

**Attachment 5**  
**CEQA Findings for Addendum #3 for the Las Vegas-San Pedro Creeks**  
**Capacity Improvement Project**  
**July 7, 2015**

CEQA section 15164 (Addendum) applies to the Las Vegas-San Pedro Creeks Capacity Improvement Project Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 11NGD-00000-00008 which was approved on October 4, 2011 and amended on April 10, 2012 and August 19, 2014. CEQA section 15164 allows an addendum to 11NGD-00000-00008 to be prepared when only minor technical changes or changes which do not create new significant impacts would result. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires analysis of environmental impacts which could occur as a result of project development. For the proposed revisions to the approved project, an Addendum to the previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration (11NGD-00000-00008) for the approved project can be prepared if the following applicable provisions of Section 15164 CEQA Guidelines can be met:

(b) An addendum to an adopted negative declaration may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary or none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.

e) A brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162 should be included in an addendum to an EIR, the lead agency's findings on the project, or elsewhere in the record. The explanation must be supported by substantial evidence.

Addendum #3 has been prepared to reflect technical changes to the approved Las Vegas-San Pedro Creeks Capacity Improvement. None of the applicable conditions of Section 15162 calling for a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred, as indicated by the County analysis and determination provided in accompanying document. There are no substantial changes or changed circumstances under which the proposed modified project is to be undertaken. No new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified potentially significant effects under the approved 11NGD-00000-00008 have been found with the proposed modified project. Further, there is no new information that the proposed modified project will have one or more potentially significant effects not discussed in the approved 11NGD-00000-00008. All documents incorporated into this Addendum by reference are on file with the Santa Barbara County Flood Control District (District) and are available upon request.

**Location**

The project area is located in the Cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara north of Hollister Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Los Carneros Road. The proposed project area is bounded by the west bank of San Pedro Creek, and northward on San Pedro Creek just beyond Calle Real. It extends east of Las Vegas Creek and the U.S. 101/Fairview Avenue Overpass, and south to Hollister Avenue. The northern portion of the project area, extending south from Calle Real to just south of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right of way (ROW), is located within the City of Goleta. The southerly portion of the project area extending south of the UPRR ROW to Hollister Avenue, including the Twin Lakes Golf Course, are located within the City of Santa Barbara Airport jurisdiction. Both Las Vegas Creek and San Pedro Creeks run north to south and pass under Calle Real, Route 101, the UPRR ROW, and Hollister Avenue. The project area is within the Second Supervisorial District.

## **Background**

The existing hydraulic capacity of Las Vegas and San Pedro Creeks has become inadequate at specific locations, resulting in break-out flooding during 10-year storm events. This hydraulic capacity improvement project would involve Calle Real within the City of Goleta, Route 101 within Caltrans right-of-way (ROW), the UPRR within the UPRR ROW, and the City of Santa Barbara Airport properties downstream of the UPRR.

Currently, the Las Vegas Creek culverts under Route 101 and under the UPRR facility have the hydraulic capacity to carry peak flows of less than a ten-year event, while San Pedro Creek under Calle Real, Route 101 and the UPRR has the hydraulic capacity to carry peak flows of no greater than a ten-year event. As a result, the existing hydraulic capacities of the Las Vegas and San Pedro Creeks under Calle Real, Route 101 and UPRR result in overtopping of the roadway surface at Calle Real and Route 101 during heavy rains. In 1995, 1998, and 2000 flooding of Calle Real and Route 101 occurred. These flooding events resulted in floodwaters backing up on San Pedro Creek into the neighborhood north of Calle Real, with subsequent flooding and closures of both Calle Real and Route 101. Improvements are proposed for Las Vegas and San Pedro Creeks starting at Calle Real within the City of Goleta, Route 101 within Caltrans ROW, the UPRR within the UPRR ROW, and the City of Santa Barbara Airport properties downstream of the UPRR. The project has been separated into three components to facilitate implementation by the District and Caltrans.

As Lead Agency under CEQA, the District wrote and approved the MND for this project. The District also wrote and approved the two Addenda in April 2012 and August 2014. Both Caltrans and the District have obtained the necessary permits for construction.

## **Previously Approved Project**

The project approved on October 4, 2011 includes the following three components:

- Project A: Improvements within Caltrans ROW and on San Pedro Creek extending to Calle Real within the City of Goleta ROW;
- Project B: Improvements within UPRR ROW; and
- Project C: Improvements within the City of Santa Barbara Airport properties downstream of the UPRR.

Project details are provided below, presented in a north-to-south direction.

### **Project A: Improvements within Caltrans ROW and on San Pedro Creek Extending to Calle Real within the City of Goleta ROW**

Caltrans is responsible for the following project elements:

- Increase the capacity of Las Vegas Creek under Route 101 by replacing existing culverts with a bridge with a natural bottom.
- Increase the capacity of Las Vegas Creek under the southbound Route 101/ Fairview Avenue off-ramp by replacing existing culverts with a three-sided concrete box culvert.
- Increase the capacity of San Pedro Creek under Calle Real and under Route 101 by replacing existing culverts with a bridge with a natural bottom

Note: Project A has been under construction by Caltrans since 2014 and is scheduled to be complete in early 2016.

### **Project B: Improvements within the UPRR ROW and District ROW Upstream of Calle Real**

The District has partnered with UPRR to implement the following project elements:

- Replacement of the UPRR Bridge over Las Vegas Creek.

- Replacement of the UPRR Bridge over San Pedro Creek.
- Creek channel conform work (i.e., the improvements that provide a transition between proposed and existing channel characteristics within UPRR ROW).

Note: Project B has been under construction by the District since April 2015 and is scheduled to be complete by August 2015.

Hydraulic Drop Structure: A Hydraulic drop structure is needed in San Pedro Creek upstream of Calle Real. This element is needed to address a change in elevation along San Pedro Creek and to transition from the existing upstream concrete-lined channel to the new natural bottom of San Pedro Creek. This project element is schedule for construction in the fall of 2016 after Caltrans has completed Project A.

*Project C: Improvements within the City of Santa Barbara Airport Properties  
Downstream of the UPRR*

The District would implement the following project elements.

- Las Vegas Creek conform work between the proposed wider UPRR bridge and downstream to the existing Las Vegas Creek within the Twin Lakes Golf Course.
- San Pedro Creek conform work between the proposed wider UPRR bridge and downstream to the existing San Pedro Creek. Conform work between the proposed UPRR bridges, upstream to the proposed Caltrans bridges.
- Installation of a floodwall on the Santa Barbara Airport property located along the west side of the San Pedro Creek channel north of Hollister Avenue within Airport Long-Term Parking Lot #2 to compensate for water surface elevation increases resulting from upstream capacity improvements.

**Proposed Changes to the Project**

All components of the proposed project will remain as described above with the exception of the Floodwall adjacent to San Pedro Creek within Project C and installation of a water impound feature within Project B.

The District proposes a minor revision to previously approved hydraulic capacity improvements along San Pedro Creek. The revised floodwall is in response to a refinement of hydraulic calculations for flows associated with approved Creek channel improvements.

Because updated topographic aerial survey data for the project area became available in 2012, HDR Engineering Inc. (HDR) updated the HEC-RAS hydraulic model to reflect the refined landscape, and reevaluated the hydraulic performances of the two creeks to verify the need for the San Pedro Creek floodwall and berm as presented in the certified 2011 Project MND, 11NGD-00000-00008.

Upon evaluating the hydraulic model, HDR determined that overtopping from the post-project 100-year storm event would occur farther upstream and downstream than previously anticipated, commencing approximately 63 feet downstream of the UPRR bridge, running for a distance of approximately 837 feet (between bank Stations 10+00 and 18+37), ending approximately 200 feet downstream of the terminus of the existing concrete slope lining. Width of disturbance from the most northerly extent of the floodwall south and downstream for 637 feet extends approximately 35 feet from the toe of the east bank to the top of the west bank. Below this point and extending

200 feet south and downstream, the floodwall would be constructed 15-feet from the top of the west creek bank along an existing access road extending along the top of the bank; no disturbances within the creek channel would occur in this stretch.

The post-project hydraulic model indicated that there would be no increase in the 25-year water surface elevation, thus HDR concluded that the earthen berm, that was originally included in the 2011 MND, could be eliminated from the project design.

### Floodwall Design

Based on hydraulic evaluation and design recommendations by HDR, the District has elected to pursue the design and construction of a concrete reinforced cantilevered floodwall.

The cantilever floodwall would have an inverted T-wall shape with a stem, footing and shear keyway. The footing would be embedded a minimum of 2 feet below ground. In areas adjacent to existing buildings and other stationary structures, the floodwall would be built along the existing concrete slope lining, requiring portions of the lining to be removed and replaced. This would occur along 637 linear feet of the wall. At the end of the concrete slope lining, the floodwall angles to the southwest approximately 15-feet away from the top of San Pedro Creek for the remaining 200 feet of the design length. The flood wall is angled away from the top of the bank to avoid impacts to southern willow woodland growing along the west bank of the creek.

In addition to the floodwall, approximately 637 linear feet of riprap scour protection would be placed along the base of the concrete slope lining. Riprap is required along the concrete slope paving to protect the floodwall from scour in the event of a 100-year flow event. The depth of scour protection varies from 5 to 8 feet below the creek bottom and would be covered with native creek material. The width of rip rap would vary between 9- to 12-feet wide. Rip rap scour protection is not required along the most downstream 200 feet of the floodwall.

### Impound Water Feature

A water feature designed to impound approximately 2 inches of water would be installed within Project B boundaries. This component was designed in response to agreements with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's permit requirements to provide instream vegetation for habitat and biofiltering. A small semi-circular formation of 24- to 36-inch boulders, 50.5-feet in length, would be keyed into the channel bottom 4- to 6-feet deep and into the channel banks approximately 50 feet downstream of the new UPRR Bridge. The boulders would be stacked within the excavated area so that only a portion of the top layer of rocks would be exposed above the channel floor to create a 3.25-inch deep backwater area upstream of the formation. Voids between the rocks would be filled with native streambed material and a layer of clay sediment would underlay the upstream side of the rocks to facilitate water retention upstream of the rock feature. The rocks would not be anchored with any permanent material and would move with the channel bed so no down-cutting or fish barrier would develop. The backwater area channel bottom above the rock feature would be planted with a seed mix to propagate low-lying stream vegetation including: mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*); yerba mansa (*Anemopsis californica*); spikerush (*Eleocharis macrostachys*); Santa Barbara sedge (*Carex barbarae*); toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*); and California grey rush (*Juncus patens*).

### **Potential Impacts of the Project Changes**

The proposed changes to the floodwall and inclusion of the water impound feature do not result in more severe project impacts. The potential impacts associated with the construction of the floodwall would impact areas of San Pedro Creek that were not included in the 2011 MND,

however the severity of impacts to the creekbed are commensurate with the impacts identified for the project as a whole and mitigation measures will reduce all impacts to less than significant. Additionally, no new impacts or mitigation measures have been identified as a result of the proposed project changes.

### **Beneficial Impacts**

Beneficial impacts of the proposed project that remain unchanged include the removal of several fish barriers on San Pedro Creek within the project limits, including a 5' drop located at the UPRR Bridge as well as the replacement of the Hwy 101 and Calle Real box culverts (i.e. concrete-bottomed channel) with bridges that will have natural bottomed channels. Inclusion of the impound water feature and seeding of the channel bottom will increase the likelihood of biofiltering vegetation persisting at the project site.

### **Findings**

It is the finding of the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Board of Directors that the preparation of the previous environmental document as herein amended may be used to fulfill the environmental review requirements of the current project. Because the current project meets the conditions for the application of State CEQA guidelines Section 15164(e), preparation of a subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report is not required.