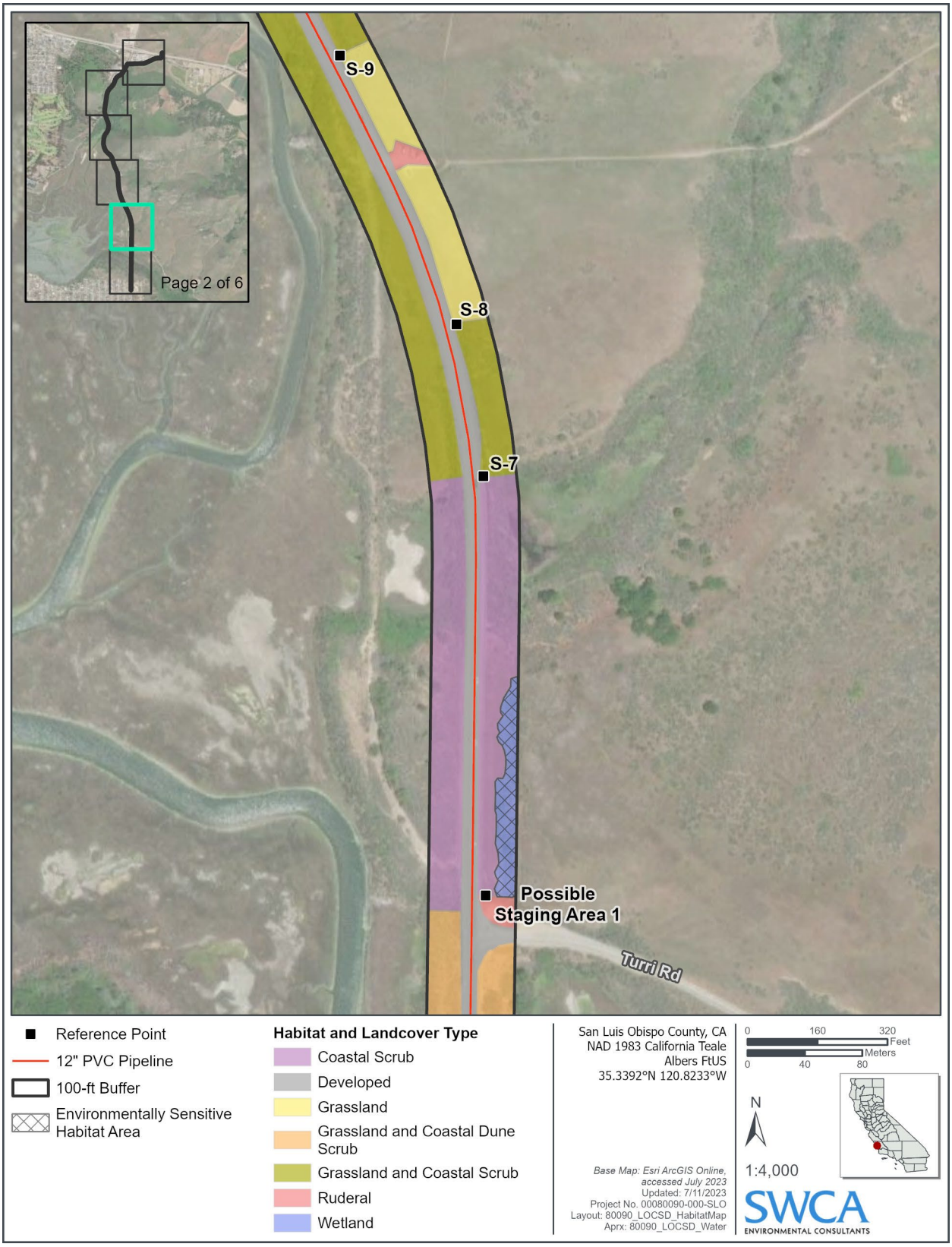

Figure 4. Habitat map of project alignment S-6 to S-9

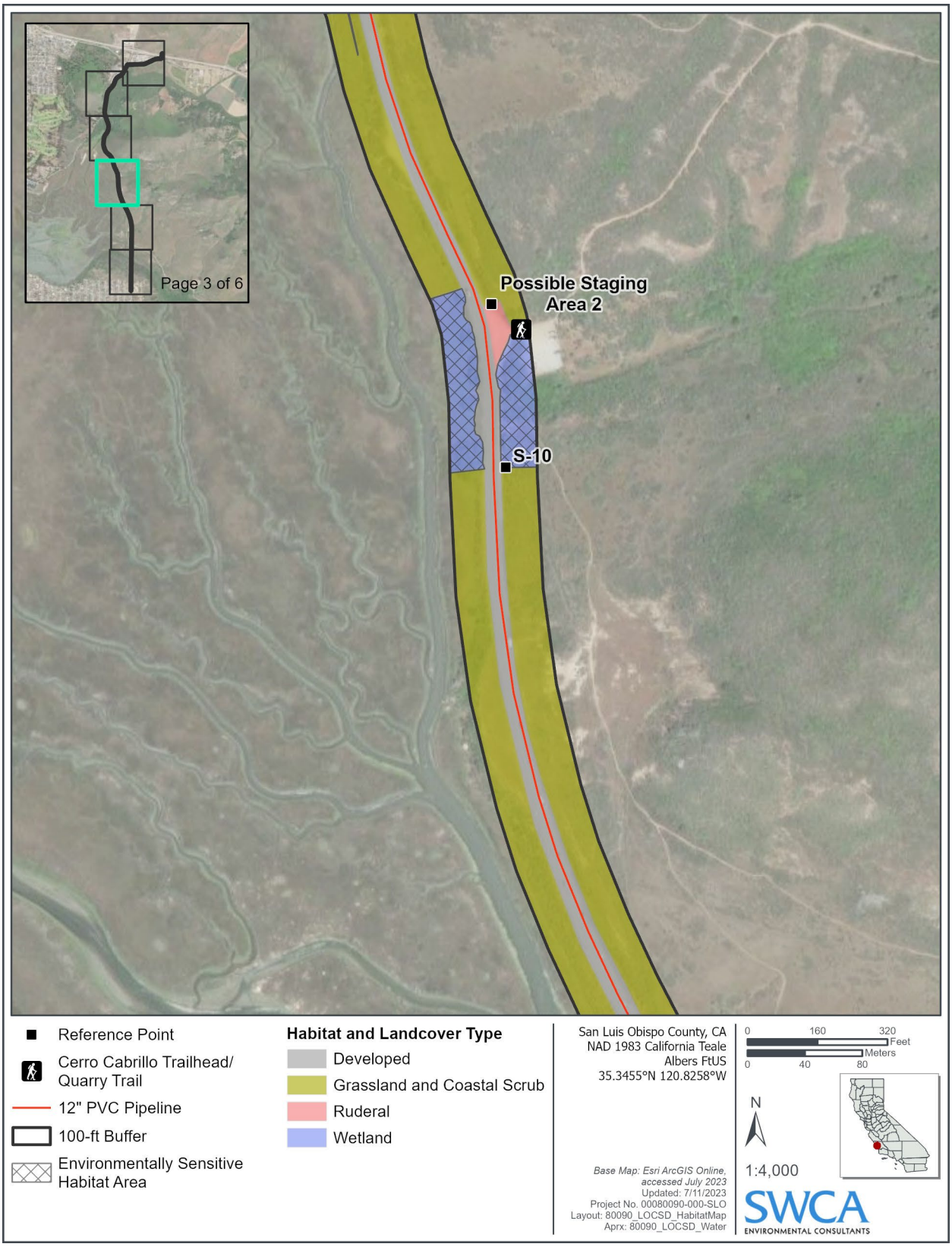

Figure 5. Habitat map of project alignment S-9 to S-11

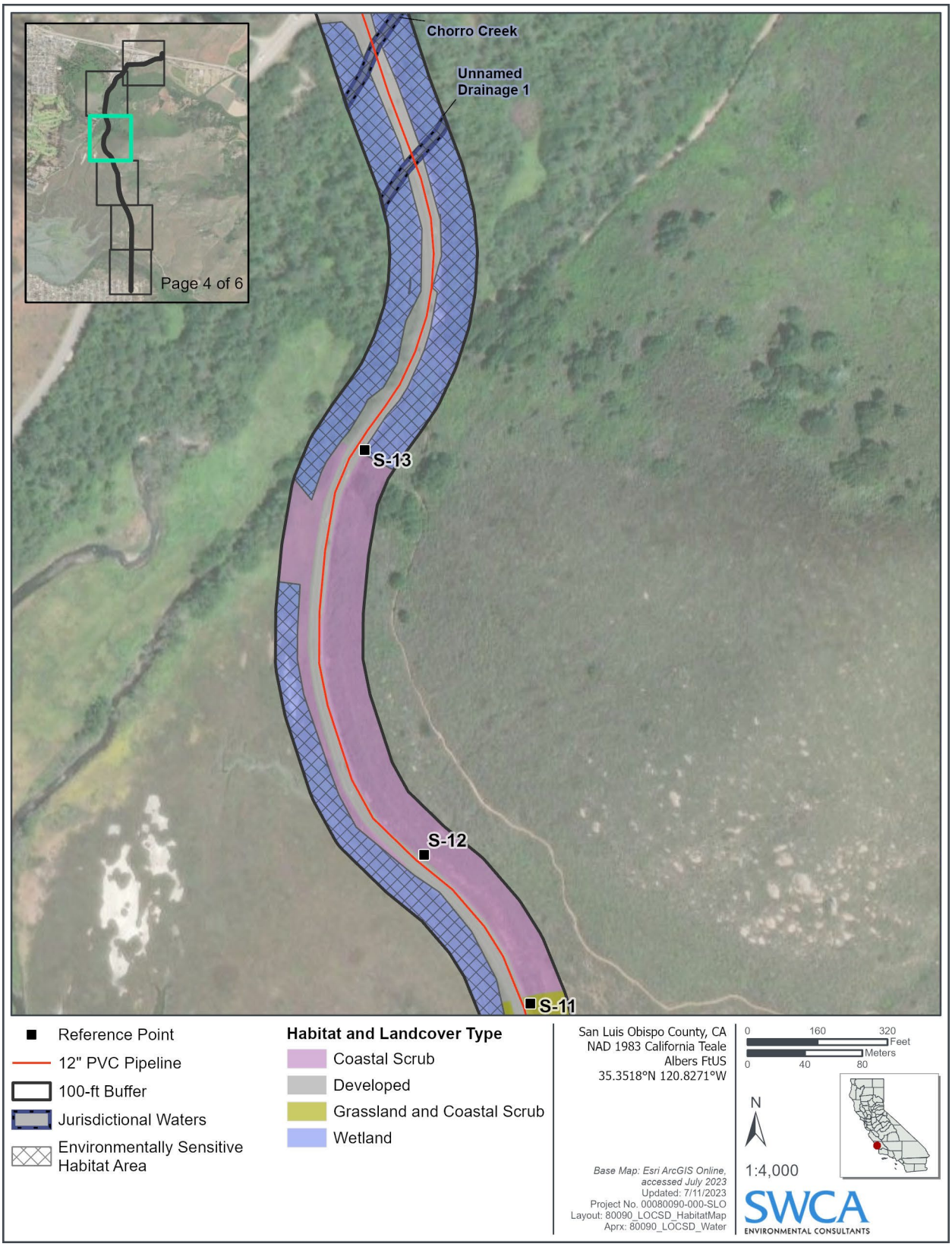

Figure 6. Habitat map of project alignment S-11 to S-14

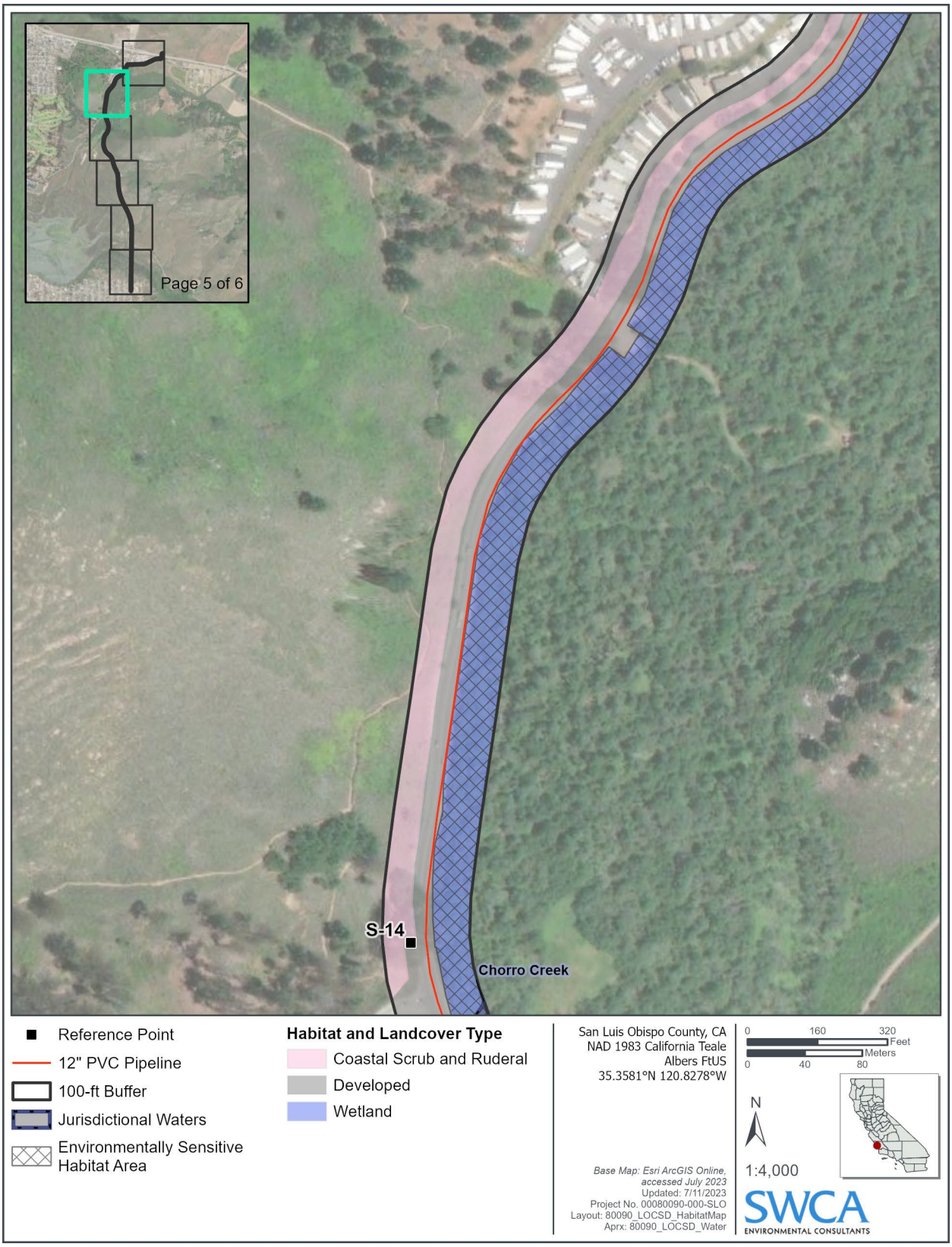

Figure 7. Habitat map of project alignment S-14 to S-15

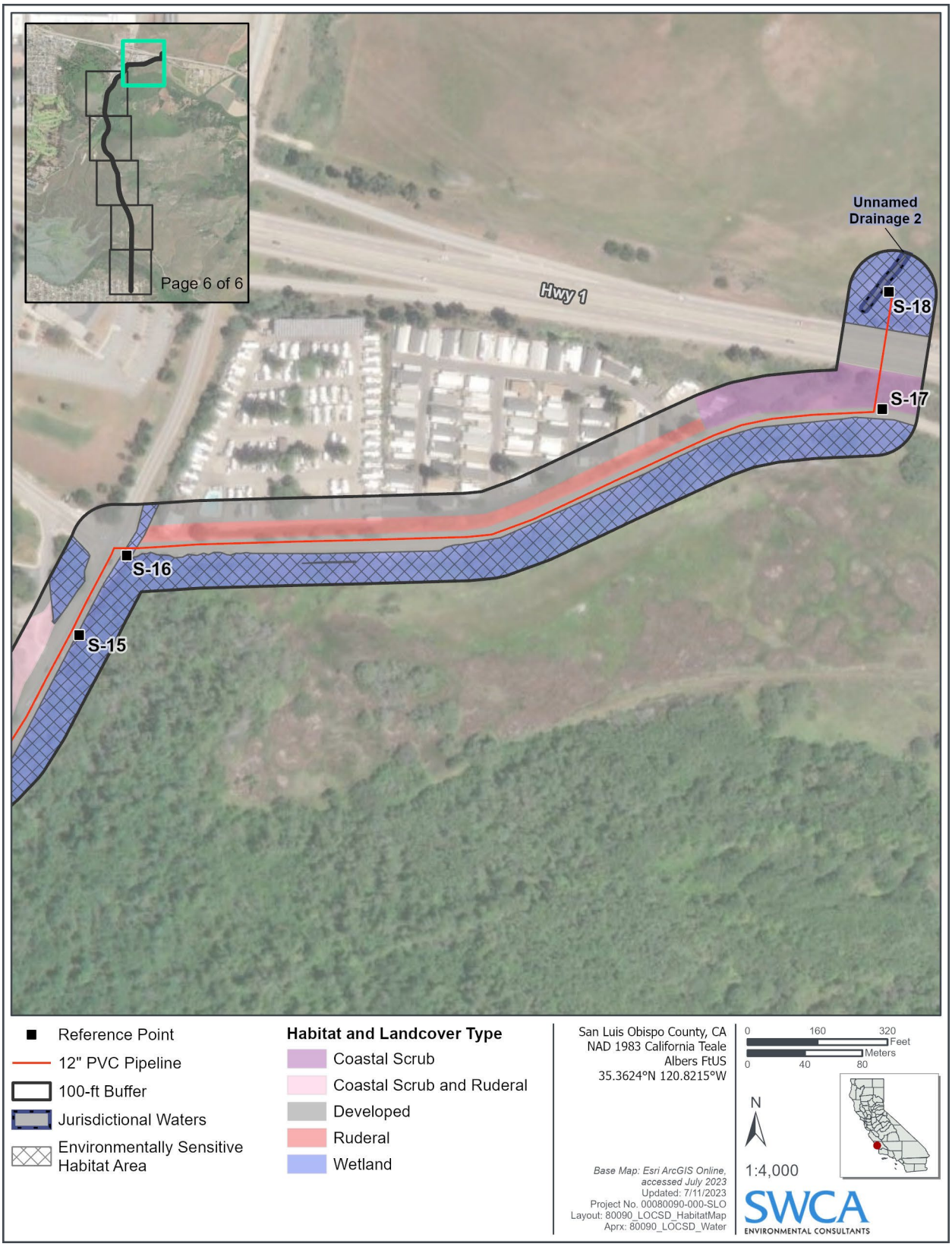

Figure 8. Habitat map of project alignment S-15 to S-18

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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?

Special-Status Plants

SWCA evaluated 69 special-status plant species for potential to occur in the proposed pipeline alignment, proposed staging areas, and proposed intertie location. SWCA compared the known habitat requirements of those 69 species to the project site's existing conditions, elevation, and soils. The analysis determined that the elevation and soils for the following plant species are present in the project sites:

- Hoover's bent grass (*Agrostis hooveri*)
- Morro manzanita (*Arctostaphylos morroensis*)
- sand mesa manzanita *(Arctostaphylos rudis)*
- Coulter's saltbush (*Atriplex coulteri*)
- coastal goosefoot (*Chenopodium littoreum*)
- popcorn lichen (*Cladonia firma*)
- Blochman's leafy daisy (*Erigeron blochmaniae*)
- Marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola*)
- San Luis Obispo sedge (*Carex obispoensis*)
- Brewer's spineflower (*Chorizanthe breweri*)
- Betty's dudleya (*Dudleya abramsii ssp. bettinae*)
- Coulter's goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata ssp. coulteri*)
- California seablite (*Suaeda californica*)
- Jones's layia (*Layia jonesii*)
- mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* ssp. *puberula*)
- Kellogg's horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* ssp. *sericea*)
- perennial goldfields (*Lasthenia californica* ssp. *macrantha*)
- southern curly-leaved monardella (*Monardella sinuata* ssp. *sinuata*)
- coast woolly-heads (*Nemacaulis denudata* var. *denudate*)
- sand almond (*Prunus fasciculata* var. *punctata*)
- Pecho manzanita (*Arctostaphylos osoensis*)
- Mile's milk vetch *(Astragalus didymocarpus* var. *milesianus)*
- Cambria morning-glory (*Calystegia subacaulis* ssp. *Episcopalis*)
- San Luis Obispo owls clover (*Castilleja densiflora ssp. obispoensis*)
- Congdon's tarplant (*Centromadia parryi ssp. Congdonii*)
- Point Reyes birds-beak (*Chloropyron maritimum ssp. palustre*)
- Dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi ssp. blochmaniae*)
- Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae ssp. blochmaniae*)

- Splitting yarn lichen (*Sulcaria isidiifera*)
- Rayless (chaparral) ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*)

The elevation and soils in the project alignment are correct to support these species. Based on the results of the reconnaissance survey conducted along the project alignment, there is potential for special-status species to occur within the pipeline alignment. Eight Morro manzanita were observed during the reconnaissance survey along South Bay Boulevard approximately 55 feet north of S-4 (Figure 3).

The project would include the installation of a pipeline along South Bay Boulevard from the LOCSD basin at Santa Ysabel Avenue, north to Quintana Road, and east along Quintana Road, within pavement. The pipeline would then cross under Highway 1 to the intertie location. The LOCSD has designed the project so that the entire pipeline alignment remains within the existing asphalt pavement. However, potential staging areas, areas adjacent to Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek bridges, the booster pump station, and the intertie location would be located outside the paved area. Based on the results of the reconnaissance survey conducted along the project alignment, there is potential for special-status species to occur within the areas outside the existing asphalt pavement. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require the LOCSD to retain a biological monitor to oversee the project and protection of biological resources. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would require the biological monitor to administer environmental awareness training to all construction personnel. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would require pre-construction surveys of sensitive natural communities, including restoration of impacted habitat. Mitigation Measures BIO-4 would require pre-construction botanical surveys to identify sensitive plant species and sensitive plant communities, and require restoration plans in the event of potential impacts. With implementation of BIO-1 through BIO-4, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Special-Status Wildlife

SWCA evaluated 47 special-status wildlife species for potential to occur in the pipeline alignment. Because the list of evaluated species is regional, an analysis of the range and habitat preferences of those animal species was conducted to identify which sensitive wildlife species have the potential to occur in the pipeline alignment. SWCA determined that the following special-status animal species and migratory birds have potential to occur in select locations:

- Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*): Cooper's hawk is relatively common in the Los Osos and morro Bay area. There are suitable nesting trees adjacent to the pipeline alignment.
- Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*): Northern harriers tend to nest in shrubs among open habitats for foraging. The coastal dune shrub habitat along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road can support this species.
- Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*): California legless lizards are relatively common in areas of Los Osos that contain Baywood fine sand, and portions of the pipeline alignment contains Baywood fine sand. The presence of California legless lizards can be inferred in all project areas that are not currently hardscaped (e.g., asphalt, concrete, etc.) and have some vegetation or woody debris cover.
- Morro shoulderband snail (*Helminthoglypta walkeriana*): MSS are found in parts of Los Osos and Morro Bay that contain Baywood fine sand associated with coastal dune and coastal sage scrub and ample vegetative or woody debris cover. Areas with high potential to support MSS are those areas that contain the appropriate soil, vegetation, and shelter conditions for the species to aestivate in. The following areas have a high potential to support MSS:
    - The ice plant and veldt grass at the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard.

  - The west side of South Bay Boulevard from Santa Ysabel Avenue to the Los Osos Creek Bridge.
  - The dune scrub vegetation is located just east of the ROW on the east side of South Bay Boulevard.

Areas with moderate potential to support MSS are those areas that contain the appropriate soil and/or vegetation for MSS, but recent disturbances (e.g., mowing, grading, etc.) have reduced or eliminated the available aestivation/shelter habitat. The following areas have a moderate potential to support MSS:

  - The ROW on the east side of South Bay Boulevard between Santa Ysabel Avenue and the Los Osos Creek Bridge.
  - The ice plant and coastal dune scrub vegetation located at the Los Osos Creek Bridge.
  - The South Bay Boulevard ROW between the Los Osos Creek Bridge and the Quarry Trail parking area.

The soil transitions from sandy to rocky/clayey soil types north of Turri Road. The further north from Turri Road the project alignment travels, the less likely the area is to support MSS. Once the project alignment reaches the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead parking area, the soil type is rocky and wetland conditions become more prevalent. The rocky soils and wetland conditions are not conducive to MSS. Therefore, the project alignment north of the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead parking area to Morro Creek Road has a low potential to support MSS. Wetland and riparian conditions prevail north of Morro Creek Road. MSS cannot survive in wetland conditions; therefore, the project alignment north of Morro Creek Road has very little to no potential to support MSS.

- Morro Bay blue butterfly (*Plebejus icarioides moroensis*): Dune lupine shrubs in the portion of the alignment from S-3 to approximately 95 feet north of Possible Staging Area 1 (Figures 3 and 4) can support this species.
- Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*): The veldt grass and coastal dune scrub along South Bay Boulevard from S-3 to approximately 95 feet north of Possible Staging Area 1 (Figures 3 and 4) can support this species.
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*): The freshwater marsh and riparian habitat present along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road can support this species.
- Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*): The grassland and coastal dune scrub habitats along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road can support this species.
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*): The eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) grove within 300 feet of S-14 (Figure 7) can support this species.
- Tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*): The freshwater marsh, salt marsh, and riparian habitats of the Morro Bay estuary, Los Osos creek, and Chorro creek can support this species.
- South-central California coast steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*): The riparian habitats of Chorro and Los Osos creeks can support this species.
- Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*): The wetland and riparian habitats along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road can support this species.
- Townsends big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*): The eucalyptus grove near S-14 (Figure 7) as well as the willows and oaks along the alignment may support day and night roosts for this species.

- Morro Bay kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys heermanni morroensis*): The coastal dune scrub habitats within the Elfin Forest between S-2 and S-3 (Figure 3) along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road can support this species.
- California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*): The saltwater marsh habitat on the west side of South Bay Boulevard can support this species.
- California brackish snail (*Tryonia imitator*): The saltwater marsh habitat on the west side of South Bay Boulevard can support this species.
- Nesting birds: Select locations of the pipeline alignment and staging areas support potential nesting habitats.

The project would include the installation of a pipeline along South Bay Boulevard from the LOCSD basin at Santa Ysabel Avenue, north to Quintana Road, and east along Quintana Road, within pavement. The pipeline would then cross under Highway 1 to the intertie location. The LOCSD has designed the project so that the entire pipeline alignment remains within the existing asphalt pavement. However, potential staging areas, areas adjacent to Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek bridges, the booster pump station, and the intertie location would be located outside the paved area.

The project alignment supports California legless lizard in all project areas that are not currently hardscaped (e.g., asphalt, concrete, etc.) and have some vegetation or woody debris cover, as well as coast horned lizard in veldt grass and coastal dune scrub along South Bay Boulevard from S-3 to approximately 95 feet north of Possible Staging Area 1. Construction activities in these areas could result in impacts to these species. Mitigation Measure BIO-5, in conjunction with Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, would require preconstruction surveys and relocation of the species if present during construction.

Portions of ROW areas in the pipeline alignment support habitat for MSS including areas with Baywood fine sand associated with coastal dune and coastal sage scrub and ample vegetative or woody debris cover. If MSS are present in the disturbance areas, vegetation removal could result in take of the species. The proposed project has largely been designed to avoid take of MSS, but construction activities in these areas outside of existing pavement could result in impacts to MSS. Mitigation Measure BIO-6, in conjunction with Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and BIO-2, would require preconstruction surveys for MSS and if present would require avoidance or obtainment of an ITP from the USFWS.

CRLF habitat is present along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road, including in the wetland and riparian habitat near the proposed intertie location and potential booster pump station. Ground disturbance and other construction activities have the potential to disturb CRLF species that may be present on site. Mitigation Measure BIO-7 would require pre-construction surveys for construction activities located in these areas.

Western pond turtle has potential to occur in the wetland and riparian habitats along South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road. Construction activities in these location, outside of existing pavement, could result in impacts to individuals. Mitigation Measure BIO-8 would require pre-construction surveys for construction activities located in these areas.

Potential habitat for Morro Bay kangaroo rat is located near the Elfin Forest between S-2 and S-3. Construction activities in this location, outside of existing pavement, could result in impacts to individuals. Mitigation Measure BIO-9 would require pre-construction surveys for construction activities located in this area.

Mitigation Measure BIO-10 would require pre-construction nesting bird surveys to avoid impacts to Cooper's hawk, northern harrier, and nesting birds.

Construction activities conducted in close proximity to the eucalyptus groves have the potential to disturb monarch butterflies if present within the habitat. Mitigation Measure BIO-11 would ensure project activities do not result in significant disturbance to monarch butterflies.

Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-11, impacts to special-status wildlife would be considered *less than significant with mitigation*.

b) Would the project 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?

Riparian Habitat

Riparian habitat is present along portions of South Bay Boulevard, Quintana Road, and Morro Creek Road associated with Los Osos and Chorro creeks.

Critical Habitat

The portion of the pipeline alignment between S-1 on Santa Ysabel Avenue to approximately 600 feet north of Turri Road and Possible Staging Area 1 (Figure 3, Figure 4) adjacent to Turri Road is designated as critical habitat for MSS.

The portion of the pipeline alignment between Possible Staging Area 1 on Turri Road to S-14 (Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6. Figure 7), approximately 1,000 feet south of Morro Bay State Park Road, is adjacent to designated critical habitat for California red-legged frog, which is located immediately adjacent to and east of the South Bay Boulevard northbound lane ROW. The remaining alignment from S-14 to the terminus of the pipeline at S-18 (Figure 7, Figure 8), the proposed stockpile and staging area north of Highway 1, the potential booster station, and the proposed intertie location is within designated critical habitat for California red-legged frog.

The portion of the pipeline alignment that crosses Los Osos Creek, between S-5 and S-6 (Figure 3), is within designated critical habitat for tidewater goby, and the portion between S-6, approximately 50 feet north of Los Osos Creek Bridge, to possible staging area 1 (Figure 3, Figure 4) is adjacent to designated critical habitat for tidewater goby.

The portion of the pipeline alignment that crosses Los Osos Creek, between S-5 and S-6 (Figure 3), and the portion that crosses the Chorro Creek watershed, including the culverted unnamed drainage, approximately 400 feet north of S-13 to S-14 (Figure 6, Figure 7), is within designated critical habitat for south-central coast steelhead and the portion from S-14 to S-17 (Figure 7, Figure 8) is adjacent to designated critical habitat for south-central coast steelhead.

The estuarine habitats at the project site support Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) as identified by Fisheries Management Plans, which includes tidal channels, Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, and salt marsh in the project vicinity. The portion of the project alignment between S-4 to approximately 100 feet south of Los Osos Creek at S-5 (Figure 3), and the portion of the project that crosses Chorro Creek approximately 0.2 miles north of S-13 (Figure 6), is within essential fish habitat for groundfish, coastal pelagic species, and finfish.

Sensitive Natural Communities

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) maintains a list of Sensitive Natural Communities that are evaluated using the NatureServe Heritage Methodology to assign Global and State rankings to the communities (NatureServe 2018). The communities are evaluated at both the Global (full natural range within and outside of California) and State (within California) levels resulting in a single G (global) and S (state) rank ranging from 1 (very rare and threatened) to 5 (demonstrably secure). Natural Communities with ranks of "S1" through "S3" are considered Sensitive Natural Communities that should be addressed in the environmental review processes of CEQA and its equivalents (i.e., National Environmental Policy Act). The Global and State ranking system does not imply that specific actions are required in review of projects that may impact the community; however, regulatory agencies may request that impacts to these communities be addressed in environmental documents.

Areas adjacent to the project alignment support coast live oak woodlands, coastal dune scrub, arroyo willow thickets, freshwater marsh, salt marsh, and maritime chaparral communities that are listed in the Sensitive Natural Communities list. Coastal dune scrub, arroyo willow thickets, freshwater marsh, and salt marsh communities occur in the proposed alignment. Arroyo willow thicket, freshwater marsh, wetland areas, and coastal dune scrub occur adjacent to the pipeline alignment.

Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas

Most of the pipeline alignment ROW areas support coastal dune scrub, arroyo willow thickets, salt marsh, and/or freshwater marsh which are considered ESHA under both the County's and City's LCPs. These habitats provide potential habitat for CRLF, MSS, California legless lizard, steelhead, tidewater goby, California brackish snail, Morro manzanita, San Luis Obispo owl's clover, southern curly-leaved monardella, Morro Bay blue butterfly, and nesting birds. Areas of the pipeline alignment ROW that are disturbed nonnative veldt grass grassland, ruderal plants, and bare soil may provide potential habitat for MSS, California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), and nesting birds, but do not constitute ESHA.

Ground disturbing activities located off the existing paved roadway and erosion resulting from construction activities could result in impacts to the riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would require the LOCSD to identify ESHA and other sensitive habitat communities prior to construction and avoid direct impacts. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 also requires implementation of a restoration plan to remedy any impacts that occur to riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-3, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

c) Would the project 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 pipeline alignment would cross Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, and one culverted unnamed drainage south of Chorro Creek, which are tributaries to the Morro Bay National Estuary and Marine Reserve. Additionally, there is one unnamed drainage adjacent to the intertie location. These creeks are categorized as Riverine, Estuarine, and Marine Deepwater wetlands that are Waters of the United States and Waters of the State. Construction of the pipeline at the Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek/unnamed drainage crossings may require boring under the creek by horizontal directional drilling methods. Horizontal directional drilling or jack and bore (casing) would also be used to install the pipeline under Highway 1 between the intertie location and Quintana Road. These methods could result in hydraulic fracture which could cause pollutants to enter Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek. Hydraulic fracture (also known as frac-out) is an accidental release of drilling fluid that can occur during horizontal directional drilling activities

and is caused by excess drilling fluid pressure that exceeds the strength of the rock being drilled. Given the project's location, frac-out could result in drilling fluids entering wetlands and creeks.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3 requires that the project avoid all direct impacts to coastal wetland vegetation (also considered ESHA). Mitigation Measure BIO-12 requires the implementation of erosion and sedimentation control measures during construction. Mitigation Measure HYD-1 requires the preparation and implementation of a hydraulic fracture (frac out) plan to avoid and mitigate potential hydraulic fracture incidents. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-3, BIO-12, and HYD-1, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project alignment is located within or adjacent to several wildlife corridors or aquatic resources that could interfere with the movement of migratory fish or wildlife upon implementation of the project. The project would have the potential to impact migratory nesting birds and migratory overwintering monarch butterflies, and impacts to surface waters could affect essential fish habitat, including that of south-central coast steelhead. Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-10, BIO-11, BIO-12, and HYD-1 have been identified to require a pre-construction surveys, avoidance, monitoring, awareness training, and best management practices. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-10, BIO-11, BIO-12, and HYD-1, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The project does not proposed to remove or impact any trees. No other local policies or ordinances are applicable to the project. Therefore, there would be *no impact.*

f) Would the project 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 County has prepared a communitywide HCP for Los Osos to streamline the permitting of certain future activities by providing a program for the protection and enhancement of habitat for listed species that could be negatively impacted by such activities. The County is currently seeking a programmatic ITP from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and is requesting a permit term of 25 years to authorize take of covered species associated with covered activities in the HCP area. Covered activities within the HCP include commercial and residential development and redevelopment of previously owned parcels; public entity and private utility facility and infrastructure projects; public entity and private utility company activities to operate, maintain, and repair existing facilities; and activities conducted to implement the HCP conservation strategy. According to the County, adoption of the HCP and issuance of the ITP(s) will facilitate a streamlined permitting process and also provide a cohesive conservation strategy managed by one entity with a single funding source.

The proposed project would be a covered activity in the HCP; however, the County has not yet finalized the HCP and received the ITP, and therefore cannot begin HCP implementation. Participation in the HCP is voluntary and projects resulting in ground disturbance have other options for compliance with the local, state, and federal permitting requirements that are addressed through this plan. Depending on timing of construction activities, the LOCSD may choose to avoid impacts to HCP-covered species (in this case MSS), or obtain coverage under the HCP, if the ITP has been issued and the implementing entity has

begun to extend coverage to individual projects. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an adopted HCP and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 **Biological Monitor.** Prior to issuance of encroachment permits or any site disturbance activities, the Los Osos Community Services District shall retain a qualified biological monitor. The biological monitor shall prepare and submit a biological monitoring plan for review by the Los Osos Community Services District. The monitoring plan shall detail the responsibilities of the monitor, including, but not limited to: oversee the installation of protective fencing around all areas identified by SWCA (2023) containing riparian habitat, critical habitat, wetlands, sensitive natural communities, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas; ensuring the use of heavy equipment and vehicles are limited to the existing roadways and defined staging areas/access points and that the boundaries of each work area are clearly defined and marked with visible flagging prior to project initiation; conducting regular inspections/site visits to verify construction activity location, conducting the worker awareness training required by BIO-2; managing preconstruction surveys required by BIO-3 through BIO-11; and verifying best management practices required by BIO-12 are adhered to.

The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall be limited to the proposed project work area, existing roadways, and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined and marked with visible flagging prior to Project initiation.

BIO-2 **Worker Environmental Awareness Training.** Prior to mobilization of any equipment on the project site and installation of project limit fencing/flagging, the qualified biologist (BIO-1) shall present an environmental awareness training for all construction staff. The purpose of the training is to educate the personnel on identification of special-status wildlife species that may occur within the project area and to provide an overview of the avoidance and minimization measures to be adhered to during the project. Specifically, the training will emphasize on all special-status wildlife species that would be expected to occur within the project limits, applicable regulatory policies and provisions regarding their protection, and a review of measures being implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the species and their associated habitat. Furthermore, crew members will be briefed on the reporting process in the event that an inadvertent injury should occur to a special-status species during construction.

At a minimum, the training shall include a description of Morro shoulderband snail (MSS), northern California legless lizard, coast horned lizard, California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, Morro Bay kangaroo rat and their habitats; the provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, as amended; the specific measures being implemented to conserve the species as they relate to the project; and the project boundaries. Further, the training shall include a description of the specific measures being implemented to avoid take of listed species.

BIO-3 **Sensitive Habitat Communities.** Prior to initiation of any construction activities, the qualified biologist (BIO-1) shall conduct pre-construction surveys of the intertie, booster pump station, staging areas, bridge abutments, and pipeline alignment that are outside of the existing paved roadway. The biologist shall survey the work and staging areas and identify all coastal wetlands or other California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

sensitive communities that would be considered environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA), including arroyo willow thickets, coastal wetland, and coastal dune scrub, critical habitat, or sensitive natural communities that could potentially be impacted by project construction. If these habitats are confirmed in the work areas, the biologist shall flag and/or fence the boundaries of the habitat that interface with the work area to avoid direct impacts or removal of these habitats.

If sensitive habitat communities cannot be avoided, the qualified biologist shall quantify the limits of disturbance and prepare a restoration plan in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW, if necessary. If any Incidental Take Permits (ITP) are required, the restoration plan shall be consistent with the permit. At a minimum, the plan shall include:

1. Identification of locations, amounts, size and types of community to be restored, as well as any other necessary components (e.g., temporary irrigation, amendments, etc.) to ensure successful reestablishment. Restoration areas shall be located within open space and conservation easements onsite.

2. Provide for a native plant salvage and seed collection effort prior to ground disturbing activities. Salvaged plants shall include plant species that are native to the community that may be affected.

3. A program schedule and success criteria for a minimum five-year monitoring and reporting program that is structured to ensure the success of the restoration plan.

4. In-kind replacement of communities that are removed or damaged shall be restored in-kind at a minimum 2:1 ratio (based on square feet cover) within the designated restoration area with 100% success in five years (inclusive of replacement plantings for unsuccessful individuals). Prior to any removal or impacts (take) to species requiring an ITP, the Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD) shall provide evidence that an ITP has been obtained and shall also provide a copy of the Habitat Conservation Plan that accompanies the ITP.

5. Identification of access and methods of materials transport to the restoration area, including personnel, vehicles, tools, plants, irrigation equipment, water, and all other similar supplies. Access shall not result in new or additional impacts to habitat and special-status species.

6. Incorporation of an invasive species control program, which would include the following at a minimum:

    a. To avoid the spread of invasive species, the contractor shall stockpile topsoil and redeposit the stockpiled soil on the slopes after construction is complete, or if heavily infested with invasive species, transport the topsoil to a certified landfill for disposal.

    b. During construction, the project will make all reasonable efforts to limit the use of imported soils for fill. Soils currently existing on-site should be used for fill material when feasible. If the use of imported fill material is necessary, the imported material must be obtained from a source that is known to be free of invasive plant species; or the material must consist of purchased clean material such as crushed aggregate, sorted rock, or similar.

c. The restoration planting plans must emphasize the use of native species expected to occur in the area. Project plans must avoid the use of plant species that the California Invasive Plant Council, California Exotic Pest Plant Council, CDFW, or other resource organizations considers to be invasive or potentially invasive.

d. If performance standards detailed in the final restoration plan are not achieved in any restoration area, the LOCSD shall prepare and implement an alternative or adaptive mitigation strategy during the restoration and monitoring phase, in consultation with other appropriate resource agencies including the USFWS and/or CDFW.

The replacement species may either be planted onsite, in a location determined by the biological monitor, outside of the 100-foot vegetation clearance zone, OR may be arranged to be included in an offsite replanting effort with similar species. If planting onsite, the biological monitor shall provide for a native plant salvage and seed collection effort prior to ground disturbing activities. The biological monitor shall monitor the replacement plantings annually and submit a report to the LOCSD regarding the success of the species. Should any if the species not meet 100% success within 5 years, the LOCDS shall implement an alternative or adaptive mitigation strategy. The biological monitor shall provide reports every two weeks to the LOCSD, which shall include verification that the measures above have been implemented.

BIO-4 **Special-Status Plant Species.** Prior to initiation of any construction activities, the Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD) shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction surveys of the intertie, booster pump station, staging areas, bridge abutments, and pipeline alignment that are outside of the existing paved roadway. The biologist shall survey the work and staging areas and identify any special-status plant species that could potentially be impacted by project construction. If special-status plant species are confirmed in the work areas, the biologist shall flag and/or fence the special-status plant species to avoid direct impacts or removal.

If impacts or removal to special-status plant species cannot be avoided, the qualified biologist shall quantify the limits of disturbance and prepare a restoration plan in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), if necessary, depending on the species. If any Incidental Take Permits (ITP) are required, the restoration plan shall be consistent with the permit. At a minimum, the plan shall include:

1. Identification of locations, amounts, size and types of plants to be replanted, as well as any other necessary components (e.g., temporary irrigation, amendments, etc.) to ensure successful reestablishment. Restoration areas shall be located within open space and conservation easements onsite.

2. Provide for a native plant salvage and seed collection effort prior to ground disturbing activities. Salvaged plants shall include, but not be limited to, special status plant species that may be affected.

3. A program schedule and success criteria for a minimum five-year monitoring and reporting program that is structured to ensure the success of the restoration plan.

4. In-kind replacement of individuals that are removed or damaged shall be replaced in-kind at a minimum 2:1 ratio (based on square feet cover) within the designated restoration area with 100% success in five years (inclusive of replacement plantings for unsuccessful individuals). Prior to any removal or impacts (take) to species requiring an ITP, the LOCSD shall provide evidence that an ITP has been obtained and shall also provide a copy of the Habitat Conservation Plan that accompanies the ITP.

5. Identification of access and methods of materials transport to the restoration area, including personnel, vehicles, tools, plants, irrigation equipment, water, and all other similar supplies. Access shall not result in new or additional impacts to habitat and special-status species.

6. Incorporation of an invasive species control program, which would include the following at a minimum:

    a. To avoid the spread of invasive species, the contractor will stockpile topsoil and redeposit the stockpiled soil on the slopes after construction is complete, or if heavily infested with invasive species, transport the topsoil to a certified landfill for disposal.

    b. During construction, the project will make all reasonable efforts to limit the use of imported soils for fill. Soils currently existing on-site should be used for fill material. If the use of imported fill material is necessary, the imported material must be obtained from a source that is known to be free of invasive plant species; or the material must consist of purchased clean material such as crushed aggregate, sorted rock, or similar.

    c. The restoration planting plans must emphasize the use of native species expected to occur in the area. Project plans must avoid the use of plant species that the California Invasive Plant Council, California Exotic Pest Plant Council, CDFW, or other resource organizations considers to be invasive or potentially invasive.

    d. If performance standards detailed in the final restoration plan are not achieved in any restoration area, the LOCSD shall prepare and implement an alternative or adaptive mitigation strategy during the restoration and monitoring phase for approval to the San Luis Obispo County Planning and Building Department, in consultation with other appropriate resource agencies including USFWS and/or CDFW.

The replacement species may either be planted onsite, in a location determined by the biological monitor, outside of the 100-foot vegetation clearance zone, OR may be arranged to be included in an offsite replanting effort with similar species. If planting onsite, the biological monitor shall provide for a native plant salvage and seed collection effort prior to ground disturbing activities. The biological monitor shall monitor the replacement plantings annually and submit a report to the LOCSD regarding the success of the species. Should any if the species not meet 100% success within 5 years, the LOCSD shall submit and implement an alternative or adaptive mitigation strategy. The biological monitor shall provide reports every two weeks to the LOCSD, which shall include verification that the measures above have been implemented.

BIO-5 **Northern California Legless Lizard and Coast Horned Lizard.** A preconstruction survey shall be conducted by the qualified biologist (BIO-1). A separate survey shall be conducted for any phase of the project not conducted concurrently. The biologist shall use appropriate survey techniques for the special-status species identified in this document as having potential to occur on-site. **Within one-hour prior to initial ground disturbance,** grading of the top 18-inches of soil, and tree removal activities, pre-activity surveys shall also be completed by a biological monitor immediately prior to project grading, excavation, and vegetation removal activities to inspect the work area for any wildlife that may be in the path of heavy equipment. Leaf litter and sandy areas under shrubs within suitable habitat shall be raked in the areas to be disturbed to a minimum depth of eight inches. In addition to raking, coverboards or other suitable methods identified in the Biological Monitoring Plan (BIO-1) shall be used to capture reptiles. If using coverboards, they shall consist of untreated lumber, sheet metal, corrugated steel, or other flat material, at a minimum size of 4 foot by 4 foot. Coverboards shall be placed in suitable habitat areas **at minimum 7 days prior** to ground disturbing activities and shall be inspected daily unless otherwise outlined in the Biological Monitoring Plan (BIO-1). Captured lizards shall be placed in buckets and relocated to a pre-determined location within the area that will not be disturbed by project activities. As necessary, appropriate regulatory agency permits and/or approvals shall be obtained to allow relocation of special-status species from the project area. If any of these species are found on-site, the biologist shall coordinate with the Los Osos Community Services District and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as appropriate, on methods to avoid the species or to ensure the successful relocation of individuals to suitable habitat nearby. The wildlife protection measures to be employed will be based on the results of the survey and the particular characteristics of their use of the site, in coordination with CDFW and the construction engineer.

BIO-6 **Morro Shoulderband Snail (MSS).** Implementation of the following measures will further facilitate avoiding take of MSS in areas that support MSS habitat.

A. The following design measures shall be incorporated into the project plans:

    1. The pipeline alignment in South Bay Boulevard between Santa Ysabel and Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead and potential staging areas shall be sited to avoid physical disturbance of vegetation, including ice plant, veldt grass, and dune scrub.

    2. The pipeline that will be located in South Bay Boulevard shall be located in the existing paved roadway. If installation of any part of the new pipeline requires vegetation removal, the vegetation shall be surveyed for MSS prior to its removal by a qualified biologist.

    3. MSS are attracted to straw waddle and hay bales. Straw waddle and hay bales shall not be used on-site. If best management practices require the installation of sediment control devices, silt fence may be used in place of straw waddle or hay bales.

B. Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD) shall retain a qualified biologist that is permitted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to survey for MSS. The biologist shall monitor project implementation and report to the LOCSD. The

biologist shall have authority to stop construction activities that could result in take of MSS.

C. All project staging areas shall be confined to the existing asphalt or areas that the biologist verifies does not support MSS and are at least 15 feet away from occupied or suitable MSS habitat.

D. All initial ground-disturbance, vegetation removal, and/or construction activities, including staging, located outside of existing paved areas on South Bay Boulevard between Santa Ysabel Avenue and Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead shall be restricted to the dry season (historically considered to be between April 15 and November 1, annually) when MSS are most likely to be in aestivation and less likely to move into the construction area.

E. If at any time during ground-disturbing and/or construction activities rain or heavy fog/dew conditions occur and snails (any species) are observed to be active, all project activities shall be suspended until dry conditions prevail. If delaying project activities is not feasible, the biologist shall monitor all activities being conducted to determine if MSS are active onsite and/or present in the work areas. If any MSS are present or move into the work area, LOCSD shall suspend project activities that could result in take of MSS and remain on hold until the MSS has left the area on its own accord.

F. Prior to ground-disturbing, vegetation removal, and/or construction activities, including staging, located outside of existing paved areas on South Bay Boulevard between Santa Ysabel Avenue and Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead, the biologist and the contractors shall conduct the following activities:

    1. Within 48 hours of ground-disturbance, vegetation removal, and/or construction activities (inclusive of mobilization), the biologist will conduct pre-construction monitoring survey(s) of the entire work area to ensure MSS are not present. If an ITP is not obtained, take of the species is not authorized for the project; therefore, no individual MSS may be captured or moved. If live MSS are observed in the work area at any time, LOCSD shall suspend the project activities that could result in take of the individual(s) and revise the project approach to avoid the individual(s).

    2. Immediately after the monitoring surveys and environmental training that will be conducted prior to the initiation of ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and/or construction activities, the contractor, as supervised by the biologist, will install construction (i.e., exclusion) fencing along the edge of the pavement. The purpose of this fencing is to clearly delineate the construction area (inclusive of ingress and egress routes and staging areas) and prevent accidental trespass into adjacent habitats (i.e., non-paved areas). The contractor will be responsible for maintaining this construction fencing in working condition for the duration of the project.

    3. AThe biologist must be present during all vegetation removal and initial grading activities to search for native shoulderband snails that may be exposed during vegetation removal. If MSS are identified during vegetation removal, construction or any other activities that could result in take will be

suspended while USFWS is contacted regarding need for an incidential take permit (ITP). If an ITP is determined to be necessary, work will remain on hold until such time as an ITP is issued.

4. If there is more than a 48-hour break in work (e.g., after a weekend), the biologist shall conduct additional surveys prior to the re-commencement of work. The focus of the additional surveys will be to ensure that MSS did not enter the work area during this time. If any MSS move into the work area, any project activities that could result in take of the individual(s) will be suspended until the individual(s) have left the area on their own accord.

G. If at any time the biologist and the LOCSD determine that a project activity cannot be conducted in such a manner that avoids take of MSS, the LOCSD shall delay all project activities until they have coordinated with USFWS regarding the need for an ITP. If an ITP is determined to be necessary, work should remain on hold until such time as an ITP is issued. The proposed project would be considered a covered activity under the County's Community-wide Habitat Conservation Plan and the LOCSD may be able to obtain incidental take coverage through the Community-wide Habitat Conservation Plan.

1. If the Community-wide Habitat Conservation Plan becomes available for use prior to the LOCSD implementing the proposed project, the LOCSD may choose to seek incidental take coverage under the Community-wide Habitat Conservation Plan prior to project implementation. If the LOCSD obtains incidental take coverage via the Community-wide Habitat Conservation Plan or an Individual Habitat Conservation Plan, the measures provided above may be superseded by the conditions put forth in the ITP.

H. Within 30 days of project completion, the biologist shall submit a report to the LOCSD that documents how each of these measures was implemented.

BIO-7 **California Red-Legged Frog Surveys.** A United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-approved and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)-approved biologist shall survey the project alignment areas in wetland and riparian non-paved areas no more than 48 hours before the onset of project site disturbance activities of all project phases. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog or foothill yellow-legged frog is found and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist will be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work activities begin. The USFWS-approved and CDFW-approved biologist shall relocate the California red-legged frogs and/or foothill yellow-legged frogs the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by the activities associated with the project, preferably within the same drainage. The relocation site shall be in the same drainage to the extent practicable. The project biologist shall coordinate with the CDFW to discuss site-specific, full avoidance measures, or the relocation or take of California red-legged frogs prior to species capture.

BIO-8 **Western Pond Turtle.** Between 2 to 4 weeks prior to initiation of construction or site disturbance activities of each project phase, the qualified biologist shall survey the project alignment and, if present, capture and relocate any western spadefoot or western pond turtles to suitable habitat outside of proposed disturbance areas. Observations of these or other special-status species shall be documented on California Natural Diversity

Database forms and submitted to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife upon phase completion. The project biologist shall submit a survey report to the Los Osos Community Services District documenting the number of observations of these or other special-status species (even if none are observed) as well as the areas in which individuals were relocated, if applicable.

BIO-9 **Morro Bay Kangaroo Rat.** Immediately prior to construction activities outside of the existing paved roadway between S-2 and S-3, the qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for Morro Bay Kangaroo Rat to determine if habitat is currently occupied and if occupied, identify what protective measures, if any, should be implemented prior to construction.

BIO-10 **Migratory Nesting Birds.** If any site preparation, ground-disturbing, or construction activities associated with any project phase are required during the migratory bird breeding season (February 1–September 15), the qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey no sooner than 10 days prior to site disturbance activities. If nesting activity is detected, the following measures shall be implemented:

a) The project shall be modified or delayed as necessary to avoid direct take of identified nests, eggs, and/or young protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or California Fish and Game Code;

b) The qualified biologist shall establish a biological buffer zone around active nest sites. Standard California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) guidelines recommend a minimum no-disturbance buffer of 250 feet around active nests of non-listed bird species and a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer around active nests of non-listed raptors. Construction activities within the established buffer zone will be prohibited until the young have fledged the nest and achieved independence; and

c) The qualified biologist shall document all active nests and submit a letter report to the County, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and CDFW documenting project compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the California Fish and Game Code, and applicable project mitigation measures within 14 days of survey completion.

BIO-11 **Butterflies.** Tree removal and/or noise-generating construction activities (including but not limited to use of large equipment, gas-powered tools, and/or pneumatic equipment) within 100 feet of eucalyptus trees shall be avoided during the fall and winter migration of the monarch butterflies (late October through February) to the extent feasible. If tree removal or site disturbance within 100-feet of eucalyptus trees are necessary during the fall and winter migration period (late October through February), the qualified biologist (BIO-1) shall conduct a preconstruction survey for monarch butterflies that could utilize trees onsite for overwintering. If monarch butterflies are detected in the work area or within 100 feet of the work area, activities will be postponed until after the overwintering period or until the biologist determines monarch butterflies are no longer utilizing the trees.

BIO-12 **Erosion and Sediment Best Management Practices (BMPs).** The following erosion and sedimentation control BMPs are required to be implemented during vegetation removal and construction activities. BMPs shall be listed on all tract improvement plans, building, and grading plans.

1. If possible, the potential for erosion and sedimentation shall be minimized by scheduling construction to occur outside of the rainy season, which is typically defined as October 15 through April 15.

2. To minimize site disturbance, all construction related equipment shall be restricted to established roads, construction areas, and other designated staging areas.
3. **Prior to any site disturbance, a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan shall be prepared by a qualified engineer**. The use of silt fence, erosion control blankets, sandbags, fiber rolls, and other appropriate techniques should be employed to protect the drainage features on and off the property. Biotechnical approaches using native vegetation shall be used as feasible. All areas with soil disturbance shall have appropriate erosion controls and other stormwater protection BMPs installed to prevent erosion potential. All sediment and erosion control measures shall be installed per the engineer's requirements prior to the initiation of site grading if planned to occur within the rainy season.
4. Spill kits shall be maintained on the site, and a Spill Response Plan shall be in place.
5. No vehicles or equipment shall be refueled within 100 feet of wetland areas, riparian habitat and/or drainage features, and refueling areas shall have a spill containment system installed. No vehicles or construction equipment shall be stored overnight within 100 feet of these areas unless drip pans or ground covers are used. All equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and to avoid potential leaks or spills. Construction staging areas shall be located in a location where spills would not drain into aquatic habitats.
6. No concrete/asphalt washout shall be conducted on the site outside of an appropriate containment system. Washing of equipment, tools, etc. should not be allowed in any location where the tainted water could enter onsite drainages.
7. The use of chemicals, fuels, lubricants, or biocides shall be in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations. All uses of such compounds shall observe label and other restrictions mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and other state and federal legislation.
8. All project-related spills of hazardous materials within or adjacent to the project site should be cleaned up immediately.
9. All areas with soil disturbance shall have appropriate erosion controls and other stormwater protection BMPs installed to prevent erosion potential. Silt fencing, erosion control blankets, straw bales, sandbags, fiber rolls, and/or other types of materials prescribed on the plan shall be implemented to prevent erosion and sedimentation. Biotechnical approaches using native vegetation shall be used as feasible.
10. Areas with disturbed soils shall be restored under the direction of the project engineer in consultation with a qualified restoration ecologist as detailed above. Methods may include recontouring graded areas to blend in with existing natural contours, covering the areas with salvaged topsoil containing native seedbank from the site, and/or applying the native seed mix as described in the table below. Seeding with the native erosion control seed mix should be provided on all disturbed soil areas prior to the onset of the rainy season (by October 15).

Native Erosion Control Seed Mix

Species	Application Rate (lbs/acre)
California Brome (*Bromus carinatus*)	10
purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*)	5

tomcat clover (*Trifolium wildenovii*)	5
six weeks fescue *(Festuca microstachys,* formerly *Vulpia microstachys)*	5
Total	**25**

V. Cultural Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

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

The County CZLUO Historic Site (H) combining designation is applied to areas of the county to recognize the importance of archeological and historic sites, structures and areas important to local, state, or national history. Specific areas are also designated as Archaeologically Sensitive Areas. The County CZLUO includes standards regarding minimum parcel size, permit and processing requirements, when a preliminary site survey is required, when a mitigation plan is required, and what to do in the event of an archeological resource discovery. 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 *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element* (LUE) (CZLUO 23.07.100-104). The project site is not located within or adjacent to a site under the H Combining Designation.

California prehistory is divided into three broad temporal periods that reflect similar cultural characteristics throughout the state: Paleoindian Period (circa [ca.] 9000–6000 B.C.), Archaic Period (6000 B.C.–A.D. 500), and Emergent Period (A.D. 500–Historic Contact). The Archaic is further divided into Lower (6000–3000 B.C.), Middle (3000–1000 B.C.), and Upper (1000 B.C.–A.D. 500) Periods. These divisions are generally governed by climatic and environmental variables, such as the drying of pluvial lakes at the transition from the Paleoindian to the Lower Archaic period.

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 currently the subject of debate, as those boundaries may have changed over time.

The County COSE identifies and maps known cultural 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 America, or cultural significance. Based on the County COSE, the project is not located in a designated Archaeological Sensitive Area or Historic Site.

Plan Morro Bay establishes policies and implementation actions to identify and protect the city's historical, archaeological, and cultural resources during development and construction. Plan Morro Bay also establishes a Coastal Resource Protection-Cultural Resource (CRP-CR) overlay to identify areas of known and assumed cultural, archeological, and paleontological resources. The portion of the pipeline alignment within City jurisdiction is located within the CRP-CR overlay. Section 17.14.070 of the City Zoning Code requires mitigation measures for development that cannot avoid impacts to cultural, archaeological, or paleontological resources.

SWCA requested a records search for the potential locations from the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), located at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. The records search results included all previously documented archaeological resources within 0.125 mile of the proposed pipeline alignment, proposed staging areas, and proposed intertie location.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

There are no historical resources within the project area. The proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, *no impacts* will occur.

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

The CCIC and CHRIS records search revealed that three previously documented prehistoric archaeological resources (P-40-001066, P-40-001379, P-40-001380) are mapped by the CCIC within 50-feet of the alignment. An additional 12 cultural resources are within 0.125 mile. The records search also revealed the entire alignment has been subject to some level of prior cultural resources study, the most relevant being Applied Earthworks' *Cultural Resource Study of the South Bay Boulevard Project, Morro Bay and Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County California*, which was prepared in 2018. That study conducted background research and intensive pedestrian survey of the South Bay Boulevard corridor from Santa Ysabel Avenue to Quintana Road. Applied Earthworks did not identify any new cultural

resources within the project area and only noted weathered shell fragments along the roadway within the identified boundary of P-40-001066.

The project alignment has been subject to prior cultural resources study and significant disturbance from the original construction of South Bay Boulevard, ongoing maintenance, and the installation and maintenance of underground utilities within the roadway. The general area is considered highly sensitive for the presence of prehistoric Native American cultural resources. However, the extent of prior disturbance diminishes the likelihood of encountering intact, significant resources within the road prism during project implementation. Recent monitoring efforts for Morro Bay's Water Reclamation Facility near Quintana Road and South Bay Boulevard and for recent fiber optic work along South Bay Boulevard did not identify significant subsurface archaeological resources.

The proposed intertie would likely utilize open trenching methods, which have the potential to encounter previously undocumented archaeological resources and/or subsurface deposits associated with known resources that may meet CRHR eligibility. Although the project alignment is within areas that have been previously subject to extensive disturbance, they are considered highly sensitive. As there is a potential to encounter buried and/or obscured archaeological resources during construction, Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-4 have been identified to reduce potential impacts to *less than significant*.

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

There are no known resources containing human remains within the project area. However, project excavations have the potential to encounter previously unidentified human remains in the form of burials or isolated bones and bone fragments. If human remains are exposed during construction, construction shall halt around the discovery of human remains, the area shall be protected, and consultation and treatment shall occur as prescribed by State law. The project's archaeologist shall be notified immediately to comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has been notified and can make the necessary findings as to origin and disposition of the remains. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner will notify the California Native American Heritage Commission and the remains will be treated in accordance with PRC Section 5097.98. If the human remains are part of an archaeological site, Mitigation Measure CR-5 shall be followed to reduce potential impacts to *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Prior to construction activities, the Los Osos Community Services District shall retain a qualified archaeologist to conduct a cultural resource awareness training for all construction personnel, including the following:

1. Review the types of archaeological artifacts that may be uncovered;
2. Provide examples of common archaeological artifacts to examine;
3. Review what makes an archaeological resource significant to archaeologists and local native Americans;
4. Describe procedures for notifying involved or interested parties in case of a new discovery;
5. Describe reporting requirements and responsibilities of construction personnel;
6. Review procedures that shall be used to record, evaluate, and mitigate new discoveries; and

7. Describe procedures that would be followed in the case of discovery of disturbed as well as intact human burials and burial-associated artifacts.

CR-2 Prior to project implementation, the Los Osos Community Services District shall retain a qualified archaeologist to prepare an Archaeological Monitoring Plan (AMP). The AMP shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A list of personnel involved in the monitoring activities;
2. Description of Native American involvement;
3. Description of how the monitoring shall occur;
4. Description of frequency of monitoring (e.g., full time, part time, spot checking);
5. Description of what resources are expected to be encountered;
6. Description of circumstances that would result in the halting of work at the project site;
7. Description of procedures for halting work on the site and notification procedures;
8. Description of monitoring reporting procedures; and
9. Provide specific, detailed protocols for what to do in the event of the discovery of human remains.

CR-3 An archaeological monitor shall be present during project-related ground-disturbing activities that have the potential to encounter previously unidentified archaeological resources, as outlined in the AMP prepared to satisfy CR-2. Archaeological monitoring may cease at any time if the qualified archaeologist, in consultation with the tribal monitor, determines that project activities do not have the potential to encounter and/or disturb unknown resources.

CR-4 In the event that unknown archaeological resources are inadvertently encountered during the project, all ground disturbing activities shall cease, and the project's qualified archaeologist shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.

CR-5 If human remains are exposed during construction, the project's qualified archaeologist shall be notified immediately and comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has been notified and can make the necessary findings as to origin and disposition of the remains pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Construction shall halt around the discovery of human remains, the area shall be protected, and consultation and treatment shall occur as prescribed by law.

VI. Energy

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Local Utilities

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for urban and rural communities within unincorporated San Luis Obispo County. Approximately 50% of electricity provided by PG&E is sourced from renewable resources and an additional 43% is sourced from greenhouse gas-free resources (PG&E 2023).

PG&E offers two programs through which consumers may purchase electricity from renewable sources: the Solar Choice program and the Regional Renewable Choice program. Under the Solar Choice program, a customer remains on their existing electric rate plan and pays a modest additional fee on a per kilowatt-hour (kWh) basis for clean solar power. The fee depends on the type of service, rate plan, and enrollment level. Customers may choose to have 50% or 100% of their monthly electricity usage to be generated via solar projects. The Regional Renewable Choice program enables customers to subscribe to renewable energy from a specific community-based project within PG&E's service territory. The Regional Renewable Choice program allows a customer to purchase between 25% and 100% of their annual usage from renewable sources.

Local Energy Plans and Policies

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

In 2011, the EWP established the goal to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions to 15% below 2006 baseline levels by 2020. Two of the six community-wide goals identified to accomplish this were to "[a]ddress future energy needs through increased conservation and efficiency in all sectors" and "[i]ncrease the production of renewable energy from small-scale and commercial-scale renewable energy installations to account for 10% of local energy use by 2020." In addition, the County has published an EWP 2016 Update to summarize progress toward implementing measures established in the EWP and outlines overall trends in energy use and emissions since the baseline year of the EWP inventory (2006).

Plan Morro Bay includes policies and implementation actions related to the use of renewable energy, energy conservation, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and providing affordable energy to all residents.

California Building Code

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 *2022 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.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally recognized green building certification system that provides third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance metrics in energy savings, water efficiency, carbon dioxide (CO_2)emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. LEED provides a point system to score green building design and construction. The system is categorized in nine basic areas: Integrative Process, Location and Transportation, Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Energy and Atmosphere, Materials and Resources, Indoor Environmental Quality, Innovation in Design, and Regional Priority. Buildings are awarded points based on the extent various sustainable strategies are achieved. The more points awarded the higher the level of certification achieved from Certified, Silver, Gold, to Platinum

Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards

In October 2012, the USEPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHSTA), on behalf of the Department of Transportation, issued final rules to further reduce GHG emissions and improve corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for light duty vehicles for model years 2017 and beyond. NHTSA's CAFE standards have been enacted under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act since 1978. This national program requires automobile manufacturers to build a single light-duty national fleet that meets all requirements under both federal programs and the standards of California and other states. This program would increase fuel economy to the equivalent of 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) limiting vehicle emissions to 163 grams of CO_2 per mile for the fleet of cars and light-duty trucks by the model year 2025.

In January 2017, USEPA Administrator Gina McCarthy signed a Final Determination to maintain the current GHG emissions standards for the model year 2022-2025 vehicles. However, on March 15, 2017, USEPA Administrator Scott Pruitt and Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao announced that USEPA intends to reconsider the Final Determination. On April 2, 2018, USEPA Administrator Scott Pruitt officially withdrew the January 2017 Final Determination, citing information that suggests that these current standards may be too stringent due to changes in key assumptions since the January 2017 Determination. According to the USEPA, these key assumptions include gasoline prices and overly optimistic consumer acceptance of advanced technology vehicles. The April 2nd notice is not USEPA's final agency action, and the USEPA intends to initiate rulemaking to adopt new standards. Until that rulemaking has been completed, the current standards remain in effect.

As part of California's overall approach to reducing pollution from all vehicles, CARB has established standards for clean gasoline and diesel fuels and fuel economies of new vehicles. CARB has also put in place innovative programs to drive the development of low-carbon, renewable, and alternative fuels such as their Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) Program pursuant to California Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and the Governor's Executive Order S-01-07.

In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars Program which combines the control of GHG emissions and criteria air pollutants, as well as requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles, into a single package of standards for vehicle model years 2017 through 2025. The new rules strengthen the GHG standard for 2017 models and beyond. This will be achieved through existing technologies, the use of stronger and lighter materials, and more efficient drivetrains and engines. The program's zero-emission vehicle regulation requires a battery, fuel cell, and/or plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to account for up to 15 percent of California's new vehicle sales by 2025. The program also includes a clean fuels outlet regulation designed to support the commercialization of zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell vehicles planned by vehicle manufacturers by 2015 by requiring increased numbers of hydrogen fueling stations throughout the state. The number of stations will grow as vehicle manufacturers sell more fuel cell vehicles. By 2025, when the rules will be fully implemented, the statewide fleet of new cars and light trucks will emit 34 percent fewer global warming gases and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions than the statewide fleet in 2016 (CARB 2021).

All self-propelled off-road diesel vehicles 25 horsepower (hp) or greater used in California and most two-engine vehicles (except on-road two-engine sweepers) are subject to the CARB's Regulation for In-Use Off-Road Diesel Fueled Fleets (Off-Road regulation). This includes vehicles that are rented or leased (rental or leased fleets). The overall purpose of the Off-Road regulation is to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM) from off-road diesel vehicles operating within California through the implementation of standards including, but not limited to, limits on idling, reporting and labeling of off-road vehicles, limitations on use of old engines, and performance requirements.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

During construction, energy would be used in the form of fossil fuels, diesel fuel, electricity, and natural gas for construction vehicles and equipment as well as worker transportation to the site. Construction phases of the project would be compliant with applicable local and state regulations regarding diesel idling and other wasteful energy uses while using construction equipment. Therefore, construction phases are not expected to result in the inefficient or wasteful use of energy.

Operational components of the project would include the intertie and potential booster pump station. These components would be powered by an electrical connection from a new electrical panel located in the at the intertie location and potential booster pump station location. Electricity demand for the project would be supplied by PG&E which is fully compliant with state regulations. PG&E sources 50% of its energy from renewable resources and 43% of its energy from GHG-free sources. By utilizing PG&E for electricity, the project's electricity demand would be primarily sourced from GHG-free energy sources.

Vehicle trips during the operation of the project would include periodic inspection by the LOCSD staff during periods of intertie operation. Infrequent maintenance activities would be expected to occur once a year or less. Operational energy use would be minimal and is not expected to result in the wasteful consumption of energy sources; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Project construction would be compliant with applicable local and state regulations regarding diesel idling and other wasteful energy uses while using construction equipment and would not result in wasteful energy use. Standard diesel idling standards are identified in Mitigation Measure AQ-1. Project operation would result in minimal energy use to power the intertie and potential booster pump station. The operation-related vehicle trips would occur for maintenance of the well on an as-needed basis during intertie operation. The project does not propose development that would be subject to energy efficiency building standards and operations. Therefore, project construction and operation would not conflict with applicable energy efficiency regulations and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would further reduce potential impacts.

VII. Geology and Soils

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Environmental Issues	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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning 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 act identifies active earthquake fault zones and restricts building habitable structures over known active or potentially active faults. San Luis Obispo county is located in a geologically complex and seismically active region. The *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Safety Element* and Plan Morro Bay identify three active faults that traverse through the county and that are currently zoned under the 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 the pier at 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, and Plan Morro Bay identifies seven active faults that could potentially affect the City. The County Safety Element and Plan Morro Bay both establish policies that require new development to be located away from active and potentially active faults, that applicable building codes relating to seismic design of structures be enforced, and that design professionals to evaluate the potential for liquefaction or seismic settlement to impact structures in accordance with the Uniform Building Code and CBC.

The County CZLUO identifies a Geologic Study Area (GSA) combining designation for areas where geologic and soil conditions could present new developments and their users with potential hazards to life and property. All land use permit applications for projects located within a GSA shall include a report prepared by a certified engineering geologist and/or registered civil/soils engineer, as appropriate. This report shall then be evaluated by a geologist retained by the county who is registered in the state of California. In addition, all uses within a GSA are subject to special standards regarding grading, distance from an active fault trace within an Earthquake Fault Zone, and erosion and geologic stability (CZLUO Section 23.07.080). The proposed intertie and potential booster pump station would be located within a GSA.

Groundshaking refers to the motion that occurs in response to local and regional earthquakes. Groundshaking can endanger life and safety due to damage or collapse of structures or lifeline facilities. The CBC currently requires structures to be designed to resist a 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. Based on the County Safety Element Maps, the project alignment in the county is primarily in an area with low potential for

liquefaction. A portion of the pipeline alignment in the county near Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, and the South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road intersection are identified as having high potential for liquefaction. The Plan Morro Bay considers portions of the pipeline alignment in the city to be in areas of high liquefaction potential.

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 being impacted by landslide activity in the County each year. The County Safety Element and Plan Morro Bay identify several policies to reduce risk from landslides and slope instability. These policies include the requirement for slope stability evaluations for development in areas of 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. Based on the County's Safety Element Maps, the project alignment in the county is primarily located in an area with a low potential for landslide. The portion of the pipeline alignment between the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead parking lot/turnout and Morro Bay State Park Road is identified as having moderate potential for landslide. A portion of the pipeline alignment near Chorro Creek is identified as having high potential for landslide. The portion of the pipeline alignment in the city is identified as having low potential for landslide.

The classification of expansive soils relates to 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. According to the NRCS Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2021), the project alignment is underlain by these 10 soil types:

- **Baywood fine sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand.

- **Baywood fine sand, 9 to 15 percent slopes.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand.

- **Diablo clay, 5 to 9 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 15.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff and a depth to restrictive feature of 40 to 59 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soil profile consists of clay and bedrock.

- **Gaviota sandy loam, 50 to 75 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 15.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 8 to 16 inches to lithic bedrock. The typical soil profile consists of sandy loam and unweathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Los Osos loam, 30 to 50 percent slopes.** This well drained soil has a very high runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of 20 to 40 inches to paralithic bedrock. The typical soils profile consists of loam, clay, sandy loam, and weathered bedrock.

- **Salinas silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, Major Land Resource Area 14.** This well drained soil has a negligible runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of silty clay loam and very fine sandy loam.

- **Corducci and Typic Xerofluvents, 0 to 5 percent slopes, occasionally flooded, Major Land Resources Area 14.** This somewhat excessively drained soil has a very low runoff class and a depth to restrictive feature of more than 80 inches. The typical soil profile consists of fine sand, sand, and coarse sand.

The County COSE and Plan Morro Bay identify policies for the protection of paleontological resources from the effects of development by avoiding disturbance where feasible. Paleontological sensitivity is defined as the potential for a geologic unit to produce scientifically significant fossils. The project alignment is located within the South Coast Range which is comprised of predominantly marine-derived Miocene and Pliocene-age sedimentary rocks.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) U.S. Quaternary Fault Map, the project alignment is located approximately 1.12 mile south of the late quaternary Cambria fault and approximately 1.48 miles north of the late quaternary Los Osos fault (USGS 2023). The project does not propose habitable structures that would put people at risk in the event of fault rupture. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the 2022 CBC (or subsequent version) and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and techniques; therefore, impacts related to rupture of a known earthquake faut are considered *less than significant*.

a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

The project is located within a seismically active region and there is always potential for seismic ground shaking. In addition, the project is located 1.48 miles north of the Los Osos fault zone and would be susceptible to potential seismic ground shaking. According to Section 1613 of the 2022 CBC, all structures and portions of structures are required to be designed to resist the effects of seismic loadings caused by earthquake ground motions. The project does not propose habitable structures that would put people at risk during a seismic event; however, aboveground features are proposed and would be subject to the 2022 CBC (or subsequent version) and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and

techniques. Therefore, impacts related to strong seismic ground shaking are considered *less than significant*.

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

According to the County and City liquefaction maps, the project alignment in the county is primarily in an area with low potential for liquefaction. A portion of the pipeline alignment in the county near Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, and the South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road intersection are identified as having high potential for liquefaction. In addition, the project would be required to comply with Section 1613 of the 2022 CBC (or subsequent version) and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event, including liquefaction, would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and techniques; therefore, impacts related to liquefaction are considered *less than significant*.

a-iv) Landslides?

The project alignment is located in a primarily disturbed area on predominantly flat land. According to the County and City landslide maps, the project alignment is primarily located in an area with a low potential for landslide. The portion of the pipeline alignment between the Cerro Cabrillo Trailhead/Quarry Trailhead parking lot/turnout and Morro Bay State Park Road is identified as having moderate potential for landslide. A portion of the pipeline alignment near Chorro Creek is identified as having high potential for landslide. The project does not propose occupiable structures that would put people at risk in the event of seismic-related ground failure. Further, the project would be required to comply with the CBC and other applicable standards to ensure compliance with current engineering practices and techniques; therefore, impacts related to landslides are considered *less than significant*.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Implementation of the project requires trenching and other minor ground disturbance activity that could result in erosion. The project proposes minimal grading activity (anticipated to be less than 5 cubic yards) for construction of intertie and booster pump station. Excavation and ground disturbance within asphalt for the pipeline installation has the potential to generate erosive runoff along work areas. The project site is located within the County's and City's Municipal Stormwater Management Area (MS4) coverage areas and must adhere to the Central Coast Post Construction Requirements (PCRs). As part of the MS4 process, construction BMPs would be applied to all work areas to reduce potential erosive runoff from construction activities. Preparation and approval of an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan is required for all construction and grading projects (CZLUO 23.05.036) 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 impacts. Implementation of the project would result in ground disturbance; however, compliance with existing regulations would reduce potential impacts related to erosion and loss of topsoil to *less than significant*.

c) Would the project 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?

According to NRCS Soil Survey (NRCS 2021), the project alignment is underlain by Baywood Fine Sand, Diablo Clay, Gaviota Sandy Loam, Los Osos Loam, Salinas Silty Clay Loam, and Corducci and Typic Xerofluvents. These soils are generally capable of supporting development at a larger scale than the proposed project. According to the USGS Areas of Land Subsidence in California Map, the project alignment is not located within an area of recorded land subsidence. In addition, the project would be required to comply with the CBC and other applicable standards to ensure compliance with current

engineering practices and techniques; therefore, impacts related to unstable soils are considered *less than significant*.

d) Would the project 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?

Typically, soils comprised of clay or clay materials have a higher shrink/swell potential than soils without clay. The project alignment is partially underlain by sand and loam, which generally have a low shrink/swell potential. A portion of the project alignment is partially underlain by clay, which generally has a moderate to high shrink/swell potential. However, the project would primarily occur within the previously disturbed ROW with non-native soils (i.e., road base). Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the CBC and other applicable standards to ensure compliance with current engineering practices and techniques; therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be *less than significant*.

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

The project does not propose development of new septic tanks or wastewater disposal systems; therefore, *no impact* would occur.

f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Based on the Los Osos Community Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the southern portion of the project alignment is underlain by old eolian deposits (County of San Luis Obispo 2020b). This formation consists of fine to coarse sand and fine gravel and is often capped with well-developed soil. Previous fossil encounters in the area have been identified in alluvial deposits; eolian sediments are typically accumulated in depositional environments that are not generally favorable for fossil preservation. The northern portion of the project alignment is underlain by Franciscan rock mélange. According to the Plan Morro Bay EIR, the Pismo Formation and Pleistocene-aged alluvial deposit geologic units in the vicinity of Morro Bay are known to contain substantial paleontological resources. Additionally, quaternary older alluvium (Pleistocene-age), mapped in the city, is highly sensitive for paleontological resources in California. Consequently, damage to or destruction of fossils could occur as a result of development under the proposed General Plan and LCP Coastal Land Use Plan Update. However, there is no mapped Pismo Formation within city limits, and fossil-bearing sediments in the Morro Bay area are predominantly located on State parks land and offshore. There are no known unique paleontological resources or unique geological features located within the project alignment. The majority of the project alignment would be located within previously disturbed roadway. The intertie and potential booster pump station would be located in native soils; however, construction of these facilities would result in small and individual impact areas and would be unlikely to impact significant paleontological resources. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

GHGs are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are CO_2, methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), 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). CO_2 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 CARB, transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHGs in the state.

In October 2008, the CARB published the *Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan*, which is the state's plan to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32. The Scoping Plan included CARB-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 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 CARB to regulate sources of GHGs to meet the following goals:

- Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020;
- Reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030;
- Reduce GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The initial Scoping Plan was first approved by CARB on December 11, 2008, and is updated every 5 years. The first update of the Scoping Plan was approved by the CARB 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 CARB 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.

When assessing the significance of potential impacts for CEQA compliance, an individual project's GHG emissions will generally not result in direct significant impacts 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. Accordingly, in March 2012, the SLOAPCD approved thresholds for GHG impacts which were incorporated into their 2012 CEQA Air Quality Handbook. The Handbook recommended applying a 1,150 $MTCO_2e$ per year Bright Line Threshold for commercial and residential projects and included a list of general land uses and estimated sizes or capacities of uses expected to exceed this threshold. According to the SLOAPCD, this threshold was based on a 'gap analysis' and was used for CEQA compliance evaluations to demonstrate consistency with the state's GHG emission reduction goals associated with AB32 and the 2008 Climate Change Scoping Plan which have a target year of 2020. However, in 2015, the California Supreme Court issued an opinion in the case of *Center for Biological Diversity vs California Department of Fish and Wildlife* ("Newhall Ranch") that determined that AB 32 based thresholds derived from a gap analysis are invalid for projects with a planning horizon beyond 2020. Since the bright-line and service population GHG thresholds in the Handbook are AB 32 based, and project horizons are now beyond 2020, the SLOAPCD no longer recommends the use of these thresholds in CEQA evaluations. Instead, the following threshold options are recommended for consideration by the lead agency:

- Consistency with a Qualified Climate Action Plan: CAPs conforming to CEQA Guidelines § 15183 and 15183.5 would be qualified and eligible for project streamlining under CEQA.

The County EWP, adopted in 2011, serves as the County's GHG reduction strategy. The GHG-reducing policy provisions contained in the EWP were prepared for the purpose of complying with the requirements of AB 32 and achieving the goals of the AB 32 Scoping Plan, which have a horizon year of 2020. Therefore, the EWP is not considered a qualified GHG reduction strategy for assessing the significance of GHG emissions generated by projects with a horizon year beyond 2020.

- No-net Increase: The 2017 Scoping Plan states that no-net increase in GHG emissions relative to baseline conditions "*is an appropriate overall objective for new development*" consistent with the Court's direction provided by the Newhall Ranch case. Although a desirable goal, the application of this threshold may not be appropriate for a small project where it can be clearly shown that it will not generate significant GHG emissions (i.e., di minimus: too trivial or minor to merit consideration).

- Lead Agency Adopted Defensible GHG CEQA Thresholds: Under this approach, a lead agency may establish SB 32-based local operational thresholds. As discussed above, SB 32 requires the state to reduce GHG levels by 40 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2030. According to the *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017, Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators* published by the California Air Resources Board, emissions of GHG statewide in 2017 were 424 million $MMTCO_2e$, which was 7 million MTCO2e *below* the 2020 GHG target of 431 $MMTCO_2e$ established by AB 32. At the local level, an update of the County's EnergyWise Plan prepared in 2016 revealed that overall GHG emissions in San Luis Obispo County decreased by approximately seven percent between 2006 and 2013, or about one-half of the year 2020 target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15% relative to the 2006 baseline[2]. Therefore, application of the 1,150 $MTCO_2e$ Bright Line Threshold in San Luis Obispo County, together with other local and State-wide efforts to reduce GHG emissions, proved to be an effective approach for achieving the reduction targets set forth by AB32 for the year 2020. It should be noted that the 1,150 $MTCO_2e$ per year Bright Line Threshold was based on the assumption that a project with the potential to emit less than 1,150 $MTCO_2e$ per year would result in impacts that are less than

[2] AB32 and SB32 require GHG emissions to be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The EnergyWise Plan assumes that the County's 1990 GHG emissions were about 15% below the levels identified in the 2006 baseline inventory.

significant and less than cumulatively considerable impact and would be consistent with state and local GHG reduction goals.

Since SB 32 requires the state to reduce GHG levels by 40 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2030, the application of an interim "bright line" SB32-based working threshold that is 40 percent below the 1,150 $MMTCO_2e$ Bright Line threshold (1,150 x 0.6 = 690 $MMTCO_2e$) would be expected to produce comparable GHG reductions "in the spirit of" the targets established by SB32. Therefore, for the purpose of evaluating the significance of GHG emissions for a project after 2020, emissions estimated to be less than 690 $MMTCO_2e$ per year GHG are considered *de minimus* (too trivial or minor to merit consideration), and will have a less than significant impact that is less than cumulatively considerable and consistent with state and local GHG reduction goals.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Impacts related to GHG emissions occur on a global scale and are, therefore, cumulative in nature. Short-term construction-related emissions rarely result in a considerable contribution to GHG emissions. The project requires minimal grading for development of the intertie and potential booster pump station (anticiapated to be less than 5 cubic yards) and would require excavation and other ground-disturbing activities within asphalt for installation of the pipeline. Construction vehicles and equipment have the potential to produce GHG emissions and ground-disturbing activity has the potential to produce ROG and NOx, which are ozone precursors. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 identifies applicable state and local regulations regarding diesel idling that would further reduce GHG emissions from construction equipment.

Operational components of the project would include the intertie and booster pump station. These components would be powered by electricity from PG&E and would result in a negligible amount of GHG emissions; therefore, impacts related to GHG emissions would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

As noted above, proposed construction activity would result in minor GHG emissions and operational activity would result in negligible GHG emissions and are not anticipated to exceed the threshold of 690 $MMTCO_2e$ per year. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation meant to reduce GHG emissions, and impacts would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☒	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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 in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) 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 (DTSC) 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, and military evaluation sites. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) 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 are provided on the CalEPA website: https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/. The project alignment is not located on or within 1,000 feet of a known hazardous materials site.

The California Health and Safety Code provides regulation pertaining to the abatement of fire related hazards and requires that local jurisdictions enforce the CBC, which provides standards for fire resistive building and roofing materials, and other fire-related construction methods.

According to the County and City fire hazard maps, the majority of the pipeline alignment is located in or adjacent to a High FHSZ. The portion of the pipeline alignment in the city is not in a FHSZ and the proposed intertie location is located in a Moderate FHSZ. For more information about fire-related hazards and risk assessment, see Section XX, Wildfire.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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 features that would facilitate the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Project construction would utilize commonly used construction materials, including gasoline, paints, solvents, oils, etc. Commonly used materials would be transported, stored, and used according to regulatory requirements and existing procedures for the handling of hazardous materials, i. Operation of the project would result in regular maintenance trips and would not require use of hazardous materials that could create significant hazard to the public. Compliance with existing regulations regarding handling of hazardous materials would ensure project impacts are *less than significant*.

b) Would the project 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, state, and local environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling of hazardous materials, including response and clean-up requirements for any minor spills. Operation of the project would result in maintenance trips and would not require use of hazardous materials that could create significant hazard to the public. Compliance with existing regulations regarding handling of hazardous materials would ensure project impacts are *less than significant*.

c) Would the project 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 alignment at South Bay Boulevard and Santa Ysabel Avenue is located immediately adjacent (to the west) of Family Partnership Charter School. 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. Therefore, the project does not have the potential to emit or handle hazardous materials within 0.25 mile of a school and impacts would be *less than significant*.

d) Would the project 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?

According to CalEPA Cortese List resources, including the DTSC Envirostor database and SWRCB Geotracker Database, the project site is not located within 1,000 feet of a known hazardous materials site.

Therefore, development of the project does not have the potential to release known hazardous materials and *no impact* 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 nearest private airstrip is located approximately 4.55 miles east at Camp San Luis (O'Sullivan Army Heliport) and the nearest public airport is approximately 12 miles east-southeast in the city of San Luis Obispo (San Luis Obispo Regional Airport). The project is not located within an Airport Land Use Plan (ALUP) or within 2 miles of a public or private airport; therefore, *no impact* would occur.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project would be located on existing roadways and ROW and would not alter or prohibit access to the local circulation system. The project does not propose occupiable buildings that would put inhabitants or structures at risk in an emergency event. Emergency access to the site and surrounding areas would be available during construction activity but may experience temporary traffic controls that would use appropriate detour signage and give proper notice. Implementation of the project would not impede emergency access to the site or put people or structures at risk of a wildfire. Therefore, the project is consistent with applicable emergency response and evacuation plans and 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 the County and City fire hazard maps, the majority of the pipeline alignment is located in or adjacent to a High FHSZ. The portion of the pipeline alignment in the city is not in a FHSZ and the proposed intertie location is located in a Moderate FHSZ. The project does not propose habitable structures that would increase the demand on fire protection services. Additionally, the project does not propose features that would increase wildfire risk in the area. Therefore, impacts related to wildfire would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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:				
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The project site is located within the Los Osos Area Subbasin of the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin, which is a low-priority subbasin under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) (Basin No. 3-08.01) but is adjudicated and considered in critical overdraft per the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118.

The RWQCB has established the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for waterbodies within the county. A TMDL establishes the allowable amount of a particular pollutant a waterbody can assimilate 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 implementation to achieve the allowable amount of pollutant loading. Section 303(d) of the CWA includes listed bodies of water that are designated as impaired. A body of water is impaired when a water quality objective or standard is not met.

Section 404 of the CWA establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Waters of the United States are typically identified by the presence of an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) and connectivity to traditional navigable waters or other jurisdictional features. CWA Section 404 requires a permit for these activities under separate regulations by the USACE and USEPA unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g., certain farming and forestry activities).

The Central Coast RWQCB Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan; 2019) 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 no 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 RWQCB implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements to individuals, communities, or businesses whose waste discharges can affect water quality.

The County CZLUO dictates which projects are required to prepare a drainage plan, including projects that would, for example, involve a land disturbance of more than 40,000 square feet, would result in an impervious surface of more than 20,000 square feet, or involves development on slopes steeper than 10 percent. The County CZLUO also dictates than an erosion and sedimentation control plan is required year-round for all construction and grading permit projects and any site disturbance activities of 0.5 acre or more in geologically unstable areas, on slopes of steeper than 30 percent, on highly erodible soils, or within 100 feet of any watercourse.

Construction sites that disturb 1 acre or more must enroll for coverage under the SWRCB Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to minimize onsite sedimentation and erosion. There are several types of projects that are exempt from preparation of a SWPPP, including routine maintenance to existing developments, emergency construction activities, agricultural discharges regulated by the SWRCB or RWQCB, and projects exempted by the SWRCB or RWQCB. Projects that disturb less than 1 acre must implement all required elements within the site's erosion and sediment control plan as required by County and City codes.

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 flood plains are subject to Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) regulations. Development projects within this combining designation are subject to FH permit and processing requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, the preparation of a drainage plan, implementation of additional construction standards, and additional materials storage and processing requirements that could be injurious to human, animal or plant life in the event of flooding. Surface water features adjacent to the project alignment include Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, Morro Bay State Estuary, and the Pacific Ocean. Additionally, portions of the pipeline alignment near Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, Blue Heron Terrace Mobile Home Park, and Quintana Road are located within a 100-year flood zone.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

South Bay Boulevard crosses both Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek, which discharges to Morro Bay. Construction of the pipeline at the Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek crossings would either include crossing the creeks on the existing bridge structures or boring under the creek by horizontal directional drilling methods. Short-term construction activities are expected to result in a short-term increase in erosion, sedimentation, and hydraulic fracture which could cause pollutants to enter Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek. Hydraulic fracture (also known as frac-out) is an accidental release of drilling fluid that can occur during horizontal directional drilling activities and is caused by excess drilling fluid pressure that exceeds the strength of the rock being drilled. Given the project's location, frac-out could result in

drilling fluids entering ground or surface water, including Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, the Morro Bay State Estuary, or the Pacific Ocean. The project proposes minimal grading activity for construction of the intertie and potential booster pump station. Excavation and ground disturbance within asphalt for the pipeline installation have the potential to generate erosive runoff along work areas. The project would disturb more than 1 acre of soil and would be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) under the SWRCB Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ. The project site is located within the MS4 coverage area and must adhere to the Central Coast PCRs. Preparation and approval of an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan is required by the County for all construction and grading projects to minimize potential impacts related to erosion, sedimentation, and siltation (CZLUO 23.05.036). The plan is required to be prepared by a civil engineer to address both temporary and long-term sedimentation and erosion impacts. Equipment used during project construction has the potential to increase pollutant runoff from the project site. BMPs and other equipment regulations would be implemented through the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan during project construction to ensure erosive and pollutant runoff is minimized during the construction period of the project. Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would require the LOCSD to prepare a frac-out plan to aid in preventing, detecting, and responding to frac-out; this along with compliance with existing regulations would reduce potential impacts related to water quality to *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

Water conveyed by the intertie would be utilized for customers located within the Los Osos Area Subbasin of the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin, which is a low-priority subbasin under SGMA (Basin No. 3-08.01). SGMA does not apply to the Los Osos Area subbasin because requirements have been met by the Los Osos Basin Management Committee. The project is meant to provide redundancy and an alternative source of water to the LOCSD, up to 200 AFY. Operation of the intertie would only occur during wet years when the State Water Project has excess water supply. The water delivered by the intertie would allow the LOCSD to reduce or offset pumping in the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin which would help protect against sea water intrusion. Implementation of the project would not result in groundwater use; therefore, there would be *no impact*.

c) Would the project 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?

Short-term construction activities are expected to result in a short-term increase in erosion, sedimentation, and hydraulic fracture which could cause pollutants to enter Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek. In addition, the project would disturb more than 1 acre of soil and would require preparation and implementation of a SWPPP under SWRCB Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ and the preparation and approval of an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan for all construction and grading activities within the County jurisdiction to minimize potential impacts related to erosion, sedimentation, and siltation (CZLUO 23.05.036). The project alignment is located within the County's and City's MS4 coverage area and must adhere to the Central Coast PCRs. Operation of the project is not anticipated to substantially alter drainage patterns or increase impervious surface areas that could increase erosion or siltation on- or off-site and compliance with existing regulations would reduce impacts to sedimentation and erosion that could runoff from work areas; 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 would primarily be constructed within an existing paved roadway, with construction of above ground features consisting of an intertie and potential booster pump station. The project would result in a marginal increase in overall impervious surface. Surface water runoff as a result of implementation of the proposed project would be minimal and would not result in on- or off-site flooding; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project would primarily be constructed within an existing paved roadway, with construction of above ground features consisting of an intertie and potential booster pump station. The project would result in a marginal increase in overall impervious surface. Construction of the project would likely disturb more than one acre and there would require to prepare and implement a SWPPP under the SWRCB Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ. The SWPPP would identify potential pollutant sources that may affect the quality of discharges to stormwater and would include specific BMPs including operational practices and physical controls to prevent the discharge of pollutants from the site during construction. BMPs would include appropriate erosion control devices, dust control measures, fuel storage and handling requirements, and measures to cover and contain stockpiled materials.

c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Portions of the project alignment are within the 100-year flood zone. The project does not propose features that would permanently impede or redirect flood flows on- or off-site; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Portions of the project site are located within a flood hazard zone, and the area of Los Osos Creek is located within a tsunami hazard area. In these areas, the project infrastructure would include below-ground pipelines and above ground meter, valves, and pipes associated with the potential booster pump station. The project pipeline and infrastructure would convey state water and would not release pollutants; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

The project site is located within the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin in the Los Osos Area subbasin (Basin No. 3-08.01), which is a low-priority subbasin under the SGMA but is adjudicated and considered in critical overdraft per the DWR Bulletin 118. According to the County, SGMA does not apply to the Los Osos Area subbasin because requirements have been met by the Los Osos Basin Management Committee. The project does not require the use of groundwater and therefore would not conflict with or obstruct a sustainable groundwater management plan.

South Bay Boulevard crosses both Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek, which discharges to Morro Bay. Construction of the pipeline at the Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek crossings would either include crossing the creeks on the existing bridge structures or boring under the creek by horizontal directional drilling methods. Short-term construction activities are expected to result in a short-term increase in

erosion, sedimentation, and hydraulic fracture which could cause pollutants to enter Los Osos Creek and Chorro Creek. Hydraulic fracture (also known as frac-out) is an accidental release of drilling fluid that can occur during horizontal directional drilling activities and is caused by excess drilling fluid pressure that exceeds the strength of the rock being drilled. Given the project's location, frac-out could result in drilling fluids entering ground or surface water, including Los Osos Creek, Chorro Creek, the Morro Bay State Estuary, or the Pacific Ocean. The project proposes minimal grading activity for construction of the intertie and potential booster pump station. Excavation and ground disturbance within asphalt for the pipeline installation have the potential to generate erosive runoff along work areas. The project would disturb more than 1 acre of soil and would be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) under the SWRCB Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ. The project site is located within the MS4 coverage area and must adhere to the Central Coast PCRs. With implementation of Mitigation Measure HYD-1 and BIO-12, the project is not anticipated to conflict or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Mitigation Measures

HYD-1 **Hydraulic Fracture.** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, the Los Osos Community Services District shall prepare a frac-out plan for all activities with the potential to result in hydraulic fracture. The plan shall include the location of all water withdrawal and injection wells, the types and quantities of chemicals used in the hydraulic fracturing fluids, the methods for disposing of wastewater, the procedures for monitoring water quality, and the procedures for responding to spills and leaks. Additionally, the plan shall include measures to prevent frac-out from occurring (e.g., using lower pressures, less toxic chemicals, lining wastewater disposal pits, etc.), procedures for detecting frac-out as early as possible (i.e., monitoring water quality, inspecting bores, conducting pressure tests, etc.), and procedures for responding to frac-out in a timely manner.

XI. Land Use and Planning

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The CCC is the ultimate permit authority in the Coastal Zone of San Luis Obispo county and dictates how the County's and City's LCPs are interpreted. The purpose of the County CZLUO, is to guide and manage the future growth in accordance with the County General Plan and LCP; 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 County 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 grown principles to define and focus the county's pro-active planning approach and balance environmental, economic, and social equity concerns. The project alignment within the county is designated public ROW within the Open Space and Agriculture land use categories.

Plan Morro Bay provides a framework for how businesses, public spaces, streets, and infrastructure are organized for the benefit of the community. The Land Use Element of Plan Morro Bay establishes standards for residential building density and nonresidential building intensity. The project alignment within the city is designated public ROW within the Open Space zone.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

The project does not propose project elements or components that would physically divide the site from surrounding areas and uses. The project would be consistent with the designated land use for the property and would not permanently create, close, or impede any existing public or private roads, or create any other barriers to movement or accessibility within the community. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community and *no impacts* would occur.

b) Would the project 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 consistent with the property's land use designation and the guidelines and policies for development within the County and City. The project was found to be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan*, the Estero Area Plan, Plan Morro Bay, the SLOAPCD CAP, and other land use policies for this area. In addition, the project would be required to implement measures to mitigate potential impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, noise, and transportation; therefore, with mitigation, the project would not conflict with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AES-1, AQ-1 through AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-12, CR-1 through CR-5, HYD-1, N-1, and TR-1.

XII. Mineral Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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 (PRC 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 [CGS] 2023):

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

Plan Morro Bay does not identify any mineral resource areas and does not include any policies or implementation actions related to mineral resources.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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?

Based on the CGS Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification, the project site is located within an area that has been evaluated for mineral resources. However, the project site is not located within or adjacent to a County Extractive Resource Area or Energy/Extractive Area and is not in an area identified by the City as having significant mineral resources. The project includes minimal grading activity for the intertie and potential booster pump station sites, and work within previously disturbed roads and is not anticipated to uncover mineral resources in the area; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project 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?

Chapter 6 of the County COSE identifies goals and policies regarding mineral resources in the county. Policies within this chapter protect mineral resources within identified extractive areas identified in the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element*. The project alignment is not located within or adjacent to an Extractive Resource Area or Energy/Extractive Area and is not in an area identified by the City as having significant mineral resources. The project includes minimal grading activity for the intertie and potential booster pump station locations, and work within previously disturbed roads is not anticipated to uncover mineral resources in the area; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

XIII. Noise

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Noise Element* provides a framework within which potential noise impacts may be addressed during project review and long-range planning. Noise sensitive uses that have been identified by the County include residential development, except temporary dwellings, schools, health care services (hospitals), nursing and personal care, churches, public assembly and entertainment, and libraries and museums.

The County CZLUO noise standards are not applicable to a range of exceptions, including noise sources associated with construction, provided such activities do not take place before 7:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m. on weekdays, or before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday. Noise associated with agricultural land uses as listed in Section 22.06.030 and traffic on public roadways, railroad line operations, and aircraft in flight are also exempt.

Plan Morro Bay establishes a land use pattern that is intended to minimize the community's exposure to excessive noise and identifies noise reduction strategies to address existing and foreseeable noise problems. The Noise Element outlines policies, plans, and programs that aim to minimize the negative effects of human-caused noise in the community. It is designed to improve the quality of life of residents by regulating and reducing noise levels, especially in residential areas and close to noise-sensitive establishments such as residential development, hospitals and nursing homes, schools, churches, meeting halls and libraries, transient lodging (motels and hotels), playgrounds and parks, offices, and mixed-use development. Plan Morro Bay provides guidance on practices and strategies to safeguard city residents and businesses from excessive noise levels. Plan Morro Bay does not specifically address construction-related noise nor are there established thresholds defining overall maximum acceptable noise levels (Lmax) or acceptable time averaged hourly levels (Leq(h)) during construction activities. The City's Municipal Code limits noise from construction activities to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends.

There are residences located along portions of the pipeline alignment near the intersection of Santa Ysabel Avenue and South Bay Boulevard and the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project result in 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?

During the construction phase of the project, noise generated from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area. Surrounding land uses of the project site include residential units along portions of the pipeline alignment. Construction activities would be limited in nature and consistent with other projects within the county and city; however, construction activity would be located in close proximity to residential units and associated noise emissions have the potential to affect the nearby sensitive receptors. Table 2 details the typical noise levels for construction equipment likely to be used in implementation the project.

Table 2. Typical Noise Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA)* 50 Feet from Source
Backhoes, excavators	80–85
Concrete pumps, mixers	82–85
Cranes (moveable)	81
Pick-up truck	55
Dump truck	76
Equipment/tool van	55
Dozer	82
Compactors	82
Water truck	76
Grader	85
Drill rigs	70–85
Pneumatic tools	85
Rock transport	76
Roller	80
Hole auger	84
Line truck and trailer	55

*dBA = A-weighted decibels

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) 1971.

CZLUO 23.06.042.d states that noise related to construction activity should take place between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. (Monday–Friday) and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Saturday–Sunday). Noise associated with construction activities taking place during these hours are exempt from the County's noise standards. The City's Municipal Code limits noise from construction activities to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday–Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday–Sunday but does not set noise thresholds for construction activities.

Construction noise would be temporary and would generally take place during daytime hours. Due to the close proximity of nearby residential and commercial uses and typical noise levels of demolition and

construction activities, Mitigation Measure N-1 has been identified to reduce the potential temporary construction noise impacts to surrounding residential and commercial uses; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

The project would require minimal long-term operational activities and maintenance and would not generate substantial long-term noise or vibration. Noise associated with maintenance work on public utilities is exempt from the County's noise standards. Minimal noise would be associated with the potential booster pump station pumps, which would be housed in a small prefab or masonry structure. Operational noise associated with the pumps would attenuate before reaching nearby property lines and is not expected to exceed County or City noise regulations of 50 decibels (dB) daytime or 45 dB nighttime; therefore, operational noise impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

The project does not propose pile driving or other high-impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Use of heavy equipment would generate groundborne noise and vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities and would very likely not be substantial enough to be detected by occupants of surrounding land uses. Therefore, potential impacts 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 nearest private airstrip is located approximately 4.55 miles east at Camp San Luis (O'Sullivan Army Heliport) and the nearest public airport is approximately 12 miles southeast in the city of San Luis Obispo (San Luis Obispo Regional Airport). The project site is not within the vicinity of an airport or airstrip and would not expose workers to excessive noise levels generated by airports or airstrips. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measures

N-1 For the entire duration of the construction phase of the project, the following BMPs shall be adhered to:

1. Stationary construction equipment that generates noise that exceeds 50 decibels (dB) daytime or 45 dB nighttime outside of between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Monday–Friday) and 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Saturday–Sunday) at the project boundaries shall be shielded with the most modern noise control devices (i.e., mufflers, lagging, and/or motor enclosures).
2. Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers, pavement breakers, rock drills, etc.) used for project construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible to avoid noise associated with compressed-air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools.
3. Where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed-air exhaust shall be used.
4. All construction equipment shall have the manufacturers' recommended noise abatement methods installed, such as mufflers, engine enclosures, and engine vibration insulators, intact and operational.

5. All construction equipment shall undergo inspection at periodic intervals to ensure proper maintenance and presence of noise control devices (e.g., mufflers, shrouding, etc.).

XIV. Population and Housing

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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 County Housing Element includes an analysis of vacant and underutilized land located in urban areas that are suitable for residential development and considers zoning provisions and development standards to encourage development of these parcels. These parcels are categorized into potential sites for very low and low income households, moderate income households, and above moderate income households.

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 provide limited financing to projects relating to affordable housing throughout the county.

The *City of Morro Bay General Plan Housing Element* encourages a balanced approach to achieving a range of housing opportunities and identifies sites within the city for residential purposes consistent with the goals of providing housing to households within the full range of incomes.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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 propose the expansion or development of roads, housing, or commercial businesses that would facilitate population growth in the area. The project proposes a new intertie with associated pipeline infrastructure and does not include habitable structures that would generate population. The purpose of the project is to provide reliability and resiliency to the LOCSD's water supply, and the allocated state water would not be used to grow population in Los Osos, which is governed by County planning documents. In addition, maintenance trips during project operation would be conducted by existing LOCSD employees and implementation of the project would not facilitate a substantial number of new employment opportunities. Installation of the new well would not facilitate population growth directly or indirectly; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project does not propose the removal of residential structures and would not displace housing at the project site or in surrounding areas. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

XV. Public Services

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Fire protection services to the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo county are provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) under contract to provide full-service fire protection. CAL FIRE is responsible for the administration of the fire stations that serve the unincorporated areas of the county not within fire protection or other special districts and provides equipment and training for volunteer stations throughout the county. The nearest County fire station to the project is County Fire/CAL FIRE Station 15 (South Bay Station), located at 2315 Bayview Heights Drive, approximately 2.0 vehicle miles south of the southern project alignment.

Fire protection services to the city of Morro Bay are provided by the Morro Bay Fire Department. The nearest City fire station to the project is Morro Bay Fire Department Station 53 located at 715 Harbor Street, approximately 1.3 miles west of the project alignment at South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road.

The County of San Luis Obispo Sheriff's Patrol Division is responsible for the first line law enforcement in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo county. Deputies respond to calls for service, conduct proactive law enforcement activities, and perform initial investigations of crime. 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 to the project site is the Coast

Station located at 2099 10th Street, approximately 1.8 vehicle miles southwest of the southern project alignment.

Police protection services for the City of Morro Bay are provided by the Morro Bay Police Department. Deputies respond to calls for service, conduct proactive law enforcement activities, and perform initial investigations of crime. The Morro Bay Police Department has one station located at 850 Harbor Street, approximately 1.3 miles west of the project alignment at South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road.

San Luis Obispo County has a total 0f 10 school districts that currently enroll approximately 34,000 students in over 75 schools. The nearest public school to the project site is Los Osos Middle School, located at 1555 El Moro Avenue, approximately 0.4 vehicle miles southeast of the southern project alignment. There is also a private school located immediately adjacent to the southern project alignment, Family Partnership Charter School located at 1480 Santa Ysabel Avenue.

Public facilities fees, Quimby fees, and developer conditions are several ways the County and City fund 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 or City may condition a project to provide land, amenities, or facilities consistent with the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Parks and Recreation Element* and Plan Morro Bay.

A public facility fee program (i.e., development impact fee program) has been adopted to address impacts related to public facilities and schools (California Government Code Section 65995 et seq.). These fees are assessed annually by the County based on the type of proposed development and 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.

Environmental Evaluation

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 proposed project would not create additional employment opportunities and would not induce population growth that would require additional fire protection services or facilities. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Police protection?

The proposed project would not create additional employment opportunities and would not induce population growth that would require additional police protection services or facilities. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Schools?

The proposed project would not create additional employment opportunities and would not induce population growth that would require additional school facilities. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Parks?

The proposed project would not create additional employment opportunities and would not induce population growth that would require additional park facilities. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Other public facilities?

As discussed above, the proposed project would not facilitate population growth to the area that would result in an increased demand on public services. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

XVI. Recreation

Environmental Issues	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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Parks and Recreation Element* establishes goals, policies, and implementation measures for management, renovation, and expansion of existing, and 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. 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.

Plan Morro Bay establishes goals and policies to protect and conserve Morro Bay's open space resources and addresses opportunities to expand the open space system by assessing park and trail facilities, coastal facilities, and recreation programs. The City currently has 11 parks over 50 acres and 3 linear miles of public beaches.

Public Facilities Fees, Quimby Fees, and developer conditions are several of ways the County and City currently fund public parks and recreational facilities. Public Facility Fees are collected upon construction of a new residential unit 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 or City may condition a project to provide land, amenities, or facilities.

The *County of San Luis Obispo 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 plan, which is updated every 5 years and was last updated in 2016, 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.

The *City of Morro Bay Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* was adopted in 2011 and guides the improvement of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Morro Bay. Pedestrian mobility is generally evaluated by the connectivity of infrastructure such as safe crosswalks and sidewalks, while bicycle mobility is evaluated based on the types of bikeways available in the community and how effectively they serve the needs of bicyclists.

Environmental Evaluation

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 proposes the installation of an intertie and associated pipeline and would not result in the development of new homes or businesses that would facilitate population growth in the area. Based on the project description, the project would not result in a substantial growth within the area and would not substantially increase demand on any proximate existing neighborhoods, regional parks, or other recreational facilities; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

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.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

XVII. Transportation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The *County of San Luis Obispo Land Use and Circulation Element* (LUCE) establishes goals, objectives, and policies to be implemented throughout the County CZLUO area. Plan Morro Bay focuses on creating a regionally connected system that facilitates safe and convenient travel for all community members, regardless of travel mode, age, or physical ability.

In 2013 SB 743 was signed 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 the State CEQA Guidelines Update package. This package included the guidelines section implementing SB 743 and identified VMT per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis effective July 1, 2020.

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 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 program, and the section and approval of transportation projects using federal funds.

The 2023 RTP, which was adopted in June 2023, is a long-term blueprint of San Luis Obispo County's transportation system. The plan identifies and analyzes transportation needs of the metropolitan region and creates a framework for project priorities. As the MPO for the region, SLOCOG represents and works with the County and Cities within the county in facilitating the development of the RTP.

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 in South County, offering service 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 pipeline would be located in South Bay Boulevard (both County and City jurisdiction), Quintana Road (City jurisdiction), and under Highway 1 (Caltrans jurisdiction).

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Implementation of the project would not result in permanent alteration of pedestrian circulation facilities and access. Project construction would require temporary traffic controls and work within the public ROW but would not result in the permanent obstruction of sidewalks, bicycle paths, transit stops, or roadways. All transit facilities would return to preconstruction conditions after construction is complete. Operation of the project would require LOCSD employee maintenance trips, which would not significantly increase vehicle trips to and from the project site. The project does not propose occupiable buildings or facilities that would further facilitate vehicle trips to the site; therefore, impacts related to conflict with applicable plans, ordinances, or policies related to the circulation system would be *less than significant*.

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

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) states a lead agency may analyze the project's VMT qualitatively. The Technical Advisory on the Evaluation of Transportation identifies an average daily trip threshold of significance of 110 trips per day. Projects that are expected to produce less than 110 trips per day can assume less-than-significant impacts on VMT as a result of implementation of the proposed project (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR] 2018). Project construction would require construction equipment and vehicle trips to the site and is not expected to result in more than 110 trips per day. Operation of the project would result in regular maintenance trips by LOCSD employees and would not exceed 110 trips per day. The project would not generate vehicle trips above the established threshold; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

c) Would the project 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 does not propose new roads and roads disturbed during construction activities would be returned to preconstruction conditions. The project proposes aboveground structures within an existing parcel and would not block or impede sidewalks, bicycle lanes, or roadways. No unique road design elements are proposed for the project; therefore, no impact would occur.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The construction of the pipeline for the proposed project would occur along South Bay Boulevard within paved roads and would extend along the eastern portion of Quintana Road. Pipeline installation would result in a partial lane closure and temporary traffic controls during work along South Bay Boulevard and

Quintana Road. A Traffic Control Plan (TCP) would be required and would be submitted to and reviewed by the County and City in conjunction with encroachment permits, as described in Mitigation Measure TR-1. Construction of the intertie and potential booster pump station would occur within the proposed parcel and would not require traffic controls. Any construction-related detours would include proper signage and notification and would be short-term and limited in nature and duration. Implementation of the project is not expected to permanently restrict emergency access to the site or surrounding areas; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Mitigation Measures

TR-1 Traffic Control Plan. Prior to issuance of encroachment permits for pipeline construction, the applicant shall submit a Traffic Control Plan to the Department of Public Works for review and approval. The Traffic Control Plan shall ensure emergency access is maintained to all areas of the community during any road closures.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Environmental Issues	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	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of cultural 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 Section 5020.1.

2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of 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 may have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 also 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. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the significance of tribal cultural resources, the significance of the project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, alternatives, and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe.

Environmental Evaluation

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)?

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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

The project vicinity is considered highly sensitive for the presence of known and unknown archaeological resources and there are three previously documented prehistoric archaeological resources within 50 feet of the project alignment and an additional twelve cultural resources within 660 feet. Installation of the pipeline would require excavation and ground-disturbing activity within previously developed asphalt roads; however, due to the archaeologically sensitive nature of the area, ground-disturbing activity has the potential to uncover known or unknown archaeological resources of tribal significance. Additionally, the intertie location and potential booster pump station would require disturbance in native soils.

The LOCSD has provided notice of the opportunity to consult with appropriate tribes per the requirements of AB 52. No comments or consultation requests have been received. Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5 identify the appropriate protocol in the event archaeological resources are discovered on-site. Implementation of the identified mitigation measures would reduce project impacts related to tribal archaeological resources and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(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) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Per the County's Stormwater Program, the County Department of Public Works is responsible for ensuring that new construction implements best management practices during construction, and that site plans incorporate appropriate post-construction stormwater runoff controls. Construction sites that disturb 1 acre or more must also enroll for coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board's Construction General Permit.

PG&E is the primary electricity provider to development within the unincorporated county.

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. The project would be served by Mission Country Disposal.

Environmental Evaluation

a) Would the project 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?

The project proposes the development of a municipal new intertie to the CVP and installation of associated pipeline in the public ROW from that extends from Santa Ysabel Avenue north along South

Bay Boulevard to Quintana Road. Construction of the intertie and pipeline requires ground disturbance within asphalt along South Bay Boulevard, Quintana Road, and under Highway 1, as well as minor site disturbance in unpaved areas in the ROW. Development of the project would be conducted in close proximity to residential units and has the potential to generate emissions and excessive noise during construction activities. In addition, the project site is located within an archaeologically sensitive area and has the potential to disturb known and unknown archaeological resources during excavation activities. Additional impacts to sensitive species could occur in the road shoulders adjacent to South Bay Boulevard. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1, AQ-1 through AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-12, CR-1 through CR-5, HYD-1, N-1, and TR-1 would ensure construction activities would not result in significant environmental effects; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Water conveyed by the project would serve LOCSD customers in the Los Osos Area Subbasin of the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin, which is a low-priority subbasin under the SGMA (Basin No. 3-08.01). The SGMA does not apply to the Los Osos Area subbasin because requirements have been met by the Los Osos Basin Management Committee. The project is meant to provide redundancy and an alternative source of water to the LOCSD, up to 200 AFY. Operation of the intertie would only occur during wet years when the State Water Project has excess water supply. Implementation of the project would not result in water use, outside of periodic flushing of the pipeline after periods of stagnation. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

c) Would the project 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?

The project does not propose features that would increase demands on existing wastewater collection, treatment, or disposal facilities. The project does not include new connections to wastewater treatment facilities; therefore, there would be *no impact.*

d) Would the project 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?

Project construction has the potential to generate solid waste from excavated materials and minimal grading activity. Operation of the project would result in negligible solid waste. Cold Canyon Landfill and other local landfills have adequate permit capacity to serve the project and the project does not propose to generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The project would not result in a substantial increase in waste generation during project construction or operation. Construction waste disposal would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AES-1, AQ-1 through AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-12, CR-1 through CR-5, HYD-1, N-1, and TR-1.

XX. Wildfire

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

In central California, the fire season usually extends from roughly May through October, however, recent events may indicate that wildfire behavior, frequency, and duration of the fire season are changing in California. FHSZs are defined by CAL FIRE 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. 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 extends from Monterey County to the north, to Santa Barbara County to the south. The Moderate Hazard designation does not mean the area cannot experience a damaging fire, rather that the probability is reduced, generally because the number of days a year that the area has "fire weather" is less. According to the County and City fire hazard maps, the majority of the pipeline alignment is located in or adjacent to a High FHSZ. The portion of the pipeline alignment in the city is not in a FHSZ and the proposed intertie location is located in a Moderate FHSZ.

The County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) addresses several overall policy and coordination functions related to emergency management. The EOP includes the following components:

- Identifies the departments and agencies designated to perform response and recovery activities and specifies tasks they must accomplish;
- Outlines the integration of assistance that is available to local jurisdictions during disaster situations that generate emergency response and recovery needs beyond what the local jurisdiction can satisfy;

- Specifies the direction, control, and communications procedures and systems that will be relied upon to alert, notify, recall, and dispatch emergency response personnel; alert the public; protect residents and property; and request aid/support from other jurisdictions and/or the federal government;

- Identifies key continuity of government operations; and

- Describes the overall logistical support process for planned operations.

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.

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.

The County 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. Plan Morro Bay includes policies and strategies to reduce the threat to life, structures, and the environment caused by fire. These policies identify standards for construction in high-risk areas, vegetation removal and clearance requirements, and requires adherence to the California Fire Code.

Environmental Evaluation

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

According to the County and City fire hazard maps, the majority of the pipeline alignment is located in or adjacent to a High FHSZ in a state responsibility area. The portion of the pipeline alignment in the city is not in a mapped FHSZ or state responsibility area and the proposed intertie location is located in a Moderate FHSZ in a state responsibility area. The project does not propose long-term features such as restricted emergency access or design concepts that would be inconsistent with existing fire regulations. Emergency access along the project alignment and surrounding areas would be available during construction activity but may experience temporary traffic controls that would use appropriate detour signage and give proper notice. Implementation of the project would not impede emergency access to the site or put people or structures at risk of a wildland fire. Therefore, the project is consistent with applicable emergency response and evacuation plans and impacts would be *less than significant*.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, if located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Topography influences wildland fire and factors, such as wind speed and direction and length and steepness of slopes, have the potential to exacerbate fire risks. The project site is located in a developed area with relatively flat topography. The average wind speed in Los Osos is between 7.6 mph and 10.2

mph year-round. The topography of the project site and surrounding area is not anticipated to exacerbate wildfire hazard in the area; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project 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 installation of a new well site and associated pipeline in the public ROW that extends from South Bay Boulevard north to Mountain View Drive and eventually Nipomo Avenue. Additionally, the project would develop aboveground features, including a well building, piping, 6-foot-tall chain-link fencing with green privacy slats, concrete pads, and an emergency diesel generator. In addition, the access driveway would be improved to an A/C driveway. The project does not propose utility breaks during project construction that could exacerbate fire risk in the area. Development would be in compliance with applicable CBC, California Fire Code, and PRC standards and regulations. The project does not propose any utility features that would increase fire risk to the area; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

As previously discussed, the project site is not anticipated to experience wildfire hazard. The project site and surrounding area is located on predominantly flat topography and according to the Safety Element Maps, is at low risk for landslides. The project does not include any occupiable buildings or other design elements that would put people or structures at significant risk. Additionally, the project design would be compliant with the CBC; therefore, the potential impacts are *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.

XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Environmental Issues	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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

	Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

As discussed in each resource section above, upon implementation of identified mitigation measures, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to biological or cultural resources and would not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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)?

Aesthetic and Visual Resources

The analysis conducted in Section I, Aesthetics, describes the existing visual setting of the project area and concludes that project impacts would be less than significant due to the consistency with surrounding developed areas with implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1. Based on the less-than-significant determination, the impacts to aesthetic and visual resources of this project, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Section II, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, identifies that the project is not located on or adjacent to designated Prime Farmland. The proposed project does not propose to construct on Prime Farmland and impacts are considered less than cumulatively considerable.

Air Quality

The analysis provided in Section III, Air Quality, concludes that the project's potential construction-related and operational emissions will fall below SLOAPCD thresholds of significance for both project-related and cumulative impacts. Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 have been identified to reduce emissions impacts in close proximity to sensitive receptors. Therefore, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development projects in the unincorporated county, the contribution of the subject project to potential impacts to air quality are considered less than cumulatively considerable.

Biological Resources

The analysis provided in Section IV, Biological Resources, concludes that the project would have a less-than-significant impact upon implementation of the identified mitigation measures for special-status wildlife species and their habitats. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-12 potential impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

All surrounding proposed development projects would undergo evaluation for potential to impact biological resources. Proposed projects that are determined to have the potential to impact sensitive species and/or their habitats, sensitive natural communities, federal or state wetlands, migratory corridors, native trees, or conflict with state or local policies or HCPs would be required to implement mitigation measures to reduce these impacts.

Based on the mitigation measures identified to reduce potential project impacts and discretionary review of surrounding projects, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, project impacts associated with biological resources would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Cultural Resources

The analysis provided in Section V, Cultural Resources, concludes that the project is located within an archaeologically sensitive area but would have a less-than-significant impact upon implementation of the identified mitigation measures for known and unknown resources in the area. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-2, potential impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant.

All surrounding proposed development projects would undergo evaluation for potential to impact cultural resources. Proposed projects that have the potential to adversely affect cultural resources in the area would be required to implement mitigation measures to reduce these impacts.

Based on the mitigation measures identified to reduce potential project impacts and discretionary review of surrounding projects, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, project impacts associated with cultural resources would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Impacts related to GHG emissions occur on a global scale and are, therefore, cumulative in nature. The project would result in minimal GHG emissions and would result in less than significant impacts. Because GHG emissions are cumulative in nature, project impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As discussed in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality, the project's water use is planned for in the Basin Plan. Additionally, Mitigation Measure HYD-1 along with compliance with existing regulations would adequately reduce potential impacts associated with hydrology and water quality to be less than significant.

Noise

As discussed in Section XIII, Noise, implementation of Mitigation Measure N-1 would reduce the noise impacts generated by the project to surrounding properties.

All surrounding proposed development projects would undergo evaluation for potential noise impacts generated by the project. Proposed projects that have the potential to adversely affect ambient noise levels in the area would be required to implement mitigation measures to reduce these impacts.

Based on the mitigation measures identified to reduce potential project impacts and discretionary review of surrounding projects, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, project impacts associated with noise would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Population and Housing

As discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing, the project does not propose features that would directly or indirectly increase population to the area. Therefore, when considered with other reasonably foreseeable future development, project impacts associated with population and housing would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Public Services

As discussed in Section XV, Public Services, the project does not propose features that would directly or indirectly increase population to the area that would increase demand on public facilities. Therefore, when considered with other reasonably foreseeable future development, project impacts associated with public services would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Transportation

As discussed in Section XVII, Transportation, the project would generate a minimal amount of vehicle trips during construction and operation and would not result in over 110 trips per day. Therefore, when considered with other reasonably foreseeable future development, project impacts associated transportation would be less than cumulatively considerable.

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. In addition, implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1, AQ-1 through AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-12, CR-1 through CR-5, HYD-1, N-1, and TR-1 identified in the resource sections above would reduce potential adverse effects on human beings to less than significant; therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Mitigation Measures

Implement Mitigation Measures AES-1, AQ-1 through AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-12, CR-1 through CR-5, HYD-1, N-1, and TR-1.

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