

1 **4.1 VISUAL RESOURCES/AESTHETICS**

2 This analysis is based on photo-simulations prepared for the project by John Kular
3 Consulting, site reconnaissance, review of aerial photography and maps, and the Tajiguas
4 Landfill Project Environmental Documents.

5 **4.1.1 Setting**

6 4.1.1.1 Applicable Standards

7 Santa Barbara County policies and guidelines that relate to visual resources are
8 contained in the Land Use (adopted 1980, amended 2011), Open Space
9 (adopted 1979, republished 2009) and Scenic Highway Elements (adopted
10 1975, republished 2009) of the County Comprehensive Plan; the Land Use
11 Development Code (2011 with 2013 updates) covering the inland portions of
12 the County, and the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (2012). Policies and Guidelines
13 that are applicable to the proposed project are described in Section 4.8.

14 Additionally, the draft Gaviota Coast Plan (Board of Supervisors Initiation Draft
15 December 2013) also provides visual goals, policies, actions and development
16 standards under consideration for adoption.

17 4.1.1.2 Existing Conditions

18 In general, the whole of Santa Barbara County is considered to be of high
19 visual quality. As stated in the County Comprehensive Plan Environmental
20 Resources Management Element (ERME), “the County’s scenic beauty is one
21 of the principal factors that has attracted its residents and visitors” (Santa
22 Barbara County, adopted 1980, republished 2009).

23 The project site is in an area identified as having a high level of scenic value as
24 shown on the Santa Barbara County Scenic Values Map of the Santa Barbara
25 Comprehensive Plan Open Space Element.

26 **Visual Characteristics**

27 The scenic features of the project region include the Pacific Ocean, coastal
28 plain, foothills and Santa Ynez Mountain range. Topography ranges from sea
29 level at the Pacific Ocean to well over 2,000 feet within the coastal mountain
30 range. Incised arroyos are a common feature of this coastal area. There are
31 three industrial developments (PXP Point Arguello, Las Flores Canyon, and
32 Tajiguas Landfill) on the coast with the most visible being the PXP Point
33 Arguello site near the Gaviota Tunnel (County of Santa Barbara, December
34 2013). The Gaviota Coast is bisected by the transportation corridor of U.S.
35 Highway 101 and the Union Pacific railroad. The immediate project vicinity is
36 generally rural agricultural in character with scattered residences. The Arroyo
37 Quemada community lies between U.S. Highway 101 and the coast in the
38 project area. Cattle grazing is a common land use within the area.

1 The Los Padres National Forest is north of the Landfill property. Land east and
2 south of the site is ranch/agriculturally zoned land with native plant restoration
3 activities occurring on the County-owned Baron Ranch to the east. The Arroyo
4 Hondo Preserve and Cañada de la Huerta (site of the former Shell Hercules oil
5 processing facility undergoing remediation) are located west of the Tajiguas
6 Landfill. U.S. Highway 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad extend generally
7 parallel to the Pacific Ocean coast line south of the project site. Arroyo Hondo
8 and Arroyo Quemado run north-south to the east and west of the Tajiguas
9 Landfill respectively.

10 Currently, there is limited development in the project area. Scattered
11 residences are located in the vicinity of the landfill (see Figure 4.7-1). Three
12 are located north of U.S. Highway 101. One is located approximately 0.5 miles
13 east of the landfill on the County-owned Baron Ranch. Another is located about
14 0.5 miles west of the landfill, and a third residence is located more than one
15 mile west of the landfill. As mentioned above, the Arroyo Quemada community
16 is located to the south of U.S. Highway 101 about 0.5 miles south of the landfill
17 and includes fewer than 20 homes. Another home (Hart residence) is under
18 construction about 400 feet south of the landfill boundary as discussed in
19 Section 4.1.2.6, Cumulative Impacts of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery
20 Project.

21 **Existing and Future Visual Conditions at the Landfill**

22 The Tajiguas Landfill has been used as a County MSW disposal facility since
23 1967. As an active landfill, the top deck and other active disposal areas have
24 earthen surfaces that currently do not support vegetation. However, the side
25 slopes of the landfill have been planted for erosion control and support grasses
26 and shrubs. Areas of the site not disturbed by ongoing operations support
27 primarily annual grassland and coastal scrub plant species.

28 The visual condition of the landfill is constantly changing as new waste cells are
29 developed and then filled with MSW, borrow areas are excavated for daily
30 cover, soil is removed and stockpiled for waste cell development activities, and
31 on site roads and infrastructure are moved to adjust to the different waste
32 disposal locations. In the prior environmental documents for the Tajiguas
33 Landfill Project (listed in Section 1.4.2), the visual impact analysis and the
34 identification of mitigation measures was based on the landfill visual condition
35 at buildout. As noted below, from several view locations the impacts were
36 identified as significant and unavoidable (Class I).

1 The Resource Recovery Project facilities would be built when the landfill is at
2 an interim condition of development (see Figure 3-3). Some areas of the landfill
3 site will have reached their buildout conditions (including final disturbance
4 footprints and fill elevations), while development will be ongoing in other areas.
5 The proposed MRF/AD Facility site would be located within the west central
6 portion of the existing Tajiguas Landfill property in the area of the operations
7 deck. In this area, the final waste fill elevations have been reached and existing
8 conditions generally represent buildout/permitted conditions. Therefore, with
9 respect to visual conditions for the MRF/AD Facility the baseline is the existing
10 visual condition at the operations deck.

11 The landfill top deck, the proposed location of the composting area, will
12 undergo substantial change between current conditions and when the
13 composting area is constructed in approximately 2016. In this area, up to 80
14 feet of additional MSW will be placed, the top deck area and landfill front face
15 will be closed and a final cover system will be installed prior to construction of
16 the composting area. Therefore, the baseline for the assessing aesthetic/visual
17 impacts for this element of the project is the condition expected to exist at the
18 time of construction. This represents an interim condition of the landfill site
19 development.

20 Since the precise interim landfill condition at the time the Resource Recovery
21 Project would be constructed is not fully known, the following visual simulations
22 depict the existing conditions, the landfill buildout conditions without the project
23 and the landfill buildout conditions with the proposed project components. The
24 impact discussions; however, include an analysis of the visual impacts at the
25 interim condition and at buildout as appropriate.

26 **Viewsheds**

27 Sensitive viewsheds are identified as land uses with potential line-of-sight views
28 to the landfill. Areas of potential sensitivity include the Arroyo Quemada
29 community, U.S. Highway 101, offshore (such as may be seen by passing
30 boats), and public trails including those in Arroyo Hondo and Baron Ranch
31 described in further detail below.

32 To facilitate the assessment of aesthetic impacts on these sensitive viewsheds,
33 eight views were selected as representative locations from which the proposed
34 project facilities would have the most likelihood of being potentially visible. The
35 selected views are identified as follows.

- 36 • View 1: private entrance to the Arroyo Quemada residential community,
37 approximately 4,000 feet southeast of the proposed MRF/AD Facility
38 site;
- 39 • View 2: landfill access road entrance, approximately 3,000 feet south of
40 the proposed MRF/AD Facility site;

- 1 • View 3: U.S. Highway 101, approximately 2.4 miles west of the
2 proposed MRF/AD Facility site;
- 3 • View 4: U.S. Highway 101, approximately 1.4 miles southeast of the
4 proposed MRF/AD Facility site;
- 5 • View 5: offshore Pacific Ocean, approximately 0.9 miles south-southeast
6 of the proposed MRF/AD Facility site;
- 7 • View 6: U.S. Highway 101, south of the landfill, approximately 3,100 feet
8 from the proposed MRF/AD Facility site;
- 9 • View 7: Baron Ranch Trail, approximately 1.3 miles north-northeast of
10 the proposed MRF/AD Facility site; and
- 11 • View 8: Upper Outlaw Trail, approximately 0.6 miles to the north-
12 northwest of the proposed MRF/AD Facility site.

13 The above view locations and their line of sight views toward the project site are
14 shown in Figure 4.1-1.

15 **Viewer Sensitivity**

16 Viewer sensitivity has been categorized in two different ways for the purposes
17 of this analysis: type of viewer and distance/duration. Three types of viewers
18 are identified:

- 19 • Residential – people living in the vicinity;
- 20 • Recreational – transient viewers located at recreational areas (e.g. trails
21 and ocean); and
- 22 • Mobile – people traveling along transportation corridors in the site
23 vicinity (e.g., U.S. Highway 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad).

24 View 1 is representative of residential viewers. Views 1 through 4 and 6 are
25 representative of mobile viewers. Views 5, 7 and 8 are representative of
26 recreational viewers.

27 Distance from the site and duration of view also affect viewer sensitivity.
28 Distance affects the apparent size of what is viewed; an increase in distance
29 will result in an apparent reduction in size as perceived by the viewer. The
30 greatest duration of views is associated with residential viewers. The duration
31 of recreational views is ~~are~~ generally less than residential views; however,
32 viewers may have a heightened sense of regard for aesthetics when engaged
33 in specific recreational activities such as hiking, etc. Duration from mobile
34 sources such as cars is the least. However, some travelers make repeated
35 trips such as those persons who commute to work through the area on a daily
36 basis, thus the frequency of the viewer's access to a particular viewpoint would
37 be effectively increased.

38

1 **Scenic Highways/Scenic Overlays**

2 As defined in the Santa Barbara County Scenic Highways Element, “a rural
3 scenic highway” is a route that traverses a defined visual corridor within which
4 natural scenic resources and aesthetic value(s) are protected and enhanced.”
5 The Tajiguas Landfill is not located within a designated County or State scenic
6 resources area, scenic corridor or on a designated scenic highway. However,
7 U. S. Highway 101, which lies approximately 1,500 feet south of the permitted
8 waste area of the landfill, is an eligible scenic highway throughout the County.
9 For the purposes of this analysis, it has been assumed that at the appropriate
10 time U.S. Highway 101 will be designated a Scenic Highway.

11 In addition, the scenic corridor Visual Overlay area specifically extends from
12 Highway 101 to the ocean. Because the project site is located north of U.S.
13 Highway 101, it is outside of the area governed by the scenic corridor Visual
14 Overlay.

15 In the draft Gaviota Coast Plan, (Board of Supervisors Initiation Draft December
16 2013) a portion of the southern area of the Landfill property is within the
17 proposed Critical Viewshed Corridor Overlay. Within the Critical Viewshed
18 Corridor Overlay development would be required to be screened to the
19 maximum extent feasible as seen from public viewing places.

20 **Recreational Resources**

21 The Baron Ranch Trail which opened in December 2010 is located within
22 County-owned Baron Ranch east of the landfill. The trailhead is located off
23 U.S. Highway 101 on Calle Real about 2 miles west of Refugio Beach. The trail
24 leads inland through Arroyo Quemado and into the Santa Ynez Mountains and
25 is a 6.6 mile loop trail. The Baron Ranch Trail is currently open for public use
26 on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, from 8:00 a.m. until sunset and is restricted
27 for use by only pedestrians/hikers.

28 A 2.5 mile extension (Baron Ranch Trail Connector) of the Baron Ranch Trail is
29 planned to connect to West Camino Cielo, allowing eventual through access to
30 the California State Parks Gaviota Peak trail system.

31 The 782-acre Arroyo Hondo Preserve (Preserve) is located north, west and
32 adjacent to the Tajiguas Landfill. The Preserve property was purchased from
33 the Hollister family in late 2001, and is now protected and managed by the Land
34 Trust for Santa Barbara as a natural and historic preserve. The Preserve
35 includes a number of hiking trails including the Upper Outlaw Trail which was
36 selected as one of the modeled views for this aesthetic analysis. The Preserve
37 is open to the public by reservation the first and third full weekends of each
38 month, and every Monday and Wednesday for school and community groups.

39 As indicated above, the Pacific Ocean lies south of the Tajiguas Landfill. The
40 ocean is used by people pursuing various recreational interests including
41 boating, fishing, and surfing among others.

1 **4.1.2 Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures**

2 4.1.2.1 Thresholds of Significance

3 **State CEQA Guidelines**

4 The State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Chapter 3, Appendix G) suggest that a
5 project may have a significant impact with respect to aesthetics if it results in
6 any of the following:

- 7 • Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- 8 • Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to,
9 trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic
10 highway;
- 11 • Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site
12 and its surroundings; and,
- 13 • Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely
14 affect day or nighttime views in the area.

15 **Santa Barbara County Thresholds**

16 The Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual
17 (Guidelines Manual, updated 2015) provides guidance for the evaluation of
18 aesthetic impacts, but does not provide formal significance thresholds. The
19 guidance is based upon the State CEQA Guidelines and “directs the evaluator
20 to the questions which predict the adversity of impacts to visual resources”.

21 The Guidelines Manual states that the assessment of visual impacts of a
22 project involve two major steps: 1) evaluating the visual resources of the project
23 site; and 2) identifying the potential impact of the project on the visual resources
24 located onsite and on views in the project vicinity which may be partially or fully
25 obstructed. Significant visual resources which have aesthetic value are
26 identified in the Comprehensive Plan Open Space Element and are referenced
27 in the Guidelines Manual. They include:

- 28 • Scenic highway corridors;
- 29 • Parks and recreational areas;
- 30 • Views of coastal bluffs, streams, lakes, estuaries, rivers, watersheds,
31 mountains, and cultural resources sites; and
- 32 • Scenic areas.

33 All views addressed in the Guidelines Manual are public views, not private
34 views.

35 The Guidelines Manual indicates that affirmative answers to the following
36 questions indicate potentially significant impacts to visual resources.

- 1 1a. Does the project site have significant visual resources by virtue of surface
- 2 waters, vegetation, elevation, slope or other natural or man-made
- 3 features which are publicly visible?
- 4 1b. If so, does the proposed project have the potential to degrade or
- 5 significantly interfere with the public's enjoyment of the site's existing
- 6 visual resources?
- 7 2a. Does the project have the potential to impact visual resources of the
- 8 Coastal Zone or other visually important area (i.e., mountainous area,
- 9 public park urban fringe, or scenic travel corridor)?
- 10 2b. If so, does the project have the potential to conflict with the policies set
- 11 forth in the Coastal Land Use Plan, the Comprehensive Plan or any
- 12 applicable community plan to protect the identified views?
- 13 3. Does the project have the potential to create a significantly adverse
- 14 aesthetic impact through the obstruction of public views, incompatibility
- 15 with surrounding uses, or intensity of development, removal of significant
- 16 amounts of vegetation, loss of important open space, substantial
- 17 alteration of natural character, lack of adequate landscaping, or extensive
- 18 grading visible from public areas?

19 4.1.2.2 Approved Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project

20 01-EIR-05 prepared for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project (see Section
21 3.8.3) identified the following visual resources/aesthetic impacts for the
22 approved Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project:

- 23 1. The change in visual character of the landfill area associated with the
- 24 Expansion Project was considered a significant and unavoidable visual
- 25 impact (Class I). Measures VIS-1 and BIO-3 were adopted to reduce
- 26 this impact but the residual impacts remain significant.
- 27 2. Increased visibility of landfill slopes from Viewpoints 4 (landfill access
- 28 road) and 5 (Pacific Ocean, 1100 feet offshore) was considered a
- 29 significant and unavoidable visual impact (Class I). Measures VIS-1 and
- 30 BIO-3 were adopted to reduce this impact but the residual impacts
- 31 remain significant.
- 32 3. Night lighting from the landfill scale house and the operations and
- 33 maintenance facilities was considered a significant but mitigable visual
- 34 impact (Class II). Mitigation measure BIO-9 was adopted to reduce the
- 35 off-site visibility of night lighting.
- 36 4. At closure (maximum build-out) long-term changes in topography from
- 37 Viewpoints 4 (landfill access road) and 5 (Pacific Ocean, 1100 feet
- 38 offshore) were considered a significant and unavoidable visual impact
- 39 (Class I). Measures VIS-1 and BIO-3 were adopted to reduce this
- 40 impact but the residual impacts remain significant.

1 4.1.2.3 Approved Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration
2 Project

3 The Subsequent EIR for the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch
4 Restoration Project (see Section 4.8.2) noted that the landfill is visible from both
5 the West Ridge Trail and Upper Outlaw trail within the Arroyo Hondo Preserve.
6 The reduced elevation, reduced vegetation removal and reduced production of
7 artificial slopes at the North Slope borrow/soil stockpile area associated with the
8 Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration was determined to reduce visual impacts and
9 visibility of the landfill from the West Ridge Trail. It was determined that with
10 the implementation of the landfill reconfiguration and Baron Ranch restoration,
11 the existing landfill and approved expansion area would continue to be visible
12 from the Upper Outlaw Trail and that post reconfiguration views would be
13 similar to the approved expansion. It was further noted that at final closure as
14 required by existing mitigation measure 01-EIR-05-VIS-1, the landfill will be
15 recontoured and revegetated which will help to reduce but not eliminate the
16 visual impact as seen from the trail.

17 The Subsequent EIR for the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch
18 Restoration Project and 01-EIR-05 identified that portions of the existing landfill
19 and approved expansion may be visible from selected locations along the
20 upper-most alignment of the Baron Ranch Trail (proposed at the time of the
21 Subsequent EIR preparation, but subsequently constructed and currently in
22 use). The Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration
23 Project was determined not to result in a substantial change in the overall
24 landfill area and would have no effect on the visual character or quality of views
25 from the trail.

26 The Subsequent EIR for the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch
27 Restoration Project stated that the existing landfill, approved expansion and the
28 proposed reconfiguration may be visible from sections of the West Camino
29 Cielo Road. However, due to the distance between the road and the landfill
30 (two miles at the closest point) and the fact that the approved expansion and
31 proposed reconfiguration occur in the same general area and the footprint
32 would remain the same there would not be a significant change in the visual
33 appearance as compared to existing and approved conditions.

34

1 4.1.2.4 Proposed Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project

2 **Methodology and Assumptions**

3 The analysis of visual impacts is focused on the viewsheds/views identified in
4 Section 4.1.1.2. Five of the locations are the same or similar to those evaluated
5 in the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion EIR (Views 1 – 5). Views 7 (Baron Ranch
6 Trail) and 8 were evaluated in the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron
7 Ranch Restoration Project Subsequent EIR. View 6 has been added as it
8 provides a line of sight to the proposed MRF/AD Facility. Since the proposed
9 project would be located entirely within the area of the landfill operations, it is
10 reasonable to address these same viewpoints as supplemented by the
11 additional View 6. John Kular Consulting prepared photos and photo-
12 simulations depicting existing, permitted (maximum build-out conditions) and
13 permitted plus project conditions which were used in the visual
14 resource/aesthetics evaluation. The photo-simulations were created using
15 geographically referenced computer assisted modeling. The photos and photo-
16 simulations are provided as Figures 4.1-2 through 4.1-9 and are summarized as
17 follows. Additional information derived from consideration of the photos,
18 simulations and other factors including the number and types of potential
19 viewers and viewer sensitivity is also provided.

20 Figure 4.1-2 shows that the line of sight from View 1 (Arroyo Quemada
21 community entrance) toward the proposed MRF and AD Facility is blocked by
22 intervening topography. Viewer sensitivity from this location is high, based on
23 the potential duration of views and potential number of private viewers. The
24 residences of the Arroyo Quemada community are situated along a coastal
25 terrace, below the elevation of southbound U.S. Highway 101. Thus, the view
26 from these residences is expected to be likewise blocked by topography.

27 Figure 4.1-3 shows that the existing view from View 2 (landfill access road)
28 includes the southern-most waste fill slope. Under permitted conditions, the
29 view would be similar to that under existing conditions with the exception that
30 the visible portion of the waste fill slope would be larger. With the addition of
31 the project, the proposed composting area would be slightly perceptible behind
32 the waste fill slope, but would visually blend in with the color and texture of the
33 fill slope.

34 Figure 4.1-4 illustrates that the line of sight from View 3 (U.S. Highway 101
35 west of the landfill access road) toward the existing operations deck. Note that
36 all proposed Resource Recovery Project facilities would be entirely obscured by
37 intervening topography and vegetation.

38 Figure 4.1-5 illustrates that the line of sight from View 4 (U.S. Highway 101 east
39 of the landfill access road) toward the existing operations deck. Note that all
40 proposed Resource Recovery Project facilities would be entirely obscured by
41 intervening topography and vegetation.

1 Figure 4.1-6 illustrates that the line of sight from View 5 (offshore) toward the
2 existing operations deck. Note that all proposed Resource Recovery Project
3 facilities would be entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.

4 Figure 4.1-7 shows the existing and permitted condition views from View 6
5 (U.S. Highway 101, just east of the landfill access road), which includes a
6 distant view of existing operations trailers currently located at the proposed
7 MRF/AD Facility site. It also shows that under post project-conditions the AD
8 Facility building would be visible and would appear as a prominent feature of
9 the view from U.S. Highway 101.

10 Figure 4.1-8 illustrates the line of site views from View 7 (Baron Ranch Trail)
11 under existing, permitted and permitted plus project conditions. As can be seen
12 from the photo-simulations and line of site profile, due to distance and
13 intervening topography, proposed Resource Recovery Project facilities would
14 not be visible.

15 Figure 4.1-9 illustrates the views from View 8 (Upper Outlaw Trail) under
16 existing, permitted and permitted plus project conditions. Under permitted
17 conditions, the top deck would be filled with MSW to elevation 620 ft (msl), and
18 once final fill elevations are reached, the top deck would be closed and a final
19 cover system installed. The composting area would be located on the top deck
20 after the final cover system is installed.

21 Under permitted plus project conditions, the proposed composting area run-off
22 collection tank (left edge of photo), maintenance building (left center of photo)
23 and composting area would be visible from the trail. However, the composting
24 area would be in the background, with the northern portion of the waste
25 disposal area in the foreground (facing southeast, see Figure 3-5). The
26 composting area and related facilities would have a similar visual character and
27 quality as the landfill in general, and would not substantially change the visual
28 quality of the view, nor block background views of the ocean.

29 **Impact TRRP VIS-1: Project implementation would not significantly alter**
30 **the visual setting from public vantage points (View 2, View 7 and View 8) –**
31 **Class III Impact.**

32 As indicated above, the proposed project facilities would not be visible from
33 most of the views evaluated. The view from the landfill access road (View 2)
34 under existing conditions (see Figure 4.1-3), the front face of the landfill is
35 visible in the central portion of the image as a round partially vegetated
36 landform. In this image, the elevation of top portion of the landfill (top deck) is
37 approximately elevation 540 feet (msl).

38

1 Between the existing conditions and the time construction of the composting
2 area is proposed to take place, up to an additional 80 feet of waste fill would be
3 placed (to reach a maximum elevation of 620 feet msl) and a final landfill cover
4 system will be installed. This condition would essentially be the same as under
5 buildout of the landfill (see Permitted Conditions in Figure 4.1-3) as viewed from
6 this location. The change in the visual setting from existing to permitted
7 conditions is a part of the overall significant and unavoidable (Class I) visual
8 impact disclosed in the Tajiguas Landfill Project environmental documents as
9 discussed in section 4.1.2.2. Figure 4.1-3 depicts the addition of the
10 composting area to the permitted landfill condition (Permitted + Project
11 Conditions). The proposed composting area (compost piles and litter fencing)
12 would be slightly visible above the landscape, on the top deck in this view. The
13 change in the visual condition would result from implementation of the project
14 would be a small variation in the visual condition of the landfill as seen from this
15 perspective and would not be considered a substantial adverse effect on a
16 scenic vista because the degree of change in the view would be slight.
17 Therefore, the visual impact would be adverse but less than significant.

18 Implementation of the project would result in an almost unperceivable change in
19 the view from the Baron Ranch Trail as shown on Figure 4.1-8. With project
20 development, the 325,000 gallon composting area collection tank would barely
21 be seen on the plateau within the mid-ground view from this location, but would
22 likely be discernable as a tank. However, distant views of tanks are not
23 completely incongruous with the visual setting of the general area as such
24 tanks are not unusual within areas used for agricultural purposes such as
25 grazing. This project element would not block views of the ocean.

26 The view from the Upper Outlaw Trail toward the Pacific Ocean (View 8)
27 presently includes the disturbed landfill area including the back canyon (Phase
28 3) disposal area in the foreground and the top deck area in the background
29 (see Figure 4.1-9, Existing Conditions). The operations deck area is not visible
30 from this view. As discussed, prior to construction of the composting area the
31 top deck will receive up to 80 feet of additional fill to reach the maximum
32 permitted elevation of 620 feet and the final cover will be installed. The back
33 canyon area is also currently being modified (800,000 cubic yards of grading
34 and installation of 6 acres of landfill liner) as a part of the Phase 3B liner
35 installation project. This area will look significantly different by the time the
36 composting area is constructed, but not all areas visible in the image will have
37 reached buildout conditions.

38

1 Figure 4.1-9 presents both the condition of the landfill at buildout as viewed
2 from the Upper Outlaw Trail (Permitted Conditions) and buildout conditions with
3 the composting area (Permitted + Project Conditions). At the time of the
4 construction of the composting area, the landfill will be in an interim condition of
5 development different than depicted in Figure 4.1-9. The back canyon waste fill
6 area landform in the foreground of the picture (which is depicted at its maximum
7 elevation of 580 feet) will just be in the beginning phase of being filled with
8 waste at the time the composting area is installed. Therefore, there will be a
9 more direct view of the top deck and composting area in the background.
10 However, the maximum elevation of the top deck will be above the maximum
11 elevation of the Phase 3 waste fill area so even under full buildout conditions
12 the top deck and composting area would remain visible in the background from
13 the Upper Outlaw Trail. The change in the visual setting from existing to
14 permitted conditions is a part of the overall significant and unavoidable (Class I)
15 visual impact associated with the Tajiguas Landfill Project.

16 The development of the proposed composting area would alter the view from
17 the interim condition and permitted conditions by introducing an additional
18 element of man-modified landscape. However, the composting windrows and
19 stockpiles that would be created, the runoff storage tank, and the relocated
20 landfill maintenance facility would not block views of the ocean as they would
21 be just below the elevation of the topographic features to the south.
22 Additionally, project-related view modifications would be an insubstantial
23 element of the view relative to the landscape which has already been and will
24 continue to be substantially modified by landfill operations and will continue to
25 appear as a man-altered landscape during operation and after closure. Visual
26 impacts of the landfill development would remain significant and unavoidable
27 (Class I) but impacts resulting from the addition of the Resource Recovery
28 Project composting area and associated facilities to the view from the Upper
29 Outlaw Trail in the interim landfill development condition and at landfill buildout
30 are considered to be adverse, but less than significant.

31 **Impact TRRP VIS-2: Project implementation would significantly alter the**
32 **visual setting as seen from U.S. Highway 101, (View 6), an eligible scenic**
33 **highway – Class II Impact.**

34 View 6 (Figure 4.1-7) is from U. S. Highway 101 south of the landfill. The
35 existing operations deck and landfill operations trailers are slightly visible from
36 this view; the landfill top deck (proposed location of the composting area) is not
37 visible). This area has reached its final permitted elevation and the existing
38 condition is generally reflective of the permitted condition.

39

1 The proposed MRF and AD Facility would involve additional cut and placement
2 of fill (to create a level building pad and to provide a setback from the waste
3 footprint) and the facilities would be visible between two hills as an incongruous
4 element of the background view. As compared to the existing landfill
5 operations trailers, the proposed MRF and AD Facility would be a substantively
6 larger and a more prominent feature of the view as shown in the photo
7 simulation presented on Figure 4.1-7. In particular, the light color of the
8 proposed structures, as simulated, makes them stand out visually relative to the
9 surrounding landscape.

10 Viewers from this perspective are typically motorists on the heavily traveled
11 highway and would typically be moving at a speed of about 65 miles per hour.
12 Thus, the duration of the view (a few seconds) would be very brief as the
13 topography of the surrounding hills would obscure the view from perspectives
14 further north or south. However, the duration of the view may be considered to
15 be additive for frequent travelers of this route. Although the view would brief
16 and limited, without proper aesthetic treatment, the introduction of the MRF and
17 AD Facility as shown in Figure 4.1-7 may be considered to have a significant
18 visual impact to public viewers as U.S. Highway 101 is a well-traveled
19 transportation corridor and an eligible scenic highway.

20 ***Mitigation Measures:***

21 ***MM TRRP VIS-1a: Building Exterior Color.*** The exterior of the MRF, and AD
22 Facility and other readily visible structures (such as retaining walls, containment
23 walls and tanks) shall be an earth tone color selected to visually blend with the
24 surrounding landscape.

25 Plan Requirements and Timing. The above measure shall be reflected in the
26 project plans and contract specifications for the Resource Recovery Project and
27 shall be implemented during construction.

28 Monitoring. RRWMD shall monitor for compliance.

29 ***MM TRRP VIS-1b: Landscape Screening.*** A landscape architect shall be
30 retained to develop a landscape plan for the project that includes vegetative
31 plantings that would break up the massing of the MRF, and AD Facility and
32 other readily visible structures (such as retaining walls, containment walls and
33 tanks) as viewed from the south. Native plants shall be used to the extent
34 feasible to maximize visual compatibility with the surrounding vegetation
35 communities, minimize irrigation requirements, minimize spread of invasive
36 species, and augment nearby wildlife habitat. Landscape screening shall be
37 maintained and replaced as needed over the life of the project.

38 Plan Requirements and Timing. The landscape plan shall be developed prior to
39 project construction and implemented during construction and prior to operation
40 of project facilities.

41 Monitoring. RRWMD shall monitor for compliance.

1 Residual Impacts. Implementation of the mitigation measures above would
2 reduce the scenic vista impact from View 6 to a less than significant level.

3 **Impact TRRP VIS-3: Project implementation would result in an adverse but**
4 **less than significant change in the visual setting as seen from private**
5 **views - Class III Impact.**

6 The proposed project facilities would not be visible from View 1 (Arroyo
7 Quemada community entrance); therefore, no change in the visual setting
8 would occur as seen from this view point. The proposed project facilities would
9 be visible from private property in the project area. The closest residence to the
10 project site is presently under construction on APN 081-150-034 (Hart property)
11 which borders the landfill property immediately to the south. The residence is
12 located approximately 0.4 miles south of the proposed composting area and
13 2,500 feet southeast from the proposed location of the MRF and AD facilities.
14 Portions of the landfill property, including fill slopes, operations trailers and the
15 west borrow area cut slope are currently visible from the Hart property. As
16 would be expected, views from the new residence (under construction) are
17 primarily focused to the south towards the Pacific Ocean. However, based on
18 site visits by RRWMD staff, the existing landfill operations trailers are visible
19 from a small portion of the driveway to the Hart residence and would be visible
20 from a small area of the building pad (pool and northwestern corner of the
21 patio).

22 Therefore, with project implementation, the proposed MRF and AD Facility
23 would also be visible from these locations. However, given that views from
24 private residences would be limited, the views occur in areas substantially
25 affected by existing landfill operations, construction of the facilities would not
26 obstruct scenic vistas on or across the landfill property, and that Appendix G of
27 the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's Visual Aesthetic Impact
28 Guidelines address public views, rather than private views, the visibility of the
29 Resource Recovery Project facilities from private views is considered an
30 adverse but less than significant impact. Additionally, the implementation of
31 mitigation measures **MM TRRP VIS-1a** and **1b** would help to reduce the
32 adverse visual impact from private property, as well as mitigate impacts from
33 public viewpoints (U.S. Highway 101, View 6).

1 **Impact TRRP VIS-4: Project-related construction activities would result in**
2 **less than significant lighting and glare impacts - Class III Impact.**

3 Construction work for the Resource Recovery Project would generally be
4 conducted during daylight hours, in compliance with the County permitted
5 landfill construction hours of 6:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Saturday,
6 and 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on Sunday. However, non-daylight work hours on
7 weekdays or daytime work on Saturdays and holidays may occur to minimize
8 conflicts with ongoing landfill waste disposal operations, make up schedule
9 deficiencies and/or to complete critical construction activities safely, such as
10 MRF equipment installation and testing. In the event that nighttime work was
11 required and it would occur outside, portable lighting may be necessary.
12 However, because this occurrence is not anticipated to be a normal part of the
13 construction process which itself would only be temporary, and due to the
14 distance of the landfill from existing likely stargazing venues such as Refugio
15 State Beach, construction-related nighttime lighting impacts are expected to be
16 less than significant.

17 **Impact TRRP VIS-5: Project operation could result in less than significant**
18 **lighting and glare impacts - Class III Impact.**

19 The MRF and AD Facility building roofs would include a series of translucent
20 sky lights. The sky lights would include built-in blinds or external adjustable
21 blinds to prevent light from escaping from the building at night. Assuming that
22 the blinds are closed, interior lighting would not affect nighttime views.

23 Exterior lighting would be provided on the Resource Recovery Project buildings
24 and in the parking areas to allow continued operations after dark, accommodate
25 safe traffic flow, and employee safety. No lighting is proposed along the site
26 access roads, and unmanned facilities. The proposed lighting would consist of
27 energy efficient, dark sky compliant, full cut-off lighting fixtures lights positioned
28 to minimize off-site impacts by being directed inward and downward ~~with~~
29 ~~appropriate shielding~~ and away from U.S. Highway 101, Baron Ranch and ~~from~~
30 nearby habitat areas. Due to the measures incorporated into the project to
31 reduce the potential for nighttime lighting to spill off the site or skyward,
32 nighttime lighting introduced by the project is not expected to result in
33 significant deterioration of nighttime views in the area.

34 The MRF and AD Facility would include south-facing rooftop solar panels.
35 Currently available solar panels have anti-reflective coatings that have a
36 reflectivity or albedo of 30 percent or less (dry sand has a reflectivity of 45
37 percent) resulting in glare that would be less than or equivalent to natural earth
38 materials such as sand. Additionally, due to the angle of the panels relative to
39 the orientation of U.S. Highway 101, solar panel reflectivity should not cause a
40 significant glare impact on drivers.

1 **Relocated Landfill Facilities**

2 Operations facilities (primarily portable offices) may be temporarily relocated
3 during the project construction period to an area north of the landfill top deck or
4 to the southern portion of the landfill (see Figure 3-4). If located to the south,
5 these facilities would be visible from the driveway to the Hart residence (under
6 construction). As discussed under Impact TRRP VIS-3, views from this
7 proposed residence are currently affected by ongoing landfill operations and
8 these temporary facilities would not block views or adversely affect scenic
9 vistas. If relocated to the north, operations facilities may be visible from the
10 Upper Outlaw Trail as a minor additional element to the man-modified
11 landscape and would not result in any additional aesthetics impacts.

12 Landfill equipment maintenance facilities would be relocated to the area north
13 of the landfill top deck (see Figure 3-4). As discussed under Impact TRRP VIS-
14 1, the addition of project components (including relocated maintenance
15 facilities) would result in an adverse but less than significant impact to views
16 from the Upper Outlaw Trail.

17 4.1.2.5 Proposed Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project with Optional Commingled
18 Source Separated Recyclables (CSSR) Component

19 As discussed above, there are limited public views of the MRF and AD Facility.
20 Inclusion of the CSSR component would increase the MRF building area by
21 10,000 sf. The visual modeling included the additional building area; therefore,
22 visual resources impacts identified in Section 4.1.2.4 include the optional CSSR
23 component.

24 4.1.2.6 Extension of Landfill Life Impacts

25 **Impact TRRP VIS-6: Project-related extension of life of the Tajiguas**
26 **Landfill would delay final closure of the back canyon area of the landfill**
27 **site and result in an adverse but less than significant extension of the**
28 **landfill aesthetic impacts further in time – Class III Impact.**

29 As discussed in Section 3.4, project-related diversion of recyclable material and
30 organic waste is anticipated to extend the life of the Tajiguas Landfill by about
31 10 years. Aesthetics impacts associated with the approved and ongoing landfill
32 project are considered significant and unavoidable (see Section 4.1.2.2)
33 primarily as seen from U.S. Highway 101. The proposed project would delay
34 landfill closure, including final contouring and revegetation. However, landfilling
35 will primarily be focused in the back canyon area of the landfill, which is not
36 visible from U.S. Highway 101 and phased closure (including final contouring
37 and placement of final cover systems) is proposed to begin in the front canyon
38 portion of the landfill, where final fill elevations have been reached.

1 The affected population is very limited as the landfill is visible for only a few
2 seconds to motorists on U.S. Highway 101, an eligible scenic highway or by
3 limited recreational users of Upper Outlaw Trail on the Arroyo Hondo property.
4 In addition, the landfill has been in operation since 1967 and the public has
5 become accustomed to the current visual condition. Overall, the aesthetic
6 impacts of the landfill development remain significant but the extension of the
7 landfill's aesthetic impacts by delaying landfill closure is considered less than
8 significant.

9 4.1.2.7 Decommissioning Impacts

10 In general, the removal of major project facilities (MRF building, AD Facility
11 building, percolate tanks, bio-filters, etc.) would reduce the visual impacts of the
12 proposed project since these structures are the main project components that
13 are visible from public and private viewing locations. Where appropriate,
14 vegetation screening associated with the project would be retained to provide
15 screening of any remaining facilities and to break up the massing of any
16 remaining retaining walls that would not be removed as a part of
17 decommissioning. In addition, additional vegetation would be established as a
18 part of the approved Landfill closure. However, the removal of the buildings
19 may render the manufactured slope and retaining walls more visible, as these
20 features would be generally blocked from view by the buildings. Following
21 decommissioning, the following changes in the modelled views is anticipated:

- 22 • View 2 (Figure 4.1-3) would be virtually the same as Permitted
23 Conditions because compost piles barely visible under Permitted +
24 Project Conditions would be removed, and the MRF/AD Facility site
25 (with manufactured slope and retaining walls) is not visible from this
26 view.
- 27 • View 6 (Figure 4.1-7) would be very similar to Permitted Conditions
28 because the AD Facility building visible under Permitted + Project
29 Conditions would be removed, and the project-related manufactured
30 slope and retaining walls would be much less visible than the AD Facility
31 building shown in this view.
- 32 • View 7 (Figure 4.1-8) would be the same as Permitted Conditions
33 because compost piles present but not visible under Permitted + Project
34 Conditions would be removed. Other project components that would
35 remain are not visible in this view.
- 36 • View 8 (Figure 4.1-9) would be the virtually same as Permitted
37 Conditions because compost piles barely visible under Permitted +
38 Project Conditions would be removed, while the maintenance building
39 would likely remain. Other project components that would remain are
40 not visible in this view.

1 Overall, decommissioning would not result in any new impacts and would serve
2 to reduce project-related aesthetics impacts.

3 4.1.2.8 Cumulative Impacts of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project

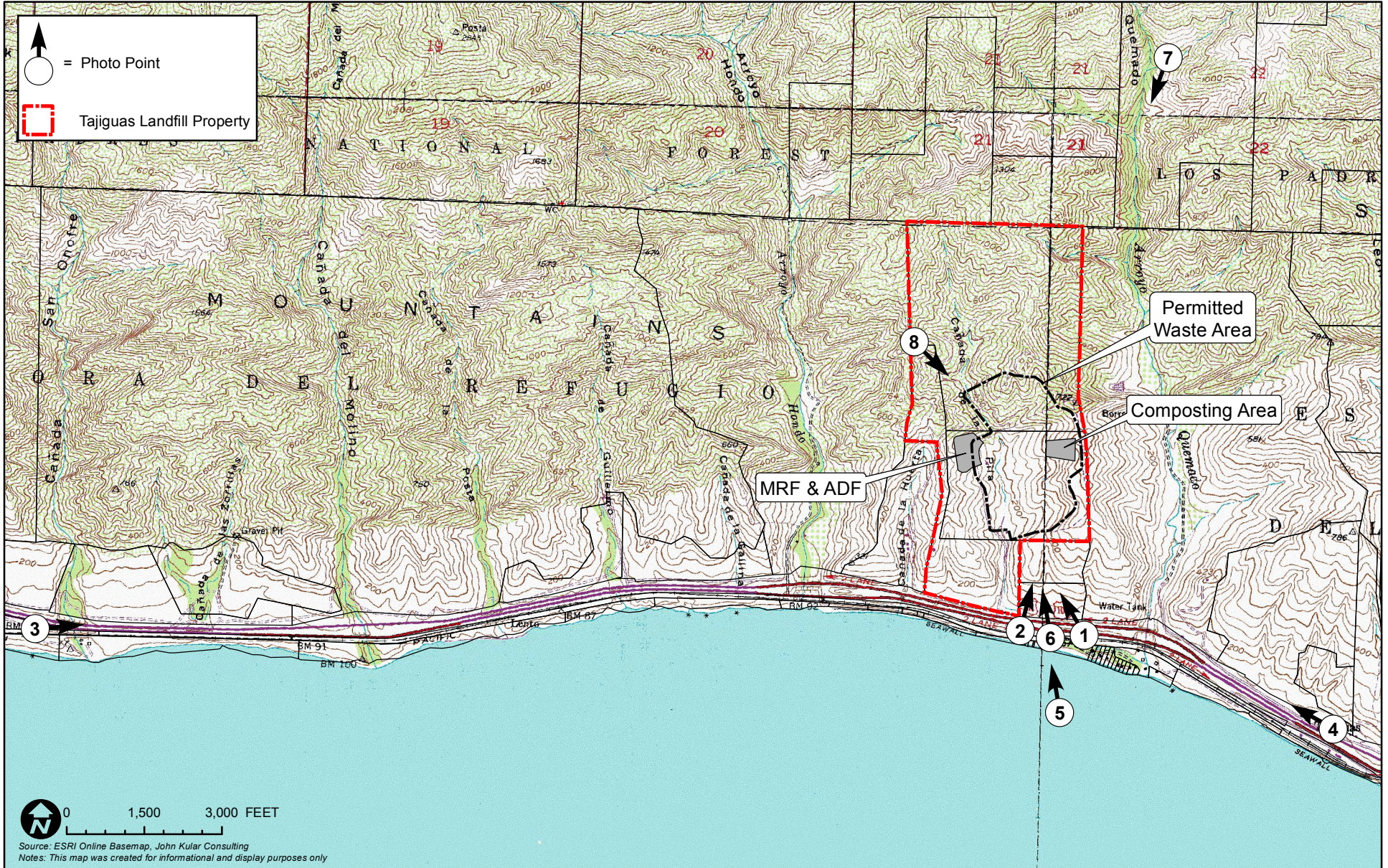
4 **Impact TRRP VIS-CUM-1: Project implementation, combined with other**
5 **related cumulative projects, could degrade the visual character/quality of**
6 **scenic vistas from U.S. Highway 101 along the Gaviota Coast – Class I**
7 **Cumulative Impact; Project Contribution – Not Considerable with**
8 **Mitigation (Class II).**

9 The County of Santa Barbara considers the coastal view corridor along U.S.
10 Highway 101 and the railroad tracks from Goleta to the Gaviota Tunnel as
11 providing ocean and inland public views of the highest quality in the region.
12 Further, stretches of this view corridor are considered to be highly susceptible
13 to visual degradation from future development due to broad near-field views
14 largely devoid of major stands of trees or intervening topographical breaks.
15 Factors including appropriate site selection, architecture, grading and
16 landscaping are integral elements to be considered in minimizing visual impacts
17 of future development and protecting the visual resources of the corridor.

18 The cumulative project list includes a number of residential subdivisions located
19 along the Gaviota Coast. The following discussion is specific to the
20 assessment of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project together with known
21 cumulative projects in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project. The Shell
22 Hercules Remediation and Slope Stabilization Project is located 0.2 miles west
23 of the Tajiguas Landfill. Continuation of site remediation at this State
24 Superfund site for poly-cyclic biphenyls, mercury and hydrocarbons is
25 proposed. Modification of landforms associated with this project may be visible
26 from U.S. Highway 101 within Canada de la Huerta where the site is located.
27 Northbound motorists would pass this site within about 20 seconds after
28 passing View 6 wherein they would have views of the proposed MRF and AD
29 Facility.

30 The proposed Hart residence is located 400 feet south of the Tajiguas Landfill
31 property boundary and is currently under construction. The residence would be
32 visible following construction as a noticeable feature of the mid-ground view for
33 persons traveling on U.S. Highway 101. Northbound motorists would view the
34 residence a few seconds before passing View 6.

35 The combined effect of the potential view modification from these two projects
36 and the approved landfill, in addition to the proposed project may be considered
37 cumulatively significant due to their proximity. However, with implementation of
38 project-specific mitigation proposed for the project (**MM TRRP VIS-1a, VIS-1b**),
39 the project's contribution to this scenic vista impact would not be cumulatively
40 considerable.

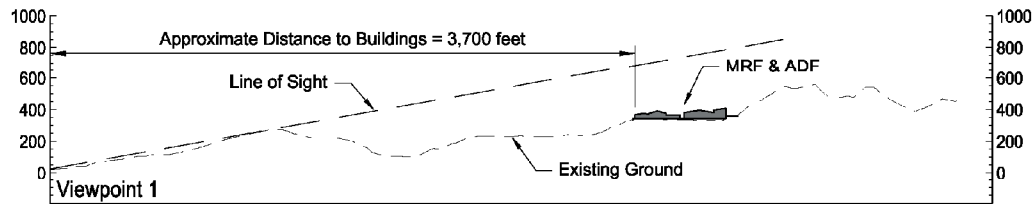


1

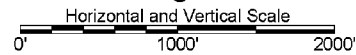
Back of color figure



Note 1 - Line of sight to existing operations deck and proposed TRRP buildings obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.



Line of Sight Profile



Source: John Kular Consulting
Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

- 1 Back of color figure
- 2

Date of photo: 12/17/2012



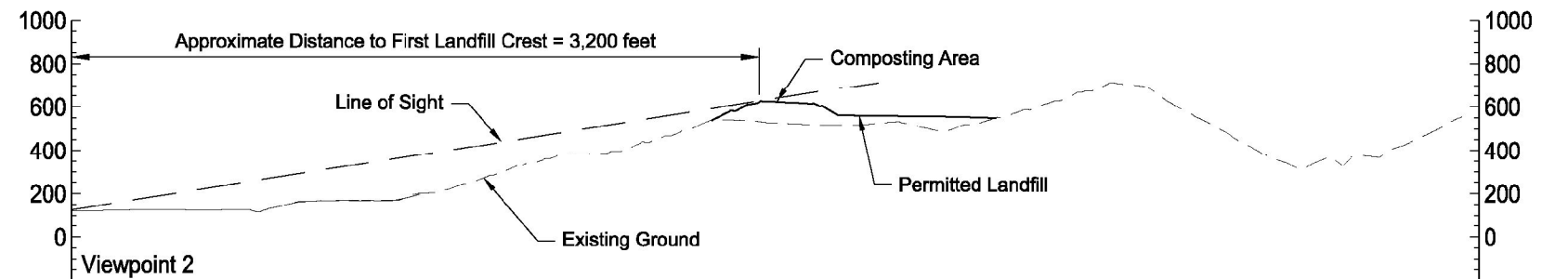
EXISTING CONDITIONS



PERMITTED CONDITIONS



PERMITTED + PROJECT CONDITIONS



Line of Sight Profile

Horizontal and Vertical Scale
 0' 800' 1600'

Source: John Kular Consulting
 Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

1
2

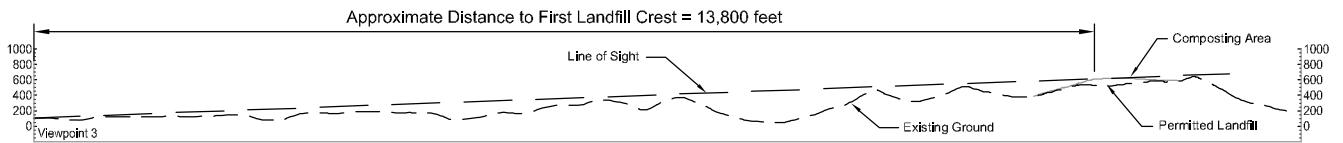
Back of color figure



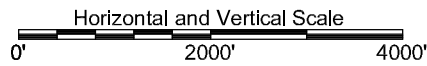
Date of photo: 2/19/2013

EXISTING, PERMITTED AND PROJECT CONDITIONS

Note 1 - Line of sight to existing operations deck and proposed TRRP buildings obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.



Line of Sight Profile

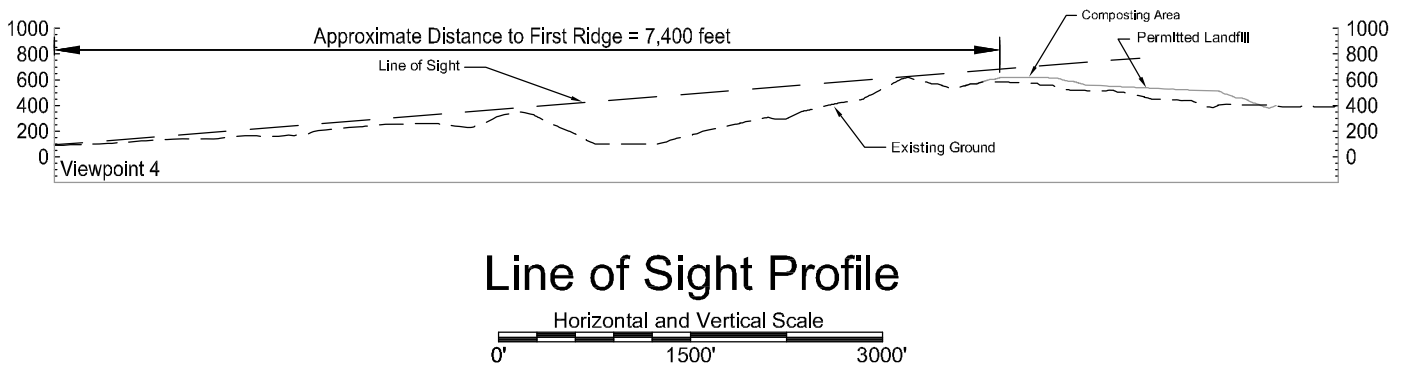


Source: John Kular Consulting

- 1 Back of color figure
- 2

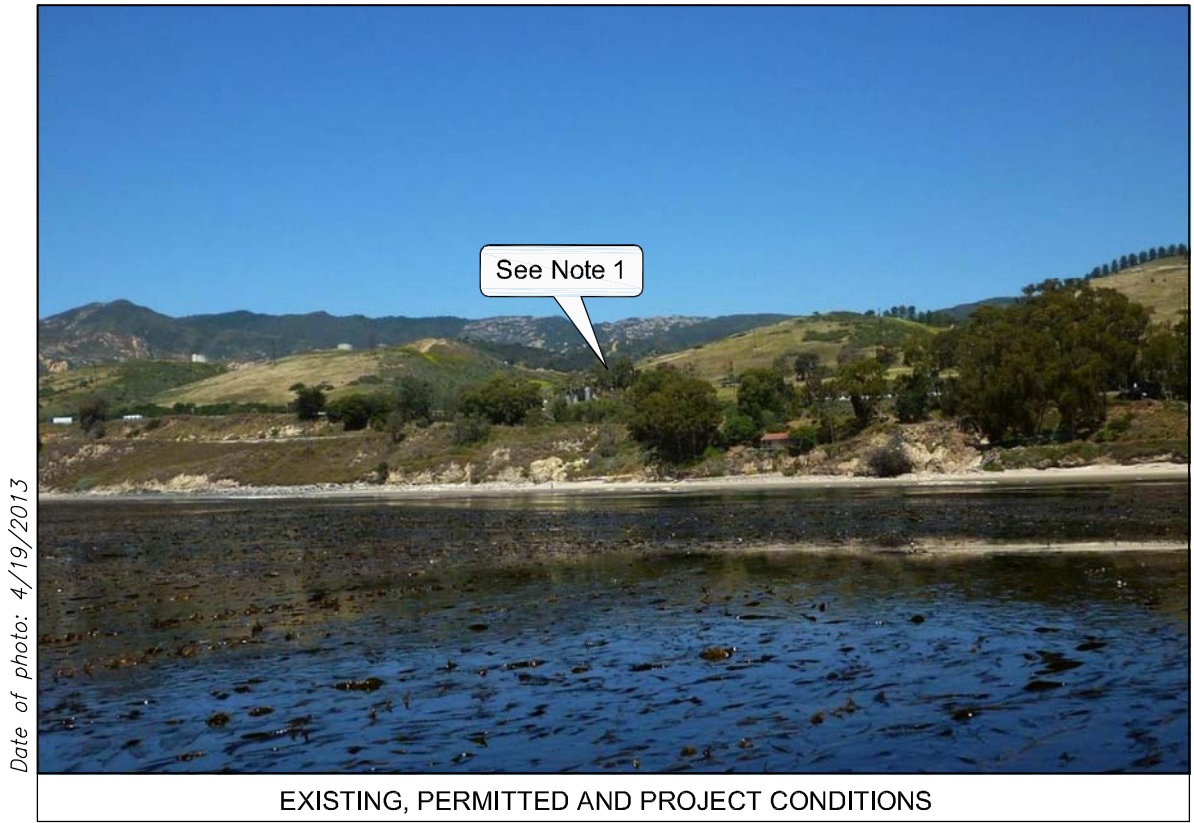


Note 1 - Line of sight to existing operations deck and proposed TRRP buildings obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.

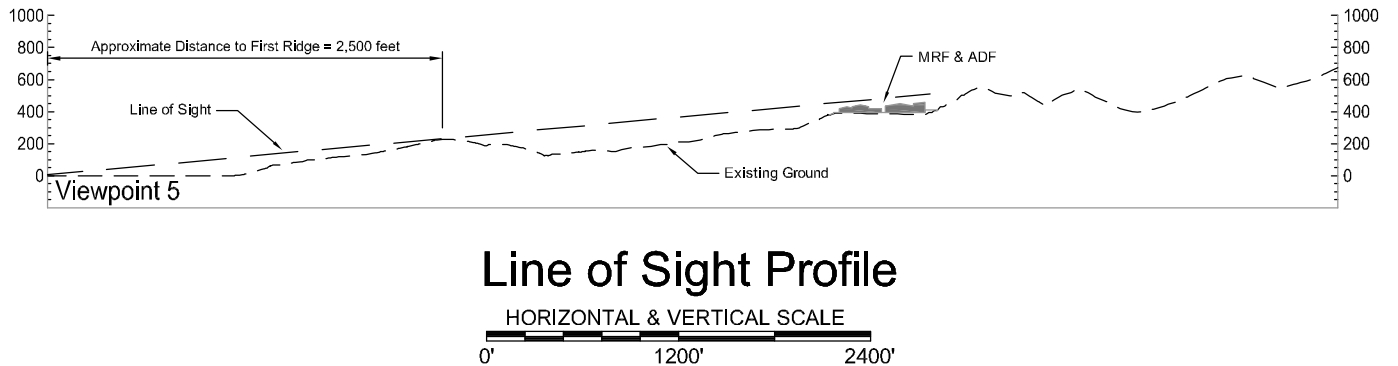


Source: John Kular Consulting

- 1 Back of color figure
- 2



Note 1 - Line of sight to existing operations deck and proposed TRRP buildings obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.



Source: John Kular Consulting

- 1 Back of color figure
- 2

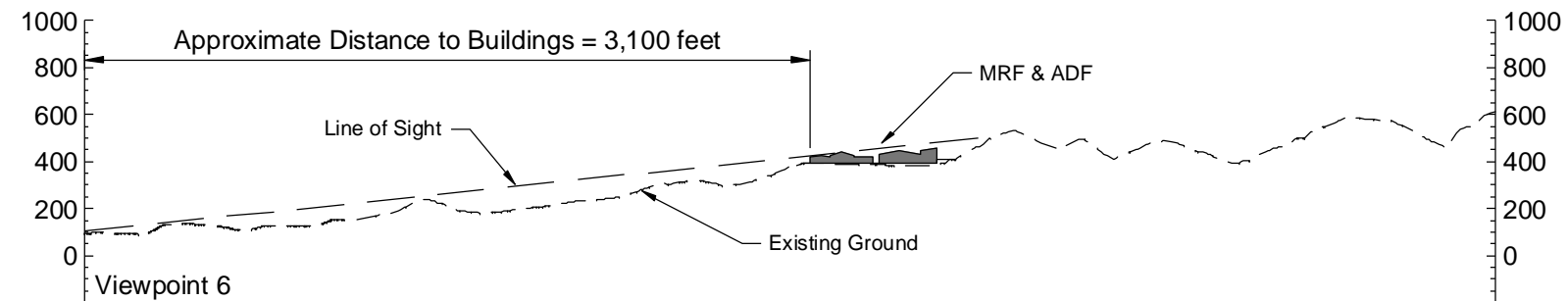
Date of photo: 12/17/2012



EXISTING & PERMITTED CONDITIONS



PERMITTED + PROJECT CONDITIONS



Line of Sight Profile

HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL SCALE
0' 800' 1600'

1
2

Back of color figure

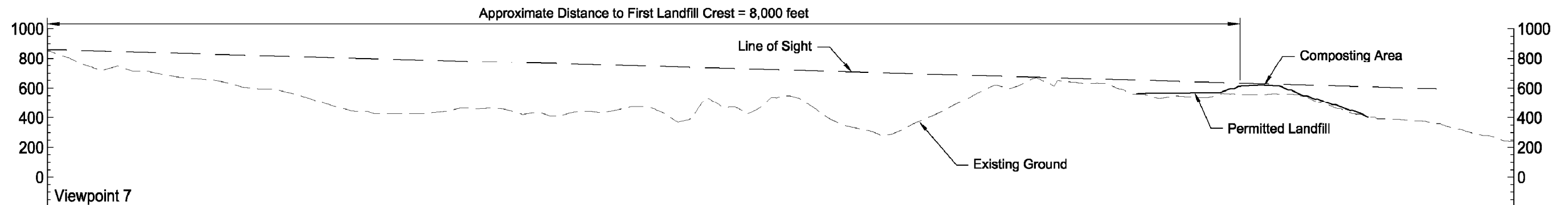
Date of photo: 1/16/2013



EXISTING & PERMITTED CONDITIONS

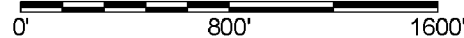


PERMITTED + PROJECT CONDITIONS



Line of Sight Profile

HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL SCALE



Source: John Kular Consulting
 Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

1
2

Back of color figure

Date of photo: 1/16/2013



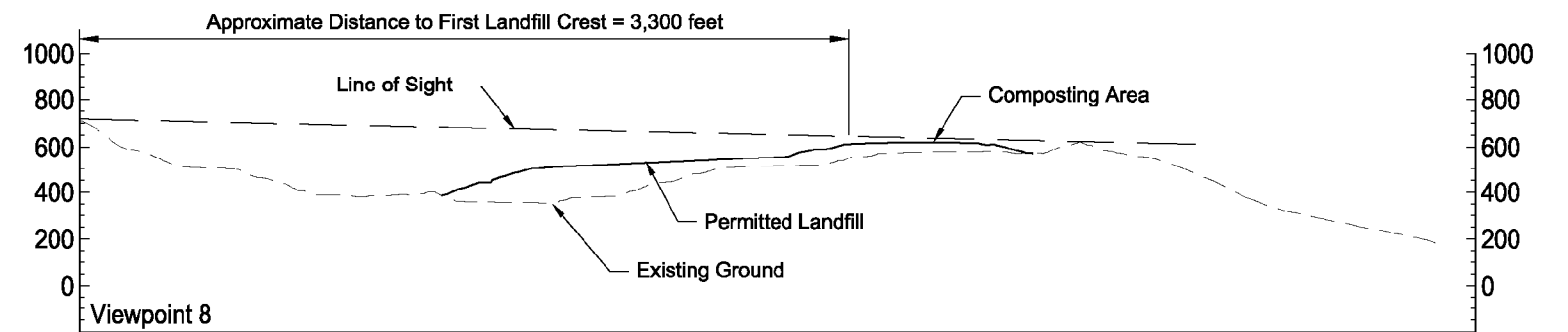
EXISTING CONDITIONS



PERMITTED CONDITIONS



PERMITTED + PROJECT CONDITIONS



Line of Sight Profile

HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL SCALE
0' 800' 1600'

Source: John Kular Consulting
Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

- 1 Back of color figure
- 2