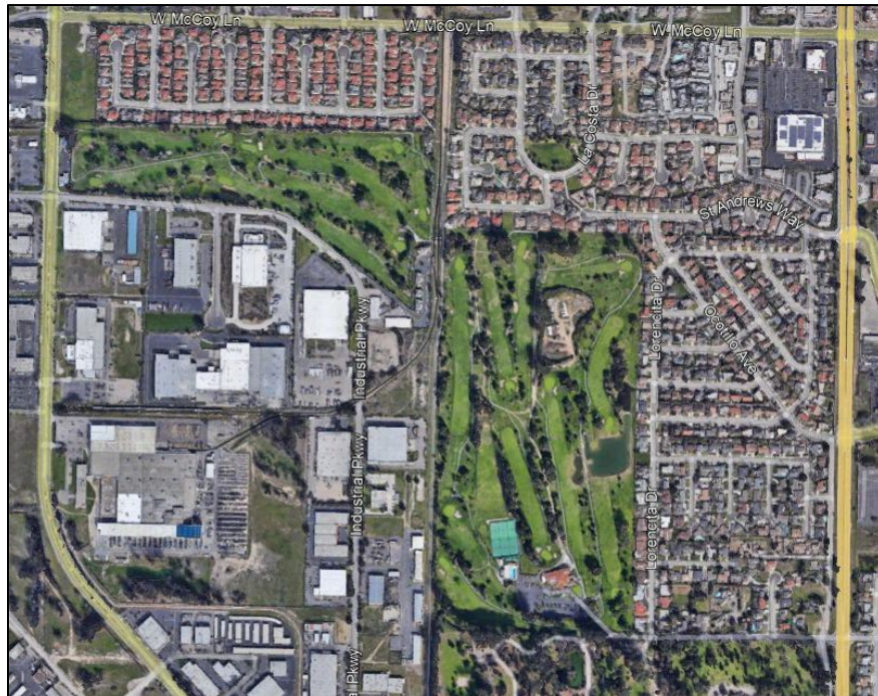


**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
Laguna County Sanitation District**

**Final  
Mitigated Negative Declaration**

**Santa Maria Country Club  
Recycled Water Pipeline**

**August 2023**



For More Information Contact Martin Wilder, Laguna County Sanitation District (805) 803-8755

## 1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Background

The Laguna County Sanitation District (LCSD) is a dependent special district of the County of Santa Barbara, formed in 1958 to provide municipal wastewater collection, treatment and disposal for the unincorporated Santa Maria area, the unincorporated community of Orcutt, and a portion of the southern part of the City of Santa Maria. The LCSD serves approximately 11,700 connections. The LCSD currently owns, operates and maintains a Wastewater Reclamation Plant (WWRP), 128 miles of collection system piping, and two lift stations. Wastewater is generated primarily from domestic sources with minor contributions from commercial establishments. The location of the WWRP is provided on Figure 1.

The WWRP is rated for 3.7 million gallons of wastewater per day (mgd) and is regulated by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board under Waste Discharge Requirements and Master Reclamation Permit Order 01-042. Effluent is treated to disinfected tertiary levels and includes screening, primary clarification, biofiltration, secondary clarification, membrane filtration (including reverse osmosis for a portion of the flow) and ultraviolet irradiation. Reverse osmosis concentrate is disposed into a class 1 non-hazardous injection well.

The current daily flow is 1.747 mgd (2022 average). Brine waste and sludge flows are 0.066 and 0.008 mgd respectively (2022 average), such that recycled water flow is approximately 1.7 mgd on an annual average daily basis. All wastewater is treated to tertiary standards and reused for beneficial uses. The LCSD currently has six users or customers of recycled water produced by the WWRP:

1. **Santa Maria Public Airport District (SMPAD).** This user currently includes the Airport's westside agricultural tenant farmer and a dry grazing cattle rancher tenant. The farmer irrigates approximately 396 acres of food crops (primarily berries of various types) with recycled water and well water. Since 2005, the farmer has used recycled water in varying degrees but recycled water accounts for approximately 48 percent of total water usage. The farmer employs spray and drip irrigation and takes water at two turnouts, each with a meter. The cattle tenant uses recycled water to fill watering troughs. The SMPAD currently takes water on demand directly from the recycled water pump station located at the WWRP via a pipeline owned by SMPAD.
2. **Santa Maria Energy, LLC (SME).** This user has periodically trucked recycled water to its oil production facility located off Graciosa Road in the Orcutt Hills where it is used to make steam for oil extraction. There are plans to expand beyond the exploratory phase of oil well operation at which time SME proposes to construct a pipeline extension to the site. Annual usage has been approximately 24 million gallons. However, upon expansion of SME oil production, daily usage is anticipated to be approximately 0.46 mgd.

3. **Santa Barbara County Northern Branch Jail.** A pipeline was extended north on Black Road from the existing distribution pipeline to the new jail facility. Phase 1 of the new jail facility is now operational. Recycled water is used for fire suppression (storage to a lined pond), a small amount of landscape irrigation and laundry facilities. The Phase 1 jail facility annual recycled water use is approximately 3.94 million gallons per year.
4. **Waller Park.** This park, owned by the County of Santa Barbara, includes approximately 65 acres of irrigated turf. Waller Park uses between 82 and 101 million gallons per year of irrigation water. Recycled water supplies a portion of the total irrigation demand, depending on the amount produced and the demand of other users. Well water is used to make up any shortage.
5. **Pasture.** The LCSD owns approximately 373 irrigable acres of pasture used to dispose of recycled water not used by other users. The land is grazed by beef cattle managed by a ranch tenant. Based on land area and typical infiltration rates, the pastures can accommodate 151 million gallons of recycled water annually.
6. **Contractors.** A minor recycled water use is by construction contractors. This began at the beginning of the current drought when local water purveyors could not provide construction water meters. This water is used for dust control, grading operations, and soil compaction typically associated with construction activities. Annual amounts are on the range of 1 to 8 million gallons.

## 1.2 Previous CEQA Documentation

A Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted in July 2018 for the LCSD's Wastewater Reclamation Plant Facilities Master Plan. The Facilities Master Plan includes the following major components:

- Upgrades to the WWRP.
- Replacement of the trunk sewer along Foster Road.
- Improvements to the LCSD storage reservoir pipeline.
- Removal of the soil stockpile at the storage reservoir.
- A recycled water storage tank and pump station at Waller Park and pipeline from the WWRP.

The proposed project would extend recycled water service from the Waller Park recycled water storage tank and pump station but is not included in the Facilities Master Plan. Therefore, an Initial Study was prepared.

## 1.3 Project Objectives

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide facilities to fully utilize recycled water produced by the WWRP, which would offset use of groundwater resources. The specific objectives are to:

- Expand the use of recycled water for beneficial uses including irrigation of crops, grazing land and landscaping.
- Develop facilities to serve recycled water to new users as supplies become available.

- Increase recycled water disposal capacity as wastewater inflows increase over time with development.
- Continue to protect public health and safety through the cost-effective treatment and reclamation of the community's wastewater while minimizing environmental impacts including impacts to federal and state listed species.

#### **1.4 Existing Facilities at the Santa Maria Country Club**

The Santa Maria Country Club was established in 1921 and was constructed in the early 1920's, expanded in the late 1940's and redesigned in the 1980's. The Country Club encompasses 120 acres and is irrigated by two on-site wells; a west well located north of Fairway Drive and an east well located south of Ballestral Avenue. The wells pump groundwater to fill ponds (two ponds on the west side of the golf course and one pond on the east side of the golf course, see Figure 2), which then have pump houses that provide pressurized groundwater to the golf course irrigation system. Approximately 90 acres are irrigated, with an estimated annual demand of 114 million gallons per year or 0.3 million gallons per day.

#### **1.5 Project Components**

Components of the proposed project include:

- Pipelines to connect the existing recycled water tank and pump station at Waller Park to existing ponds at the Santa Maria Country Club.
- Valves at each pond to control inflow of recycled wastewater.

Based on the existing production of recycled water by the WWRP and commitments to provide recycled water to other users, the LCSD may only be able to meet a portion of the irrigation demand of the Country Club. However, production of recycled water may increase over time as development occurs in the LCSD service area and wastewater inflows to the WWRP increase, which may allow a greater proportion of the Country Club's irrigation demand to be met.

Five 8-inch diameter buried pipeline segments would be installed to connect the LCSD's existing recycled water storage tank and pump station at Waller Park to the existing east pond and the larger of the two west ponds at the Country Club. Figure 2 shows the location of these five pipeline segments. These pipeline segments would be composed of high-density polyethylene (fused pipe unions) or polyvinyl chloride (bell and spigot pipe unions) and would be installed via traditional open cut trenching methods or by trenchless methods such as horizontal directional drilling or jack and bore. It is noted that potholing to confirm conflicting utility crossings and bore pits for sending and receiving would be conducted for trenchless methods. The five proposed pipeline segments are:

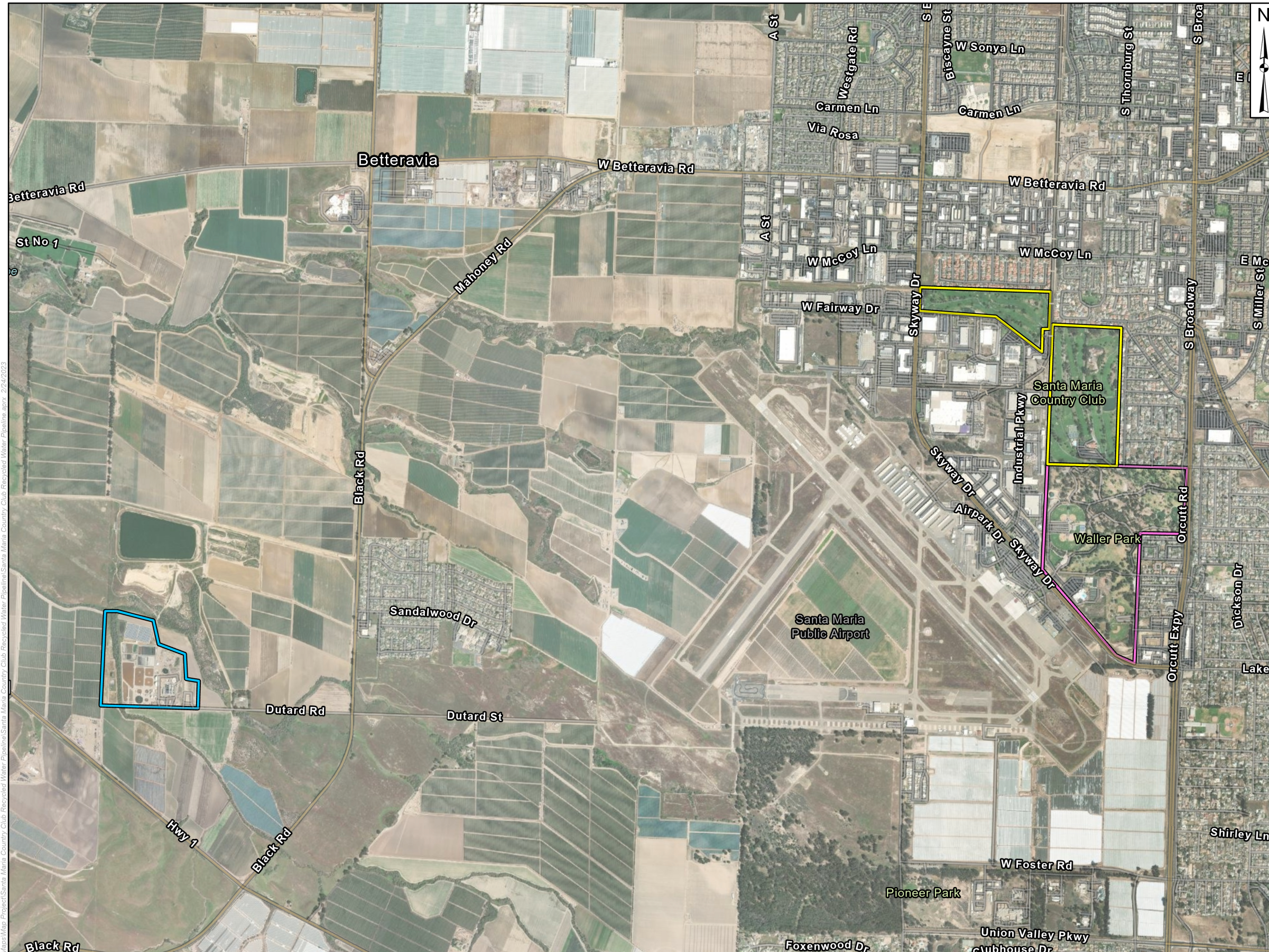
1. An approximately 1,926-foot-long pipeline segment from the existing recycled water storage tank and pump station north along a paved bike path (Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail) to a point directly west of the east pond. This pipeline segment would be installed using traditional open cut trenching methods. However, the portion of this pipeline located north of Waller Lane may be installed using directional drilling methods to minimize disturbance of the bike path.



2. An approximately 988-foot-long buried pipeline segment extending eastward from the northern terminus of pipeline segment 1 (described above) to a proposed valve box at the east pond. All but the eastern-most approximately 60 feet of this pipeline segment would be installed under the golf course using directional drilling methods. The eastern-most portion of this pipeline segment would be installed using traditional open cut trenching methods. The proposed valve box at the east pond would be buried below grade and located to minimize interference with golf play.
3. An approximately 1,409-foot-long buried pipeline segment extending from the northern terminus of pipeline segment 1 (described above) extending north along the western boundary of the Country Club to the northern boundary of the Country Club. This pipeline segment would be installed under the golf course using directional drilling methods.
4. An approximately 182-foot-long buried pipeline segment extending west under the Santa Maria Valley Railroad tracks, using jack-and-bore or directional drilling methods. Jack-and-bore methods would be used if a steel casing pipe is required to protect the proposed pipeline under the railroad tracks.
5. An approximately 1,526-foot-long buried pipeline segment extending from the western terminus of pipeline segment 4 (described above) to a proposed valve box at the larger west pond. All but the western-most approximately 34 feet of this pipeline segment would be installed under the golf course using directional drilling methods. The western-most portion of this pipeline segment would be installed using traditional open cut trenching methods. The proposed valve box at the west pond would be buried below grade and located to minimize interference with golf play.

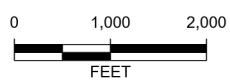
A permanent easement would be acquired from the property owner of APN 111-291-033 for pipeline segment 1. Alternatively, a portion of APN 111-291-033 may be acquired in fee for the pipeline segment 1 alignment. Construction is anticipated to require approximately 4 to 8 weeks and would likely be initiated in 2024. Construction materials and equipment staging would likely occur at the Waller Park recycled water tank site, at the Country Club maintenance yard and/or along the affected portion of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail, which may need to be closed for several weeks during installation of pipeline segment 1. Photographs of some of the pipe alignments and work areas are provided in Figure 3.





- LEGEND:**
- Santa Maria Country Club
  - Waller Park
  - LCSD Wastewater Reclamation Plant

**MAP EXTENT:**



Source: Esri Online Imagery Basemap  
 Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet  
 Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only.

**padre**  
 associates, inc.  
 ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS &  
 ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

PROJECT NAME: SANTA MARIA COUNTRY CLUB  
 RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT  
 SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CA  
 PROJECT NUMBER: 2202-3391  
 DATE: February 2023

**PROJECT LOCATION MAP**

**FIGURE 1**

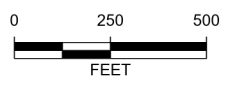
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**LEGEND:**  
 Proposed Recycled Water Pipeline Segment

**MAP EXTENT:**



Source: Esri Online Imagery Basemap  
 Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet  
 Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only.



PROJECT NAME: SANTA MARIA COUNTRY CLUB RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CA	
PROJECT NUMBER: 2202-3391	DATE: May 2023

**PIPELINE ALIGNMENT MAP**

**FIGURE**  
2

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a. Pipeline segment 1 alignment along Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail



b. Proposed location of pipeline segment 4 eastern drill pit



c. Pipeline segment 2 alignment east through the golf course



d. West pond, showing proposed pipeline outfall into pond



## 2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

<b>2.1 Site Information (City of Santa Maria)</b>	
City General Plan designation	<i>Open Space (OS)</i>
City Zoning	<i>OS</i>
Site Size	<i>120.32 acres (APNs 111-070-003, -027, -029), not including the proposed easement on APN 111-291-033</i>
Present Use & Development	<i>Recreation (Santa Maria Country Club)</i>
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	<i>North: Residential: R-1, PD/R-1                  South: Recreation: Waller County Park/REC; Industrial: PD/M-1                  East: Residential: R-1, PD/R-1                  West: Industrial PD/M-1</i>
Access	<i>West Waller Lane</i>
Public Services	<i>Water Supply: On-site wells                  Sewage: LCSD                  Fire: Santa Barbara County Fire Department</i>

## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

### 3.1 Physical Setting

#### Existing and Surrounding Uses

The Santa Maria Country Club supports recreational uses including golf, tennis and swimming, and hosts private gatherings such as weddings. Industrial land uses are located to the west, and residential land uses are located to the north and east. Waller Park is located to the south.

#### Slope/Topography

The Santa Maria Country Club site is relatively level, but includes low relief ridges and valleys to produce topography suitable for golf, including fairways, roughs and greens. Elevation ranges from approximately 215 feet above mean sea level (msl) in the northwestern-most portion of the Country Club site to approximately 240 feet above msl at Waller Park.

#### Fauna and Flora

See Section 5.4.

#### Archaeological Sites

The cultural resources record search did not identify any archaeological sites in the immediate project area.

## **Soils**

Soils mapped at the Santa Maria Country Club and Waller Park include Betteravia loamy sand (0-2 percent slopes), Marina sand (0-2 percent slopes), Narlon sand, hardpan variant (2-9 percent slopes) and Oceano sand (2-15 percent slopes, severely eroded).

## **Surface Water Bodies**

The Waller-Skyway Channel is located approximately 0.4 miles west of the Country Club site and drains to Betteravia Creek.

### **3.2 Environmental Baseline**

The environmental baseline from which the project's impacts are measured consists of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, including the operation of the existing WWRP and associated infrastructure. The WWRP currently treats an average flow of 1.6 million gallons/day, all treated wastewater is recycled for beneficial uses (see background discussion above).

## **4.0 METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

This Mitigated Negative Declaration evaluates the cumulative impacts of the project by considering the incremental effects of the proposed project in connection with the effects of past, present, or probable future projects causing impacts related to those impacts caused by the proposed project. As discussed in Sections 5.1-5.15 of this document, the incremental effect of the proposed project is not cumulatively considerable for any issue area. For the purposes of CEQA analysis, reasonably foreseeable projects include those that have submitted a permit application or are currently in the permitting process. For the purposes of this MND, these projects include those recently approved or under review by the City of Santa Maria provided in the City's list of major developments dated January 2023.

## **5.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST**

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and uses the definitions from the County's CEQA Guidelines (updated 2020):

**Significant and unavoidable impacts.** Significant unavoidable adverse impacts for which the decision-maker must adopt a statement of overriding considerations, if the decision-maker decides to approve the project.

**Significant but mitigable impacts.** Significant adverse impacts that can be avoided or feasibly mitigated to an insignificant level, and for which the decision-maker must adopt mitigation measures.

**Insignificant impacts.** Adverse impacts that are insignificant.

**No impact.** No adverse impact will result from the project.

**Beneficial impacts.** Impacts beneficial to the environment.

**Reviewed Under Previous Document:** The analysis contained in a previously adopted/certified environmental document addresses this issue adequately for use in the current case and is summarized in the discussion below. The discussion should include reference to the previous documents, a citation of the page(s) where the information is found, and identification of mitigation measures incorporated from the previous documents.

**5.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?				X	
b. Change to the visual character of an area?				X	
c. Glare or night lighting which may affect adjoining areas?				X	
d. Visually incompatible structures?				X	

**Setting:**

The proposed project is located in the Santa Maria Valley, adjacent to industrial land uses to the west, residential land uses to the north and east and a regional park (Waller Park) to the south. The project site (Santa Maria Country Club) supports varied landscaping (turfgrass, trees and shrubs) and ponds that provide a park-like visual character to the site. Waller Park supports landscaping including tree stands and grassy areas, and baseball fields to the south of the recycled water tank site.

The nearest scenic highway is State Highway 1, located approximately 2.6 miles to the southwest. State Highway 1 has also been designated a Category 6 scenic corridor by the County’s Comprehensive Plan, meaning “moderately scenic, major capacity, secondary distribution route”.

**Significance Thresholds:**

The County’s Visual Aesthetics Impact Guidelines classify coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors as “especially important” visual resources. A project may have the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic impact if (among other potential effects) it would impact important visual resources, obstruct public views, remove significant amounts of vegetation, substantially alter the natural character of the landscape, or involve extensive grading visible from public areas. The guidelines address public, not private views.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The proposed pipeline alignment is not visible from State Highway 1 or other public roadways due to intervening topography, structures or landscaping. All project components would be buried (pipelines) or at-grade (valve boxes). A small number of landscaping trees may require removal for pipeline installation; however, many trees would remain such that changes in the visual character of the Country Club would not occur.
- b. See discussion under item a.



- c. Glare-producing surfaces or night lighting are not proposed. Therefore, no visual impacts associated with project-related changes in glare or night lighting would occur.
- d. See discussion under item a. above.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

Implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in any change in the aesthetic character of the area. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable aesthetics impact.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Mitigation is not required as significant impacts were not identified.

**5.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity (whether prime or non-prime) or conflict with agricultural preserve programs?				X	
b. An effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance?				X	

**Setting:**

Agricultural lands play a critical economic and environmental role in Santa Barbara County. Agriculture continues to be Santa Barbara County’s major producing industry with a gross production value of over \$1.9 billion (Santa Barbara County 2021 Agricultural Production Report), with strawberries as the most valuable crop (\$850 million). In addition to the creation of food, jobs, and economic value, farmland provides valuable open space and maintains the County’s rural character.

The proposed project is located in the Santa Maria Valley, one of the County’s most active and productive agricultural regions, generating more than half of the County’s agricultural revenue. The region’s intensive irrigated croplands produce the bulk of the County’s strawberries, broccoli, lettuce and other fresh vegetables. In addition, Santa Maria Valley agricultural lands provide a significant amount of dry farming and cattle grazing.

**Soils.** Soils mapped at the Santa Maria Country Club and Waller Park include Betteravia loamy sand (0-2 percent slopes), Marina sand (0-2 percent slopes), Narlon sand, hardpan variant (2-9 percent slopes) and Oceano sand (2-15 percent slopes, severely eroded).

**Important Farmland.** The California Department of Conservation Important Farmland maps designate the project site (Santa Maria Country Club and Waller Park) as “Urban and Built-up Land”.

### **Significance Thresholds:**

The County's Agricultural Resources Guidelines (approved by the Board of Supervisors, August 1993) provide a methodology for evaluating agricultural resources. These guidelines utilize a weighted point system to serve as a preliminary screening tool for determining significance. The tool assists planners in identifying whether a previously viable agricultural parcel could potentially be subdivided into parcels that are not considered viable after division. A project which would result in the loss or impairment of agricultural resources would create a potentially significant impact. The Point System is intended to measure the productive ability of an existing parcel as compared to proposed parcels. The tool compares availability of resources and prevalent uses that benefit agricultural potential but does not quantifiably measure a parcel's actual agricultural production.

Initial Studies are to use this Point System in conjunction with any additional information regarding agricultural resources. The Point System assigns values to nine particular characteristics of agricultural productivity of a site. These factors include parcel size, soil classification, water availability, agricultural suitability, existing and historic land use, comprehensive plan designation, adjacent land uses, agricultural preserve potential, and combined farming operations. If the tabulated points total 60 or more, that parcel is considered viable for the purposes of analysis. The project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact if the division of land of a viable parcel would result in parcels that did not either score over 60 in themselves or resulted in a score with a significantly lower score than the existing parcel. Any loss or impairment of agricultural resources identified using the Point System could constitute a potentially significant impact and warrants additional site-specific analysis.

### **Impact Discussion:**

- a. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of farmland or result in any conflicts that may affect agricultural activities or productivity. Therefore, no agricultural resource impacts would occur.
- b. The proposed project would not result in adverse effects to any Unique farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Local importance.

### **Cumulative Impacts:**

The proposed project would not adversely affect agricultural resources. Therefore, the project would not incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts to agricultural resources.

### **Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Mitigation is not required as significant impacts were not identified.

**5.3 A. AIR QUALITY**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources)?			X		
b. The creation of objectionable smoke, ash or odors?			X		
c. Extensive dust generation?			X		

**Setting:**

**Criteria Pollutants.** Criteria air pollutants are those contaminants for which State and Federal ambient air quality standards have been established for the protection of public health and welfare. Criteria pollutants include ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM<sub>10</sub>) and particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

**Regulatory Overview.** Air pollution control is administered on three governmental levels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has jurisdiction under the Clean Air Act, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has jurisdiction under the California Health and Safety Code and the California Clean Air Act, and local districts (Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District [APCD]) share responsibility with the CARB for ensuring that all State and Federal ambient air quality standards are attained.

California is divided geographically into air basins for the purpose of managing the air resources of the State on a regional basis. An air basin generally has similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. The Project component sites is situated in the South Central Coast Air Basin, which encompasses the counties of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. The USEPA and CARB classify an area as attainment, unclassified, or nonattainment depending on whether or not the monitored ambient air quality data shows compliance, insufficient data available, or non-compliance with the ambient air quality standards, respectively. Santa Barbara County has been designated as unclassifiable/attainment for all California and Federal ambient air quality standards except the California standards for ozone and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>).

The 2019 Ozone Plan (2019 Plan) was adopted by the APCD’s Board of Directors in December 2019 and is the ninth triennial update to the initial state Air Quality Attainment Plan (other updates were done in 1994, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, and 2016). Each of the plan updates have implemented an “every feasible measure” strategy to ensure continued progress toward attainment of the state ozone standards. Since 1992, Santa Barbara County has adopted or amended more than 25 control measures aimed at reducing emissions from stationary sources of air pollution. These measures have substantially reduced ozone precursor pollutants, which includes NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC.

Along with the implementation of statewide measures, the APCD's control measure strategy has successfully improved the County's air quality, as we've witnessed a downward trend in ozone exceedances. For the last four years, Santa Barbara County had three or fewer exceedances of the State 8-hour ozone standard, and the County was designated as nonattainment-transitional in April 2017. This designation means that the County is getting close to attaining the standard and the APCD must determine whether additional control measures are necessary to accomplish expeditious attainment of the state standard.

**Local Ambient Air Quality.** The nearest ambient air quality monitoring station is the Santa Maria station (906 South Broadway), located approximately 2.0 miles northeast of the Santa Maria Country Club. Ozone and nitrogen dioxide concentrations monitored at the Santa Maria station from 2019 through 2021 did not exceed State or Federal ambient air quality standards. Concentrations of PM<sub>10</sub> monitored at the Santa Maria station exceeded the State 24-hour standard an average of 24 days per year during 2019 through 2021. Concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) monitored at the Santa Maria station exceeded the Federal 24-hour standard an average of three days per year during 2019 through 2021.

#### **Significance Thresholds:**

The APCD, the City of Santa Maria and Santa Barbara County have not established quantitative significance thresholds for construction emissions. Although most project-related activities and associated air pollutant emissions would occur in the City of Santa Maria, work in Santa Barbara County (Waller Park) would be subject to the County's Grading Ordinance which requires standard dust control conditions for all projects involving grading activities. LCSD would require the construction contractor to comply with the County's Grading Ordinance for all project-related work.

#### **Impact Discussion:**

- a. Short-Term Construction Impacts.** The proposed project would generate air pollutant emissions as a result of construction activities, primarily exhaust emissions from heavy-duty trucks, worker vehicles and heavy equipment. Emissions were estimated for a peak day, during pipeline installation at two locations (jack-and-bore at segment 4, and trenching at segment 5). It was assumed that 4 truck trips (8 one-way trips) and 8 worker trips (16 one-way trips) would occur on a peak work day. Project peak day emissions were estimated using the CARB EMFAC 2021 and OFFROAD 2021 emissions models with project-specific inputs (Santa Barbara County, year 2024) and are listed in Table 2. Due to their small magnitude and duration, project emissions are considered a less than significant air quality impact.

Project-related construction activities include minor earthwork; however, most pipeline installation would occur using directional drilling methods which avoids disturbance of the ground surface. Therefore, project-related construction activities would not have the potential to result in significant emissions of fugitive dust and PM<sub>10</sub>, with the implementation of standard construction emissions reduction measures recommended by the APCD (listed below) and compliance with APCD Rule 345 (Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition Activities).

**Table 2. Construction Air Pollutant Emissions**

Source	Pounds per Peak Day			
	ROC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	PM <sub>10</sub>
Equipment exhaust	3.5	30.3	38.9	1.4
On-road vehicles	<0.1	1.4	1.0	0.1
Fugitive dust	0.0	0.0	0.0	82.2
<b>Total</b>	3.5	31.7	39.9	83.7

Emissions of ozone precursors (NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC) during project construction would result primarily from the on-site use of heavy equipment. Due to the limited period of time that heavy equipment operation would occur (up to eight weeks), construction-related emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and ROC would not be significant on a project-specific or cumulative basis. However, due to the non-attainment/transitional status of the County for the State 8-hour ozone standard, the project would implement construction emissions reduction measures listed below to reduce construction-related emissions of ozone precursors to the extent feasible.

Standard APCD Construction Emissions Reduction Measures. Measures provided in the APCD’s 2022 Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents would be implemented and are listed below.

- During construction, use water trucks, sprinkler systems, or dust suppressants in all areas of vehicle movement to prevent dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD’s limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. When using water, this includes wetting down areas as needed but at least once in the late morning and after work is completed for the day. Increased watering frequency should be required when sustained wind speed exceeds 15 mph. Reclaimed water should be used whenever possible. However, reclaimed water should not be used in or around crops for human consumption.
- Onsite vehicle speeds shall be no greater than 15 miles per hour when traveling on unpaved surfaces.
- Install and operate a track-out prevention device where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto paved streets. The track-out prevention device can include any device or combination of devices that are effective at preventing track out of dirt such as gravel pads, pipe-grid track-out control devices, rumble strips, or wheel-washing systems.
- If importation, exportation, and stockpiling of fill material is involved, soil stockpiled for more than one day shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with soil binders to prevent dust generation. Trucks transporting fill material to and from the site shall be tarped from the point of origin.

- Minimize the amount of disturbed area. After clearing, grading, earthmoving, or excavation is completed, treat the disturbed area by watering, OR using roll-compaction, OR revegetating, OR by spreading soil binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed so that dust generation will not occur. All roadways, driveways, sidewalks etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible.
- Schedule clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation activities during periods of low wind speed to the extent feasible. During periods of high winds (>25 mph) clearing, grading, earthmoving, and excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent fugitive dust created by onsite operations from becoming a nuisance or hazard.
- The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor and document the dust control program requirements to ensure any fugitive dust emissions do not result in a nuisance and to enhance the implementation of the mitigation measures as necessary to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holiday and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the Air Pollution Control District prior to grading/building permit issuance and/or map clearance.
- All portable diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 brake horsepower (bhp) shall be registered with the state's portable equipment registration program OR shall obtain an APCD permit.
- Fleet owners of diesel-powered mobile construction equipment greater than 25 hp are subject to the California Air Resource Board (CARB) In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation (Title 13, California Code of Regulations (CCR), §2449), the purpose of which is to reduce NO<sub>x</sub>, diesel particulate matter (DPM), and other criteria pollutant emissions from in-use off-road diesel-fueled vehicles. Off-road heavy-duty trucks shall comply with the State Off-Road Regulation.
- Fleet owners of diesel-fueled heavy-duty trucks and buses are subject to CARB's On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles (In-Use) Regulation (Title 13, CCR, §2025), the purpose of which is to reduce DPM, NO<sub>x</sub> and other criteria pollutants from in-use (on-road) diesel-fueled vehicles.
- All commercial off-road and on-road diesel vehicles are subject, respectively, to Title 13, CCR, §2449(d)(3) and §2485, limiting engine idling time. Off-road vehicles subject to the State Off-Road Regulation are limited to idling no more than five minutes. Idling of heavy-duty diesel trucks during loading and unloading shall be limited to five minutes, unless the truck engine meets the optional low-NO<sub>x</sub> idling emission standard, the truck is labeled with a clean-idle sticker, and it is not operating within 100 feet of a restricted area.
- Diesel-powered mobile equipment shall utilize engines meeting the CARB Tier 3 or higher emission standards for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines should be used to the maximum extent feasible.
- On-road heavy-duty equipment with model year 2010 engines or newer should be used to the maximum extent feasible.

- Diesel powered equipment should be replaced by electric equipment whenever feasible. Electric auxiliary power units should be used to the maximum extent feasible.
- Equipment/vehicles using alternative fuels, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel, should be used on-site where feasible.
- Catalytic converters shall be installed on gasoline-powered equipment, if feasible.
- All construction equipment shall be maintained in tune per the manufacturer's specifications.
- The engine size of construction equipment shall be the minimum practical size.
- The number of construction equipment operating simultaneously shall be minimized through efficient management practices to ensure that the smallest practical number is operating at any one time.
- Construction worker trips should be minimized by requiring carpooling and by providing for lunch onsite.
- Construction truck trips should be scheduled during non-peak hours to reduce peak hour emissions whenever feasible.
- Proposed truck routes should minimize to the extent feasible impacts to residential communities and sensitive receptors.
- Construction staging areas should be located away from sensitive receptors such that exhaust and other construction emissions do not enter the fresh air intakes to buildings, air conditioners, and windows.

**Long-Term Operation Impacts.** The proposed project would provide an alternative source of irrigation water and would not result in a new demand for irrigation water or generate any additional air pollutant emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not have any long-term air quality impacts.

- b. Installation of the proposed pipeline segments and valves may result in small amounts of smoke and odors related to diesel powered equipment exhaust. However, such smoke and odors would be temporary and occur only periodically during the construction period. Overall, project-related smoke and odors would be minor and not considered objectionable or violate APCD Rule 303 (nuisance).
- c. See part a. regarding fugitive dust which would be minimized by implementation of standard APCD construction emissions reduction measures and compliance with APCD Rule 345.



**Cumulative Impacts:**

The County’s Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project’s contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the significance criteria for air quality. Therefore, the project’s contribution to regionally significant air pollutant emissions is not cumulatively considerable, and its cumulative effect is less than significant.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Impacts would be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not required.

**5.3 B. AIR QUALITY – GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Will the project:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/ Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X		
<b>b.</b> Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X	

**Setting:**

Climate change, often referred to as “global warming” is a global environmental issue that refers to any significant change in measures of climate, including temperature, precipitation, or wind. Climate change refers to variations from baseline conditions that extend for a period (decades or longer) of time and is a result of both natural factors, such as volcanic eruptions, and anthropogenic, or man-made, factors including changes in land-use and burning of fossil fuels. Anthropogenic activities such as deforestation and fossil fuel combustion emit heat-trapping greenhouse gases (GHG), defined as any gas that absorbs infrared radiation within the atmosphere.

In 2021, the average contiguous U.S. temperature was 54.5°F, 2.5°F above the 20th-century average and ranked as the fourth-warmest year in the 127-year period of record. The six warmest years on record have all occurred since 2012. The December 2021 contiguous U.S. temperature was 39.3°F, 6.7°F above average and exceeded the previous record set in December 2015.

Santa Barbara County completed the first phase (Climate Action Study) of its climate action strategy in September 2011. The Climate Action Study provides a County-wide GHG inventory and an evaluation of potential emission reduction measures. The second phase of the County’s climate action strategy is an Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP), which was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors on June 2, 2015. The ECAP includes a base year (2007) GHG inventory for unincorporated areas of the County, which identifies total GHG emissions of 1,192,970 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>E and 28,560 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>E for construction and mining equipment (primary project-related GHG source). Note that the base year inventory does not include stationary sources and energy use (natural gas combustion and electricity generation).

The focus of the ECAP is to establish a 15 percent GHG reduction target from baseline (by 2020) and develop source-based and land use-based strategies to meet this target. The County has been implementing the ECAP's emission reduction measures since 2016. However, the County did not meet the 2020 GHG emission reduction goal contained within the ECAP, and an updated 2030 Climate Action Plan is in development.

In November 2021, Santa Barbara County completed a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment as a first step to improving regional resiliency by analyzing how climate change may harm the community. The Assessment considered how severe the effects of climate change hazards are likely to be for the county's people and assets and identifies which groups of people and assets face the greatest potential for harm. The County is currently developing an Adaptation Plan and an update the Santa Barbara County Seismic Safety and Safety Element to increase resiliency throughout the unincorporated county.

### **County Environmental Thresholds:**

On January 26, 2021, the Board of Supervisors adopted interim thresholds of significance for GHG emissions from non-industrial stationary source projects. The numeric screening threshold is 300 MTCO<sub>2</sub>E per year and is used in this Initial Study to determine the significance of the project's GHG emissions. As per the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, construction GHG emissions are amortized over the lifetime of the project (assumed to be 30 years for the proposed project).

### **Impact Discussion:**

- a. Construction.** Construction of the proposed project would generate GHG emissions from the engine exhaust of heavy equipment and motor vehicles. Table 3 provides a summary of GHG emissions as compared to the County's interim threshold. Project-related GHG emissions would be less than the County's interim threshold; therefore, global climate change impacts are considered less than significant.

**Operation.** The proposed project would provide an alternative source of irrigation water for the Country Club, replacing groundwater currently used to the extent recycled water is available. Generation of electricity currently used by pumps at the groundwater wells produces GHG emissions. The proposed project would result in an increase in the electricity demand at the existing pump station at Waller Park and increase GHG emissions associated with electricity generation. However, this demand (and associated GHG emissions) would be offset by the reduced demand by pumps at the groundwater wells. Overall, any project-related in electricity consumption and associated GHG emissions would be negligible and much less than the County's interim threshold.

- b.** The proposed project is consistent with adopted air quality plans (2019 Ozone Plan) because it would have no effect on population projections upon which the Ozone Plan is based. The proposed project is also consistent with the ECAP.

**Table 3. Construction GHG Emissions (metric tons)**

Source	CO <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>2</sub> O	CH <sub>4</sub>	CO <sub>2</sub> E
Heavy equipment	68.6	<0.1	<0.1	69.1
Motor vehicles	15.2	<0.1	<0.1	15.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>83.8</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>84.7</b>
<b>Construction GHG emissions amortized over 30 years</b>				<b>2.8</b>
Santa Barbara County Interim Threshold				300

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The proposed project would not result in GHG emissions exceeding the Santa Barbara County Screening Criteria and Threshold (300 MTCO<sub>2</sub>E/year). The County’s Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project’s contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the significance criteria for GHG emissions. Therefore, the project’s contribution to regionally significant GHG emissions is would not be cumulatively considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

No significant impacts were identified. Therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

**5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<b>Flora</b>					
a. A loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community?			X		
b. A reduction in the numbers or restriction in the range of any unique, rare or threatened species of plants?				X	
c. A reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation (including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements)?			X		
d. An impact on non-native vegetation whether naturalized or horticultural if of habitat value?		X			
e. The loss of healthy native specimen trees?				X	
f. Introduction of herbicides, pesticides, animal life, human habitation, non-native plants or other factors that would change or hamper the existing habitat?				X	
<b>Fauna</b>					
g. A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals?		X			

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
h. A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals onsite (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates)?			X		
i. A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.)?			X		
j. Introduction of barriers to movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?				X	
k. Introduction of any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife?				X	

**Setting:**

The LCSD’s facilities are within areas known to contain breeding, dispersal and upland habitat for the Federally endangered and State threatened California tiger salamander (CTS, *Ambystoma californiense*), and the Federally threatened California re-legged frog (CRLF, *Rana draytonii*). To mitigate and compensate for potential impacts to these species associated with operation of existing facilities and implementation of the Facilities Master Plan, the LCSD has prepared a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and obtained an Incidental Take Permit pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The HCP provides mitigation and compensation for potential impacts to CTS and CRLF and HCP identifies the activities and components to be covered under the Federal Incidental Take Permit. The proposed project was not included in the Facilities Master Plan and is not specifically covered under the Incidental Take Permit.

**Vegetation.** Santa Barbara County has a wide diversity of habitat types, including chaparral, oak woodlands, wetlands and beach dunes. The project site (pipeline alignments and valve box sites) is entirely disturbed, including the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail (segments 1 and 4) and the Santa Maria Country Club (golf course facilities, segments 2, 3 and 5). These areas are maintained and do not support native vegetation. Some native vegetation occurs along the margin of the Country Club ponds, including California bulrush. California bulrush marshes (*Schoenoplectus californicus* Herbaceous Alliance) are not considered vulnerable to extirpation on a Statewide basis by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

**Wildlife.** Wildlife species observed at the Santa Maria Country Club during a field survey conducted on March 6, 2023 included yellow-rumped warbler, house finch, American crow, American robin, house sparrow, European starling, song sparrow, northern mockingbird, western bluebird, brewer’s blackbird, western scrub jay, mallard, California towhee, red-winged blackbird, double-crested cormorant, Hutton’s vireo, Botta’s pocket gopher and gray squirrel. In addition, introduced fish were observed in the Country Club ponds, including large-mouth bass, small-mouth bass, bluegill and western mosquitofish in the eastern pond, and large-mouth bass in the western pond.

**Special-Status Species.** Special-status species are either listed as endangered or threatened under the Federal or California Endangered Species Acts, or rare under the California Native Plant Protection Act, or considered to be rare or of scientific interest (but not formally listed) by resource agencies, professional organizations (such as the California Native Plant Society [CNPS]), and the scientific community.

Santa Barbara County considers oak woodlands, oak forests and individual specimen oak trees as important biological resources. In 2003, The County Deciduous Oak Tree Protection and Regeneration Ordinance (no. 4490) was adopted to protect valley and blue oaks and is codified in Chapter 35, Article IX of the County Code. The County's Grading Code (County Code Chapter 14) addresses native oak tree removal, including coast live oak. These regulations limit the number of oak tree removals and require replacement for removal over established thresholds. Valley oak trees are considered protected if they are at least 4 inches in diameter at breast height. Coast live oak trees are considered protected if they are at least 8 inches in diameter at breast height. However, projects undertaken by Santa Barbara County are not subject to the Grading Code (see Section 14.6) or Article IX of the County Code (see Section 35.903).

**Special-Status Species.** Based on review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base, the Orcutt Community Plan Technical Appendices and environmental documents prepared for other projects in the area, the following special-status species have been reported within two miles of the Santa Maria Country Club:

- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*); Federal Candidate: an autumnal congregation site is located just west of the recycled water tank and pump station at Waller Park. The Xerces 2021 Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count reported nine Monarchs at this site.
- Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*); Federal Threatened: reported from near Blosser Road, 1.4 miles south-southwest of the recycled water tank at Waller Park.
- CTS; Federal Endangered, State Threatened: the nearest reported breeding pool (SAMA-10) is located approximately 1.3 miles south of the recycled water storage tank and pump station at Waller Park.
- CRLF; Federal Threatened, California Species of Special Concern: reported from the Waller-Skyway Channel west of Skyway Drive, 0.5 miles west of the Country Club.
- Western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondi*); California Species of Special Concern: reported from near Blosser Road, 1.4 miles south-southwest of the recycled water tank at Waller Park.
- Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*); California Species of Special Concern: reported from several locations north of the Santa Maria Country Club but have been likely displaced by development.
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*); California Species of Special Concern: reported from near Betteravia Road (1.4 miles to the northwest of the project site).
- American badger (*Taxidea taxus*); California Species of Special Concern: reported from U.S. Highway 101 about two miles southwest of the Country Club.

Presence/absence surveys were conducted for CRLF at both the eastern and western ponds at the Country Club, and consisted of one daytime survey conducted on April 3, 2023 (focusing on detection of egg masses) and two nighttime surveys conducted on April 3 and 10, 2023 (focusing on detecting adults through eyeshine). These surveys were conducted by Padre Associates biologist Ken Gilliland, a qualified biologist highly experienced with detection of this species in the region. CRLF was not observed during these surveys. Large-mouth bass and/or small-mouth bass were found in the Country Club ponds and are known predators of CRLF, and the results of field experiments indicate these invasive fish species substantially increase mortality of larval and juvenile CRLF. Therefore, CRLF is considered absent from the Country Club ponds.

### **County Significance Thresholds:**

Santa Barbara County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (revised 2021) include guidelines for the assessment of biological resource impacts. Disturbance to habitats or species may be significant, based on substantial evidence in the record (not public controversy or speculation), if they substantially impact significant resources in the following ways:

- Substantially reduce or eliminate species diversity or abundance;
- Substantially reduce or eliminate quantity or quality of nesting areas;
- Substantially limit reproductive capacity through losses of individuals or habitat;
- Substantially fragment, eliminate, or otherwise disrupt foraging areas and/or access to food sources;
- Substantially limit or fragment range and movement (geographic distribution or animals and/or seed dispersal routes); and/or
- Substantially interfere with natural processes, such as fire or flooding, upon which the habitat depends.

Santa Barbara County considers loss of 10 percent of native specimen trees on a project site to be a potentially significant impact.

### **Impact Discussion:**

The following analysis is based on site-specific biological surveys conducted by Padre Associates biologists.

- a. Installation of the outfall at the western pond may result in the temporary loss of less than 0.01 acres of California bulrush marsh. This plant community is not considered unique, rare or threatened, and would re-colonize the pond margin following installation of pipeline outfall.
- b. Based on review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base and the Orcutt Community Plan Technical Appendices, no unique, rare, endangered or threatened plant species (as defined by the California Native Plant Society, CDFW, USFWS) have been reported within two miles of the Santa Maria Country Club. Therefore, a reduction in numbers or a restriction of the range of these species would not occur.
- c. Impacts to native vegetation are limited to that discussed above under checklist item a.

- d. Temporary loss of golf course turfgrass would occur as result of excavation of pits for directional drilling and valve boxes, and trenching for pipeline installation near the ponds. However, this vegetation does not provide habitat value due to frequent mowing and golf play, and would be replaced following pipeline installation. However, removal of landscaping trees during the nesting season may adversely affect birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is considered a potentially significant impact.
- e. No native trees would be removed as part of the proposed project.
- f. The project would not involve any additional application of herbicides or pesticides, introduction of animal species or non-native plants or provide housing. Therefore, indirect impacts to habitats would not occur.
- g. Potential impacts to special-status species would be limited to Monarch butterfly. Pipeline installation near the Waller Park tank site would occur adjacent to a known Monarch aggregation site. These activities may cause the aggregation site to be abandoned and could lead to increased mortality of affected Monarch butterflies. This impact is considered potentially significant, if not mitigated.
- h. Project components would be located in previously disturbed areas and construction would not involve permanent removal of any native vegetation. Excluding impacts to special-status species addressed under g., the project would not result in a significant reduction in local wildlife populations or species diversity.
- i. As discussed above, the proposed project would not result in the permanent loss or deterioration of fish and wildlife habitat.
- j. Project components are limited to buried pipelines and valve boxes. No barriers to wildlife movement are proposed. The proposed facilities would not result in permanent removal of vegetation or encroachment into areas that may focus wildlife movement such as riparian corridors. Therefore, impacts to wildlife movement would not occur.
- k. No additional lighting, fencing or activities resulting in additional noise, human presence or domestic animals are proposed. Therefore, the proposed project would not hinder wildlife activities.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

Significant cumulative impacts to biological resources could occur if the combined effects of the proposed project along with approved and pending projects within the vicinity of the proposed project (City of Santa Maria) would result in substantial fragmentation of open space, the loss of sensitive habitats and species, and/or urban expansion into natural areas. Cumulative development in the project site vicinity would increase the potential for potentially significant impacts to biological resources in the area through direct and indirect impacts to special-status flora and fauna and cumulative loss of habitat.



The County’s Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project’s contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has the potential to impact sensitive biological resources; however, implementation of required Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1 and MM BIO-2 would minimize the potential for the project to impact biological resources. Therefore, with implementation of required mitigation measures as described below, the project’s contribution to any cumulative loss of habitat or other cumulative impact to biological resources in the project vicinity is not considerable, and is insignificant.

**Mitigation:**

The following mitigation measures would reduce the project’s biological resources impacts to a less than significant level:

**MM BIO-1 Monarch Butterfly Avoidance.** Project-related construction activities shall not occur with 200 feet of the eucalyptus windrow located south of the golf course and immediately east of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail between November 1 and March 1, unless a survey conducted by a qualified biologist within 72 hours of the start of construction finds no aggregations within 200 feet of any work areas.

**MM BIO-2 Breeding Bird Survey and Avoidance.** If tree removal is proposed during the bird nesting period (February 15 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall survey all trees to be removed within 7 days of planned removal to identify any active bird nests. Trees supporting active native bird nests shall be avoided through project modifications, or tree removal postponed until subsequent surveys demonstrate the nest has been abandoned. Trees supporting active raptor nests shall not be removed until the nest has been demonstrated to be abandoned for at least one year.

**Plan Requirements/Timing:** These conditions shall be included in the project specifications.

**MONITORING:** The LCSD-appointed inspector shall ensure these measures are fully implemented.

**Residual Impacts:**

With the incorporation of measures **MM BIO-1** and **MM BIO-2**, residual impacts would be less than significant.

**5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines?				X	
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines?		X			

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X			
<p>d. 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, scared place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that is:</p> <p>1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources, or in the local register of historic resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or</p> <p>2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to subdivision c. of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision c. of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>				X	

**Setting:**

**Historical Setting.** The original clubhouse at the Santa Maria Country Club was constructed in the 1920's. The location was where the southern part of the dining room and ladies' locker room is presently located. The clubhouse burned in a fire in the early 1950's. A new clubhouse consisting of the present ladies' and men's locker rooms and the southern portion of the dining room was constructed. The bar was located at the southeast corner of what is now the dining room. An addition to the clubhouse was built in the early 1960's to the north consisting of what is the approximate north half of the dining room and the entry way area. In the late 1970's or early 1980's, the present bar area was added to the clubhouse. Since the clubhouse is more than 50 years old it has the potential to be considered a historic resource. However, additions to the clubhouse may have removed or obscured historic features.

**Prehistoric Setting.** The project site is located within the ethnographic territory of the Chumash that inhabited the Coast Ranges between San Simeon and Malibu. The Chumash have been divided into several geographic groups, each associated with a distinct language dialect (Hoover, 1986). The Chumash living in northern Santa Barbara County formed the *Purisimeño* dialect group of the Chumash language family (Golla, 2007). This group was named for their association with the Spanish mission of *La Purísima Concepción*, founded in 1787.

The *Purisimeño* occupied the region extending from the western Santa Barbara Channel northward to Lompoc and Vandenberg Air Force Base, with a north boundary near the Santa Maria River. Their territory contained 22 villages, the largest of which were home to about 200 individuals. Archaeological sites directly linked to the *Purisimeño* Chumash include *Nocto* near Point Arguello, and *Lompoc* established west of modern-day Lompoc.

The coastal Chumash practiced a regular seasonal round of population dispersal and aggregation in response to the location and seasonal availability of different food resources. In this way, large coastal villages would have been fully populated only in the late summer when pelagic fishing was at its peak. Through winter, the Chumash depended largely on stored food resources. During the spring and summer, the population dispersed through inland valleys in order to harvest wild plant resources.

The Chumash lived in large, hemispherical houses constructed by planting willows or other poles in a circle and bending and tying them together at the top. These structures were then covered with tule mats or thatch. Structures such as this housed 40 to 50 individuals, or three-to-four-member family groups. Dance houses and sweathouses are also reported for the Chumash. Archaeological evidence supports observations that twin or split villages existed on opposite sides of streams or other natural features, possibly reflecting the moiety system of native California.

Chumash political organization was typified by small-scale chiefdoms. Chiefs were associated with villages or segments of larger villages. Higher status chiefs controlled entire regions containing several villages. The chiefly offices were normally inherited through the male line with a primogeniture rule, i.e., the custom of the firstborn inheriting the office, in effect (Hoover, 1986). Chiefs had several bureaucratic assistants to help in political affairs and serve as messengers, orators, and ceremonial assistants. A number of status positions were associated with specialized knowledge and rituals such as weather prophet, ritual poisoner, herbalist, etc.

The protohistoric culture of the Chumash, defined as the time when intermittent trade and contact was experienced between Native Americans and Spanish trading vessels en route to Asia, was disrupted by the arrival of the Spanish expedition led by Gaspar de Portolá in 1769. Historical accounts from the Portolá expedition and subsequent Juan Bautista de Anza expedition in 1774, as well as archaeological evidence, indicate that both expeditions passed through Santa Barbara County, south of the proposed conservation easement, and stopped at principal *Purisimeño* Chumash settlements along the way.

The establishment of the Spanish missions of *La Purísima Concepción* and *Santa Inés* further disrupted Chumash culture in Santa Barbara County. Archaeological evidence verifies not only that the native population was rapidly decimated by missionization, but also that the culture itself disintegrated rapidly. Spanish settlement barred many Native Americans from traditionally important resources including clamshell beads, abalone shells, Catalina steatite, shellfish, and asphaltum.

**Record Search.** On March 7, 2023, Padre Associates Senior Archeologist (Ms. Rachael Letter) received the results of an archaeological records search from the Central Coast Information Center located at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The records search included a review of all recorded historic-era and prehistoric archaeological sites within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site as well as a review of known cultural resource surveys and technical reports. The State Historic Property Data Files, National Register of Historic Places, National Register of Determined Eligible Properties, California Points of Historic Interest, and the California Office of Historic Preservation Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility also were analyzed. No cultural resources were identified within the project site or 0.25 mile radius.

Padre Associates Senior Archeologist emailed a request for a Sacred Lands File search to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on February 27, 2023, to request information about sacred or traditional cultural properties that may be located within the project site. Padre Associates Senior Archeologist received a response from the NAHC on March 7, 2023, which indicated that a search of the Sacred Lands File was completed with negative results.

**Tribal Consultation.** On March 1, 2023, LCSD formally notified three tribal contacts of the decision to undertake the proposed project to allow the tribe to request consultation under Section 21080.3.1(d) of the Public Resources Code:

- Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians
- Mia Lopez, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Kenneth Kahn, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

LCSD received one response to these notifications on March 19, 2023, comprised of a letter from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians noting that the tribe requests no further consultation.

**Project Site Conditions.** The entire project site has been previously disturbed by golf course development and railroad construction and abandonment, and more recent construction and maintenance of the Country Club, and the storage tanks and pump station at Waller Park.

**Significance Thresholds:**

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains guidelines for identification, significance determination, and mitigation of impacts to important cultural resources. Chapter 8 of the Manual (Archaeological Resources Guidelines: Archaeological, Historic and Ethnic Element) specifies that if a resource cannot be avoided, it must be evaluated for importance under CEQA. CEQA Section 15064.5 contains the criteria for evaluating the importance of archaeological and historical resources. For archaeological resources, the criterion usually applied is: (D), "Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history".

If an archaeological site does not meet any of the four CEQA criteria in Section 15064.5, additional criteria for a “unique archaeological resource” are contained in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resource Code, which states that a “unique archaeological resource is an archaeological artifact, object, or site that: 1) contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information; 2) has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or 3) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person. A project that may cause a substantial adverse effect on an archaeological resource may have a significant effect on the environment.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. Background research indicates that historical resources do not occur in proximity to the project site, and any such resources would not be adversely affected by project implementation. In addition, the Country Club clubhouse would not be adversely affected, should it qualify as a historical resource.
- b. Based on the results of the cultural resources record search, archeological resources do not occur within areas to be disturbed by the proposed project. However, there is a potential to discover archeological resources during project-related excavation and earthwork.
- c. Based on the results of the cultural resources record search, human remains (burials) are not anticipated to occur in the project area. However, there is a potential to discover prehistoric human remains during project-related excavation and earthwork.
- d. No tribal resources have been identified from the immediate project area. Therefore, impacts to such resources are not anticipated.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

Project-specific cultural resource impacts have been identified as potentially significant since unreported cultural resources may be discovered during project-related excavation activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measure MM CR-1, the project’s incremental contribution to cumulative cultural resource impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

**Mitigation:**

The following mitigation measure would reduce the project’s potential cultural resource impacts to a less than significant level:

- MM CR-1      Stop Work at Encounter.** In the event archaeological resources are encountered during ground disturbance, work shall be stopped immediately or redirected until a qualified archaeologist and Native American representative are retained by the applicant to evaluate the significance of the find pursuant to Phase II investigations of the County Archaeological Guidelines. If remains are found to be significant, they shall be subject to a Phase III mitigation program consistent with County Archaeological Guidelines and funded by the applicant.

If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.

**Plan Requirements/Timing:** These conditions shall be printed on all grading plans.  
**MONITORING:** LCSD shall check plans prior to the initiation of construction and shall spot check in the field. The LCSD-appointed inspector shall ensure archeological testing is conducted according to the approved plan.

**Residual Impacts:**

With the incorporation of measure **MM CR-1**, residual impacts would be less than significant.

**5.6 ENERGY**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Substantial increase in demand, especially during peak periods, upon existing sources of energy?			X		
b. Requirement for the development or extension of new sources of energy?				X	

**Setting:**

Power is currently supplied to the recycled water pump station at Waller Park and to the Country Club’s well pumps by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

**Significance Thresholds:**

The County has not identified significance thresholds for electrical and/or natural gas service impacts. Appendix F of the State CEQA Guidelines for the preparation of EIRs indicates environmental impacts may include the effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and requirements for additional capacity, effects on peak and base demand for electricity, the degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards, effects on energy resources, transportation energy use requirements and use of efficient transportation alternatives.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The project-related increase in electrical demand by the recycled water pump station would be offset by reduced electrical demand of the existing groundwater well pumps. Any net increase in energy consumption would be negligible.
- b. No new electrical service lines would be required, as no new pumps are proposed.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The energy impacts of the proposed project would be less than significant. Other projects in the City would consume electricity and natural gas. The incremental contribution of the proposed project to cumulative local and regional energy demand would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

**5.7 FIRE PROTECTION**

<b>Will the proposal result in:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area?				X	
<b>b.</b> Project-caused high fire hazard?			X		
<b>c.</b> Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for firefighting?				X	
<b>d.</b> Introduction of development that will hamper fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas?				X	
<b>e.</b> Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time?				X	

**Setting:**

Fire protection service to the project site is provided by City of Santa Maria Fire Station 2 (416 W. Carmen Lane). The project site is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone as mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Most of the site is irrigated as part of the Country Club golf course or Waller Park.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The project would not involve new development that would require fire protection.
- b. Project-related construction activities would occur in areas with an adequate response time from fire protection services, and relatively high soil/vegetation moisture associated with landscape irrigation. The potential for construction equipment to start fires is considered low, and a less than significant impact to fire protection.
- c. The project would not involve new development that would require fire protection, and would not require new fire water supplies, fire hydrants or other firefighting facilities.
- d. The proposed facilities would not be located in high fire hazard areas where controlled burns and backfires would be needed.
- e. Project components would be located in areas with an adequate response time from fire protection services.



**Cumulative Impacts:**

The proposed project would not create significant fire hazards. The incremental contribution of the proposed project to cumulative fire hazard impacts (including other projects in Santa Maria) would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact**

No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be less than significant.

**5.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES**

<b>Will the proposal result in:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards?				X	
<b>b.</b> Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading?			X		
<b>c.</b> Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise?				X	
<b>d.</b> The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic, paleontologic or physical features?				X	
<b>e.</b> Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?			X		
<b>f.</b> Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed of the ocean, or any bay, inlet or lake?				X	
<b>g.</b> The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent?				X	
<b>h.</b> Extraction of mineral or ore?				X	
<b>i.</b> Excessive grading on slopes of over 20%?				X	
<b>j.</b> Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil?			X		
<b>k.</b> Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas?			X		
<b>l.</b> Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden?				X	

**Setting:**

The project site is located in the Santa Maria basin, a transitional area between the Coast Ranges geomorphic province to the north and the Transverse Ranges to the south. The onshore Santa Maria basin is a northwest oriented structural basin that could have been formed by a large tectonic depression originating during the Miocene as a result of extension related to the San Andreas Fault System. The surface geology of the project site and surrounding area consists of wind deposited sand. The largest earthquake recorded in the vicinity of the project site occurred in 1927, had a magnitude of 7.5 with an epicenter located on the Hosgri Fault approximately 15 miles southwest of the project site.

**Significance Thresholds:**

Pursuant to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, impacts related to geological resources may have the potential to be significant if the proposed project involves any of the following characteristics:

- The project site or any part of the project is located on land having substantial geologic constraints, as determined by the Planning and Development Department or the Public Works Department. Areas constrained by geology include parcels located near active or potentially active faults and property underlain by rock types associated with compressible/collapsible soils or susceptible to landslides or severe erosion. "Special Problems" areas designated by the Board of Supervisors have been established based on geologic constraints, flood hazards and other physical limitations to development.
- The project results in potentially hazardous geologic conditions such as the construction of cut slopes exceeding a grade of 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical.
- The project proposes construction of a cut slope over 15 feet in height as measured from the lowest finished grade.
- The project is located on slopes exceeding 20% grade.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. Based on the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, the project site is located in areas assigned low problem ratings for liquefaction, slope stability, tsunami, expansive soils, soil creep, and compressible-collapsible soils and a moderate problem rating (lowest rating) for seismic-tectonic. Project components are limited to small, buried pipelines that would not result in geologic hazards to adjacent land uses.
- b. Earthwork (excavation, trenching, backfill) would be required to install pipelines and valve boxes. Earthwork would remove vegetative cover and disturb the ground surface, thereby increasing the potential for erosion and sedimentation impacts. However, substantial erosion and sediment transport would be adequately addressed by compliance with the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities as required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

- c. In general, the ground surface would be restored following earthwork, with no substantial permanent change in topography. The project site is not subject to bluff retreat or sea level rise.
- d. Based on the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, no Areas of Special Geologic Interest occur in the project area. A search of the University of California Museum of Paleontology database indicates one mammal fossil (*Tapirus californicus*, Pleistocene era) has been found in the Santa Maria area. Project-related earthwork would be shallow (less than six feet deep) and limited to stabilized sand deposits. Overall, no impacts to unique geologic, paleontological, or physical features would occur.
- e. Soils affected by construction activities would be replaced and compacted where feasible. Vegetation (turfgrass) removed by pipeline installation would be replanted and reduce soil erosion by wind or storm run-off. Erosion would be minimized through implementation of a storm water pollution prevention plan as required by the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities.
- f. The project would not directly affect beach sands, dunes, Orcutt-Solomon Creek or other nearby drainages, or cause increased erosion or siltation that may adversely affect these geologic features.
- g. The project does not involve installation of septic sewer systems.
- h. The project does not involve extraction of any minerals or ore.
- i. The project does not involve grading any slopes, including those with a gradient exceeding 20 percent.
- j. The project does not involve sand or gravel removal. Topsoil may be removed as part of excavation of directional drilling pits but would be replaced.
- k. Construction equipment used to install pipelines would generate soil-borne vibration. The nearest occupied structures are light industrial buildings on Industrial Parkway, located as close as 60 feet from the segment 1 pipeline alignment. The peak day vibration level (peak particle velocity) associated with pipeline installation along segment 1 (trenching) was estimated using California Department of Transportation's Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual at the nearest structure (light industrial building). The estimated vibration level is 0.0285 inches/second at the nearest structure, which would be barely perceptible and would not result in any structural damage. Therefore, project-related vibration would be less than significant.
- l. Pipeline installation may generate excess earth material. However, this material would be free of contaminants and made available for fill at local construction sites.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The proposed project would not result in significant geologic impacts. Implementation of other projects located in the City may result in significant geologic impacts but would affect different sites and land uses. The project's incremental contribution to cumulative geologic hazards would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

No significant impacts are identified. No mitigation measures are necessary.

**5.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET**

<b>Will the proposal result in:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> In the known history of this property, have there been any past uses, storage or discharge of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel or oil stored in underground tanks, pesticides, solvents or other chemicals)?			X		
<b>b.</b> The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials?			X		
<b>c.</b> A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?				X	
<b>d.</b> Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?				X	
<b>e.</b> The creation of a potential public health hazard?			X		
<b>f.</b> Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)?				X	
<b>g.</b> Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities?				X	
<b>h.</b> The contamination of a public water supply?				X	

**Setting:**

The proposed pipelines are located in an area that has supported a golf course for nearly 100 years, and long-term fertilizer and herbicide use may be expected. Based on review of the GeoTracker (State Water Resources Control Board) and ENVIROSTOR (California Department of Toxic Substances Control) data bases, hazardous materials sites are located at the Santa Maria Airport. In addition, two hazardous materials sites are located on Industrial Parkway near the pipeline segment 1 alignment:

- Former SEMCO Drill & Tool Company (located approximately 300 feet west of pipeline segment 1 alignment): leaked solvents and cutting oil between 1949 and 2001. Subsurface soil sampling conducted in March 2022 found trichloroethylene and dichloroethylene as close as 100 feet from the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail, but these contaminants were at least 25 feet deep.
- MAFI Trench (located approximately 750 feet west of pipeline segment 1 alignment): leaked chlorinated hydrocarbons from about 1965 to 1985. Groundwater extraction and treatment was conducted from 1994 to 2004. Currently assessment activities are ongoing, with soil and groundwater contamination found near the west side of the site (over 800 feet from the pipeline segment 1 alignment).

**Significance Threshold:**

The County's safety threshold addresses involuntary public exposure from projects involving significant quantities of hazardous materials. The threshold addresses the likelihood and severity of potential accidents to determine whether the safety risks of a project exceed significant levels.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. Project-related earthwork may expose soils with potential historic pesticide (primarily DDT and breakdown products) contamination. However, changes in land use (including earthwork), irrigation, mowing and soil erosion over the past >50 years since DDT was banned is expected to have virtually removed this pesticide (if originally present) from the project site. Due to the low potential for public exposure to hazardous pesticides, this impact is considered less than significant.
- b. The proposed project does not include any use, storage or distribution of hazardous materials. Equipment and vehicles associated with pipeline installation would be fueled (if needed) from a maintenance vehicle located away from drainages and residences. No storage of fuel is proposed at or near the project site.
- c. No risk of explosion is expected as a result of project-related activities because potentially explosive materials would be limited to vehicle fuels, which would be used and stored according to standard practices to avoid ignition and explosion.
- d. The proposed pipelines and valve boxes would be buried and would not interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plan.
- e. Trenching along the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail for installation of pipeline segment 1 would be less than six feet in depth and is not anticipated to expose any contaminated soils associated with past operations by the SEMCO Drill & Tool Company. Overall, the proposed project would not involve the use of any materials or cause any condition that may result in a public health hazard.
- f. The proposed project does not include any new development near hazardous materials sites.
- g. The project site does not include any oil or gas pipelines or well facilities.
- h. The proposed project does not include any activities that would affect public water supplies.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The project would not result in significant impacts with respect to hazardous materials and/or risk of upset. Implementation of other projects located in the City may result in significant hazardous materials and/or risk of upset impacts but would affect different sites and land uses. The project's incremental contribution to cumulative hazardous materials and/or risk of upset impacts would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

No significant impacts were identified. Mitigation is not necessary.

**5.10 LAND USE**

<b>Will the proposal result in:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Structures and/or land use incompatible with existing land use?				X	
<b>b.</b> Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X	
<b>c.</b> The induction of substantial growth or concentration of population?				X	
<b>d.</b> The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?				X	
<b>e.</b> Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal?				X	
<b>f.</b> Displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X	
<b>g.</b> Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X	
<b>h.</b> The loss of a substantial amount of open space?				X	
<b>i.</b> An economic or social effect that would result in a physical change? (i.e. Closure of a freeway ramp results in isolation of an area, businesses located in the vicinity close, neighborhood degenerates, and buildings deteriorate. Or, if construction of new freeway divides an existing community, the construction would be the physical change, but the economic/social effect on the community would be the basis for determining that the physical change would be significant.)				X	
<b>j.</b> Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones?				X	

**Setting:**

Land use information concerning the project site is provided in Section 2.0 (Project Location). The proposed pipelines and valve boxes would be located on private property zoned as open space.

**Significance Thresholds:**

The Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no specific thresholds for land use. Generally, a potentially significant impact can occur if a project would result in substantial growth inducing effects.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The proposed pipelines and valve boxes would be buried and located in areas that would not conflict with existing land use (golf course).
- b. The proposed project would be consistent with existing zoning and land use designations, and would not conflict with the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, the Orcutt Community Plan, the County Land Use & Development Code or the City's General Plan.
- c. The project includes extension of recycled water infrastructure to the Santa Maria Country Club. The recycled water would replace irrigation water currently provided by on-site wells. Water made available by substituting recycled water for potable water for golf course irrigation could not be made available for off-site development as the wells are owned and controlled by the Santa Maria Country Club. Therefore, population growth inducement would not occur.
- d. The project does not include any new sewer lines or access roads, only provide access to a new area for disposal of treated wastewater. The proposed project does not involve any changes to LCSD's sewer collection system, the treatment capacity of the WWRP, or any other feature that could serve new development.
- e. The project does not involve any demolition or removal of habitable structures, including affordable dwellings.
- f. The project would not displace housing.
- g. The project would not displace persons.
- h. The proposed pipelines would be located in areas zoned as open space, but currently supporting a golf course. The pipelines would be fully buried and not result in the loss of open space.
- i. The proposed project would facilitate the continuing treatment of municipal wastewater through increased options for beneficial use of recycled water. No economic or social changes would occur, including those that could result in a physical change to the environment.
- j. The proposed project would be located outside safety zones associated with the Santa Maria Public Airport.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change to any of the proposed project site's conformance with environmentally protective policies and standards. Thus, the project would not cause a cumulatively considerable effect on land use.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

No impacts were identified. No mitigation measures are necessary.

**5.11 NOISE**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Long-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds (e.g. locating noise sensitive uses next to an airport)?			X		
b. Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds?		X			
c. Project-generated substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night)?			X		

**Setting:**

Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound which is measured on a logarithmic scale and typically expressed in A-weighted decibels (dB(A)). The duration of noise and the time period at which it occurs are important values in determining impacts on noise-sensitive land uses. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (L<sub>dn</sub>) are 24-hour noise indices which account for differences in intrusiveness between day- and night-time uses.

Dominant noise sources in the vicinity of the project site include roadway traffic (primarily Skyway Drive, State Route 135 and West McCoy Lane), aircraft traffic at the Santa Maria Public Airport and landscape maintenance equipment at the Country Club.

**Significance Thresholds:**

County long-term 24-hour noise thresholds are: 1) 65 dB(A) CNEL maximum for exterior exposure, and 2) 45 dB(A) CNEL maximum for interior exposure of noise-sensitive uses. Noise-sensitive land uses include: residential dwellings; transient lodging; hospitals and other long-term care facilities; public or private educational facilities; libraries, churches; and places of public assembly.

Construction activity conducted within 1,600 feet of noise-sensitive land uses is generally considered to result in a significant short-term noise impact.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The recycled water pump station at Waller Park may operate more frequently to provide recycled water to the Country Club, such that the duration of noise may increase. However, the pump station is located approximately 1,400 feet from the nearest noise sensitive land use (residence). Due to noise attenuation associated with distance and the relatively small project-related increase in noise, this increase is not anticipated to be detectable at the nearest residence.



- b. Installation of pipeline segment 4 (under the Santa Maria Valley Railroad) would involve directional drilling or bore-and-jack operations adjacent to residences on Ballestral Avenue (see Figure 3.b). Installation of other pipeline segments would affect residents on Fairway Vista Drive, Lorencita Drive and West Waller Lane. Construction noise levels at the nearest residence was estimated as 79.0 dBA Leq using the Federal Highway Administration’s Roadway Construction Noise Model. As construction would occur within 1,600 feet of residences, short-term construction noise impacts are considered potentially significant.
- c. See a. above.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The implementation of the project (with mitigation) is not anticipated to result in any significant noise impacts. Implementation of other projects in the City may also result in short-term or long-term noise generation but would not affect the same noise receptors as the proposed project, such that impacts would not be additive. The project’s incremental contribution to cumulative noise impacts would not be considerable.

**Mitigation:**

**MM N-1 Construction Noise.** To minimize potentially significant construction-related noise impacts to adjacent residences, the following measure shall be implemented:  
 Construction activities involving heavy equipment or heavy-duty truck traffic within 1,600 feet of residences shall be limited to 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., with no work on weekends or holidays.

**Plan Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be included in the project specifications.  
**MONITORING:** The LCSD-appointed inspector shall ensure the measure is fully implemented.

**Residual Impacts:**

With the incorporation of measure **MM N-1**, residual noise impacts would be less than significant.

**5.12 PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. A need for new or altered police protection and/or health care services?				X	
b. Student generation exceeding school capacity?				X	
c. Significant amounts of solid waste or breach any national, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal and generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity)?			X		
d. A need for new or altered sewer system facilities (sewer lines, lift-stations, etc.)?				X	

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
e. The construction of new storm water drainage or water quality control facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X	

**Significance Thresholds**

**Schools.** A significant level of school impacts is generally considered to occur when a project would generate sufficient students to require an additional classroom.

**Solid Waste.** A project is considered to result in significant impacts to landfill capacity if it would generate 196 tons per year of solid waste. This volume represents 5% of the expected average annual increase in waste generation, and is therefore considered a significant portion of the remaining landfill capacity. In addition, construction and demolition waste from remodels and rebuilds is considered significant if it exceeds 350 tons. A project which generates 40 tons per year of solid waste is considered to have an adverse effect on solid waste generation, and mitigation via a Solid Waste Management Plan is recommended.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The proposed project does not include any habitable structures that would require police protection or health care services.
- b. The proposed project does not include any residential land uses and would not generate demand for school capacity.
- c. Pipeline and valve box installation may generate excess earth material. If so, this material would be offered for use as clean fill for local construction projects or provided to local farmers. The proposed project would not result in any long-term increase in solid waste generation.
- d. The proposed project does not include any residential or commercial development and would not generate demand for sewage collection or related facilities. The project is designed to provide for the distribution of recycled water and protect public health and safety through the cost-effective treatment and reclamation of the community's wastewater.
- e. The proposed project would not require the construction of any storm drains or water quality control facilities.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for public facilities. The incremental contribution of the proposed project to the cumulative demand for public facilities would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Significant impacts were not identified. No mitigation measures are necessary.

**5.13 RECREATION**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Conflict with established recreational uses of the area?				X	
b. Conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails?		X			
c. Substantial impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities (e.g., overuse of an area with constraints on numbers of people, vehicles, animals, etc. which might safely use the area)?				X	

**Setting:**

Recreational facilities in proximity to project site include:

- Waller County Park: proposed pipeline segment 1 would be located immediately west of the Park.
- Santa Maria Country Club (private): proposed pipeline segments 2, 3 and 5 would be located within the Country Club.
- Stanley Park (City): located 750 feet northeast of proposed pipeline segment 4.

**Significance Threshold:**

The Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no threshold for park and recreation impacts. However, the Board of Supervisors has established a minimum standard ratio of 4.7 acres of recreation/open space per 1,000 people to meet the needs of a community. The Santa Barbara County Community Services Department, Parks Division maintains more than 900 acres of parks and open spaces, as well as 84 miles of trails and coastal access easements.

**Impact Discussion:**

- The proposed project would be located within the Santa Maria Country Club but would be buried and not affect existing recreational uses, including golf play.
- Proposed pipeline segment 1 would be buried under the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail, and would not affect use of this trail. However, the trail would be closed for several weeks during pipeline installation. Temporary conflicts may be potentially significant.
- The proposed project would not result in any development that would increase the demand for or the use of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impacts on the quality and quantity of existing recreational opportunities would occur.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The proposed project (with mitigation) would not significantly affect recreational facilities. Implementation of other projects in the City may also affect recreational facilities or opportunities. The project’s incremental contribution to cumulative impacts to recreational facilities would not be considerable.

**Mitigation:**

**MM R-1 Minimize Conflicts with Trail Users.** To minimize potentially significant temporary conflicts with recreational use of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail, the following measure shall be implemented:

LCSD shall minimize the size of the pipeline installation work area, including construction laydown areas where feasible, and minimize the duration of time the public is excluded from the trail. Fencing shall be provided around the work area as needed to protect public safety, and signage and noticing provided to make the public aware of the affected areas and the timing and duration of trail closures.

**Plan Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be included in the project specifications.

**MONITORING:** The LCSD-appointed inspector shall ensure this measure is fully implemented.

**Residual Impacts:**

With the incorporation of measure **MM R-1**, residual impacts would be less than significant.

**5.14 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION**

<b>Will the proposal result in:</b>	<b>Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.</b>	<b>Signif. But Mitigable</b>	<b>Insignif.</b>	<b>No Impact/ Beneficial Impact</b>	<b>Reviewed Under Previous Document</b>
<b>a.</b> Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				X	
<b>b.</b> Would the project conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				X	
<b>c.</b> Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X	
<b>d.</b> Result in inadequate emergency access?				X	

**Setting:**

The roadway network serving the project site includes State Route 135, Skyway Drive and West Waller Lane (Santa Maria Country Club access road).

## **Significance Thresholds:**

**County Significance Thresholds.** Threshold “a” – Potential Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy. The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)’s 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SBCAG, 2013) and the County’s Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinances, capital improvement programs, and other planning documents contain transportation and circulation programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. Threshold question “a” considers a project in relation to those programs, plans, ordinances, and policies that specifically address multimodal transportation, complete streets, transportation demand management (TDM), and other vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT)-related topics.

The County and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(a) no longer consider automobile delay or congestion an environmental impact. Therefore, threshold question “a” does not apply to provisions that address LOS or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion.

A transportation impact occurs if a project conflicts with the overall purpose of an applicable transportation and circulation program, plan, ordinance, or policy, including impacts to existing transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian networks pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1). In such cases, applicants must identify project modifications or mitigation measures that eliminate or reduce inconsistencies with applicable programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. For example, some community plans include provisions that encourage complete streets. As a result, an applicant for a multifamily apartment complex may need to reduce excess parking spaces, fund a transit stop, and/or add bike storage facilities to comply with a community plan’s goals and policies.

Threshold “b” – Potential Impact to VMT. Threshold “b” establishes VMT as the metric to determine transportation impacts. Because VMT is a new metric, this section begins with background information on VMT and then outlines a three-step process for analyzing and, if necessary, mitigating a project’s VMT impacts. The proposed project may be considered a transportation project, although it would not involve any new or modified roadways suitable for motor vehicles. Transportation projects may change travel patterns and increase vehicle travel on the roadway network. This change is commonly known as “induced travel demand.” Induced travel demand is the overall increase in VMT that is attributable to a project, but is distinct from any background changes in VMT caused by population change, economic growth, or other factors.

Threshold “c” – Design Features and Hazards. Threshold “c” considers whether a project would increase roadway hazards. An increase could result from existing or proposed uses or geometric design features. In part, the analysis should review these and other relevant factors and identify results that conflict with the County’s Engineering Design Standards or other applicable roadway standards. For example, the analysis may consider the following criteria:

- Project requires a driveway that would not meet site distance requirements, including vehicle queueing and visibility of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Project adds a new traffic signal or results in a major revision to an existing intersection that would not meet the County’s Engineering Design Standards.

- Project adds substantial traffic to a roadway with poor design features (e.g., narrow width, roadside ditches, sharp curves, poor sight distance, inadequate pavement structure).
- Project introduces a new use and substantial traffic that would create potential safety problems on an existing road network (e.g., rural roads with use by farm equipment, livestock, horseback riding, or residential roads with heavy pedestrian or recreational use).

If a project would result in potential roadway hazards, the applicant would need to modify the project or identify mitigation measures that would eliminate or reduce the potential hazards. For example, an applicant for a retail shopping center may need to shift the location of a new driveway or add sidewalks or pedestrian crossings to reduce potential conflicts between customers and pedestrians.

Threshold “d” – Emergency Access. Threshold “d” considers any changes to emergency access resulting from a project. To identify potential impacts, the analysis must review any proposed roadway design changes and determine if they would potentially impede emergency access vehicles.

A project that would result in inadequate emergency vehicle access would have a significant transportation impact and, as a result, would require project modifications or mitigation measures. For example, a project that modifies a street and, as a result, impairs fire truck access, would require modifications or redesign to comply with County and fire department road development standards.

**City of Santa Maria Thresholds.** Policy C.1.a of the City’s General Plan Circulation Element requires a minimum LOS of D on arterials, collectors and signalized intersections.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The project does not include any new land uses, would not create demand for transportation facilities and would not conflict with local or regional transportation planning.
- b. The project would not generate any new long-term VMT or vehicle trips. Approximately 24 construction-related vehicle trips may occur on a peak day, which is less than the 110 daily trip screening threshold recommended by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (2017). Therefore, the project is consistent with Section 15064.3 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
- c. The project would not involve any changes to the design or operation of any roadways or include any incompatible uses; therefore, project-related increases in traffic hazards are not anticipated.
- d. The project would not require emergency services or create conditions that would impede emergency access for adjacent land uses.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The County’s Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project’s contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for transportation impacts. Therefore, the incremental contribution of the proposed project to cumulative transportation impacts would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Significant impacts were not identified. No mitigation measures are necessary.

**5.15 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING**

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?				X	
b. Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?				X	
c. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?				X	
d. Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc.) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution?				X	
e. Alterations to the course or flow of flood water or need for private or public flood control projects?				X	
f. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding (placement of project in 100-year flood plain), accelerated runoff or tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion?				X	
g. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater?				X	
h. Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference?				X	
i. Overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? Or, a significant increase in the existing overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin?				X	
j. The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion?				X	
k. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?				X	

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
I. Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water?			X		

**Setting:**

**Surface Waters.** The Waller-Skyway Channel is located approximately 0.4 miles west of the Country Club site and drains to Betteravia Creek.

**Regional Groundwater.** The project site lies within the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin, which comprises 288 square miles in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. In 2010, groundwater supplied 98,650 acre-feet of the region’s water demand of 109,100 acre-feet. Imported water from the State Water Project supplied the balance. Usable groundwater in storage is estimated as 1,100,000 acre-feet.

Groundwater levels declined from historically high to historically low levels from the 1920’s to the late 1960’s. Since then, groundwater levels have fluctuated over alternating 5 to 15-year periods. From 2002 through 2008, groundwater levels in both shallow and deep zones have gradually declined. Water quality concerns in the Basin are elevated total dissolved solids and nitrate concentrations. Assessment of hydrogeologic conditions in 2010 showed groundwater levels and general mineral quality in the shallow and deep aquifer zones to be within historic levels. The recent declining trend in shallow groundwater levels was slowed or reversed during years 2005-2006, 2010-2011, late 2017, and 2019. During these years, releases from Twitchell Reservoir, as well as discharge in the Sisquoc River, were near or above average following above-average rainfall periods. Shallow and deep groundwater levels across the great majority of the Basin remained slightly above or at historical low levels in 2021.

The Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin is managed and not believed to be in a state of overdraft.

The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires the formation of groundwater sustainability agencies and development of a sustainable groundwater management plan in high- and medium-priority groundwater basins and sub-basins. The Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin is a very low priority basin and formation of a groundwater sustainability agency or development of a sustainable groundwater management plan is not required to manage groundwater in this basin.

**Floodplain.** The Country Club east pond and a portion of the pipeline segment 2 alignment is located within a special flood hazard area (inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood event) as shown on Flood Insurance Rate Map no. 06083C0187F, effective September 30, 2005.



**Water Quality Regulation.** The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has developed a Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Region (Basin Plan) (updated 2019) to protect the water quality of surface and groundwaters of the region. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses, sets narrative and numerical objectives to protect beneficial uses and describes implementation programs. Beneficial uses are processes, habitats, organisms or features that require water and are considered worthy of protection. Beneficial uses have not been identified for Betteravia Creek, nor has it been designated as impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.

**Significance Thresholds:**

A project is determined to have a significant effect on water resources if it would exceed established threshold values which have been set for each overdrafted groundwater basin. These values were determined based on an estimation of a basin's remaining life of available water storage. If the project's net new consumptive water use [total consumptive demand adjusted for recharge less discontinued historic use] exceeds the threshold adopted for the basin, the project's impacts on water resources are considered significant.

A project is also deemed to have a significant effect on water resources if a net increase in pumpage from a well would substantially affect production or quality from a nearby well.

A significant water quality impact is presumed to occur if the project:

- Is located within an urbanized area of the county and the project construction or redevelopment individually or as a part of a larger common plan of development or sale would disturb one (1) or more acres of land;
- Increases the amount of impervious surfaces on a site by 25% or more;
- Results in channelization or relocation of a natural drainage channel;
- Results in removal or reduction of riparian vegetation or other vegetation (excluding non-native vegetation removed for restoration projects) from the buffer zone of any streams, creeks or wetlands;
- Is an industrial facility that falls under one or more of categories of industrial activity regulated under the NPDES Phase 1 industrial storm water regulations (facilities with effluent limitation; manufacturing; mineral, metal, oil and gas, hazardous waste, treatment or disposal facilities; landfills; recycling facilities; steam electric plants; transportation facilities; treatment works; and light industrial activity);
- Discharges pollutants that exceed the water quality standards set forth in the applicable NPDES permit, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Basin Plan or otherwise impairs the beneficial uses of a receiving water body;
- Results in a discharge of pollutants into an "impaired" water body that has been designated as such by the State Water Resources Control Board or the RWQCB under Section 303 (d) of the Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (i.e., the Clean Water Act); or
- Results in a discharge of pollutants of concern to a receiving water body, as identified by the RWQCB.

**Impact Discussion:**

- a. The proposed project does not involve any discharges or other features that could alter currents in any waterbody.
- b. The proposed project does not involve any changes to irrigation practices at the Country Club or any new impermeable surfaces, and would not affect percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate or amount of surface water run-off.
- c. The proposed project would discharge recycled water to the Country Club ponds, which would directly replace groundwater which is currently discharged to the ponds. The proposed project does not involve any additional discharges to the ponds or any other waterbody.
- d. Discharges to surface water would be limited to the ponds as discussed above. No additional stormwater run-off would occur from the project site.
- e. The proposed project would not generate additional stormwater run-off or require any flood control improvements.
- f. Implementation of the proposed project would not increase any existing exposure of persons or property to flood hazards.
- g. The proposed project does not include withdrawal of groundwater and could not affect the rate or direction of groundwater flow.
- h. The proposed project involves changing (in part) the source of irrigation water at the Country Club from groundwater to recycled water. Therefore, the proposed project would have a beneficial impact on groundwater quantity.
- i. See g. and h. above.
- j. As the proposed project does not involve the withdrawal of groundwater, it would contribute to seawater intrusion into the aquifer.
- k. The proposed project would not result in a demand for public water supplies.
- l. Pipeline and valve box installation would be conducted in compliance with best management practices as required by the Statewide General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities. Therefore, any impacts related to stormwater run-off are considered less than significant.

**Cumulative Impacts:**

The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for water resources. Construction of other projects located in the City may result in discharge of sediment-laden storm water to surface waters; however, such discharges would be minimized by best management practices as required by the Statewide General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities. The project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts to water resources would not be considerable.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:**

Significant impacts were not identified. No mitigation measures are necessary.

## 6.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

### 6.1 County Departments Consulted

Laguna County Sanitation District, Public Works, Planning & Development.

### 6.2 Comprehensive Plan

<u>  X  </u> Seismic Safety/Safety Element	<u>  X  </u> Conservation Element
<u>  X  </u> Open Space Element	<u>  X  </u> Noise Element
<u>      </u> Coastal Plan and Maps	<u>  X  </u> Circulation Element
<u>      </u> ERME	<u>  X  </u> Agricultural Element

### 6.3 Other Sources

<u>  X  </u> Field work	<u>      </u> Ag Preserve maps
<u>  X  </u> Calculations	<u>      </u> Flood Control maps
<u>  X  </u> Project plans	<u>      </u> Other technical references (reports, survey, etc.)
<u>      </u> Traffic studies	<u>  X  </u> Planning files, maps, reports
<u>      </u> Records	<u>  X  </u> Zoning maps
<u>      </u> Grading plans	<u>  X  </u> Soils maps/reports
<u>      </u> Elevation, architectural renderings	<u>      </u> Plant maps
<u>  X  </u> Published geological map/reports	<u>  X  </u> Archaeological maps and reports
<u>  X  </u> Topographical maps	<u>  X  </u> FEMA floodplain maps
	<u>  X  </u> Energy and Climate Action Plan

## **7.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC (*short- and long-term*) AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY**

### **7.1 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts**

None identified.

### **7.2 Significant but Mitigable Impacts**

Potentially significant but mitigable impacts identified are limited to biological resources, cultural resources, noise and recreation.

**Biological Resources.** A known Monarch butterfly aggregation site may be adversely affected by construction activities associated with installation of pipeline segment 1. Breeding birds may be adversely affected by landscaping tree removal and other project-related construction activities. Implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** and **MM BIO-2** would avoid significant impacts to these species.

**Cultural Resources.** Project-related excavation may result in discovery of unreported archeological resources and/or human remains. Implementation of mitigation measure **MM CR-1** would reduce significant impacts to these resources to a less than significant level.

**Noise.** Construction of proposed project components near residences may result in significant short-term noise impacts. Implementation of mitigation measure **MM N-1** would avoid significant construction-related noise impacts.

**Recreation.** Installation of pipeline segment 1 would require temporary closure of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail and may result in safety conflicts with trail users. Implementation of mitigation measure **MM R-1** would minimize conflicts and loss of recreational use of the trail.

### **7.3 Cumulative Impacts**

With the incorporation of mitigation measures provided, the proposed project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would not be considerable.

### 8.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif. And Unavoid.	Signif. But Mitigable	Insignif.	No Impact/ Beneficial Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
<p>1. 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, contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or significantly increase energy consumption, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?</p>		X			
<p>2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?</p>				X	
<p>3. 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.)</p>			X		
<p>4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</p>		X			
<p>5. Is there disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR?</p>				X	

1. **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** With implementation of mitigation measures identified above, impacts to biological resources and cultural resources would be reduced to a level of less than significant.
2. **No Impact.** The purpose of the project is to achieve the long-term environmental goal of developing facilities (pipelines, storage tanks, pump stations) to serve recycled water to new users as supplies become available. No short-term goals would be achieved at the expense of long-term goals; therefore, there would be no impact.
3. **Less than Significant.** The project may contribute to cumulative impacts, but its incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would not be considerable.
4. **Less than Significant with Mitigation.** The proposed project may create environmental effects which would cause adverse effects on human beings, including construction noise and recreation opportunities. However, mitigation measures (**MM N-1**, **MM R-1**) have been identified to reduce significant impacts to a less than significant level.
5. **No Impact.** There is no evidence of disagreement, supported by facts, that the project requires analysis in an EIR.

## **9.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

No significant, adverse unmitigable impacts were identified; therefore, project alternatives were not considered.

## **10.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

The proposed project, with mitigation, would be consistent with all applicable policies of the County's Comprehensive Plan, Orcutt Community Plan and Energy and Climate Action Plan, and the City of Santa Maria's General Plan.

## 11.0 RECOMMENDATION BY P&D STAFF

### On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of Planning and Development:

Finds that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, recommends that a Negative Declaration (ND) be prepared.

Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures incorporated into the REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION would successfully mitigate the potentially significant impacts. Staff recommends the preparation of an ND. The ND finding is based on the assumption that mitigation measures will be acceptable to the applicant; if not acceptable a revised Initial Study finding for the preparation of an EIR may result.

Finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and recommends that an EIR be prepared.

Finds that from existing documents (previous EIRs, etc.) that a subsequent document (containing updated and site-specific information, etc.) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15162/15163/15164 should be prepared.

Potentially significant unavoidable adverse impact areas: None

With Public Hearing  Without Public Hearing

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENT:** None

**PROJECT EVALUATOR:** Matt Ingamells, Padre Associates

**DATE:** June 21, 2023

**12.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER**

NA\* I agree with staff conclusions. Preparation of the appropriate document may proceed.

     I DO NOT agree with staff conclusions. The following actions will be taken:

     I require consultation and further information prior to making my determination.

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **INITIAL STUDY DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **REVISION DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*The project is entirely located within the City of Santa Maria and does not require a Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Hearing Officer*

**13.0 ATTACHMENTS**

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program



**SANTA MARIA COUNTRY CLUB RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT  
MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM – IMPLEMENTATION TABLE**

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Methods	Monitoring Frequency	Party Responsible for Monitoring	Method of Compliance Verification	Verification of Compliance		
						Signature	Date	Remarks
<b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>								
<p><b>MM BIO-1: Monarch Butterfly Avoidance.</b> Project-related construction activities shall not occur with 200 feet of the eucalyptus windrow located south of the golf course and immediately east of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail between November 1 and March 1, unless a survey conducted by a qualified biologist within 72 hours of the start of construction finds no aggregations within 200 feet of any work areas.</p>	<p>Within 72 hours of planned construction work between November 1 and March 1</p>	<p>The LCSD project manager will ensure the measures are implemented</p>	<p>Weekly, as needed</p>	<p>LCSD</p>	<p>LCSD staff will document compliance in construction progress reports</p>			
<p><b>MM BIO-2: Breeding Bird Survey and Avoidance.</b> If tree removal is proposed during the bird nesting period (February 15 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall survey all trees to be removed within 7 days of planned removal to identify any active bird nests. Trees supporting active native bird nests shall be avoided through project modifications, or tree removal postponed until subsequent surveys demonstrate the nest has been abandoned. Trees supporting active raptor nests shall not be removed until the nest has been demonstrated to be abandoned for at least one year.</p>	<p>Within 7 days of planned construction work between February 15 and August 31</p>	<p>The LCSD project manager will ensure the measures are implemented</p>	<p>Weekly, as needed during the breeding season</p>	<p>LCSD</p>	<p>LCSD staff will document compliance in construction progress reports</p>			

**SANTA MARIA COUNTRY CLUB RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT  
MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM – IMPLEMENTATION TABLE**

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Methods	Monitoring Frequency	Party Responsible for Monitoring	Method of Compliance Verification	Verification of Compliance		
						Signature	Date	Remarks
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>								
<p><b>MM CR-1: Stop Work at Encounter.</b> In the event archaeological resources are encountered during ground disturbance, work shall be stopped immediately or redirected until a qualified archaeologist and Native American representative are retained by the applicant to evaluate the significance of the find pursuant to Phase II investigations of the County Archaeological Guidelines. If remains are found to be significant, they shall be subject to a Phase III mitigation program consistent with County Archaeological Guidelines and funded by the applicant.</p> <p>If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.</p>	Throughout the construction period	The LCSD project manager will ensure the measures are implemented	Initially and weekly thereafter	LCSD	LCSD staff will document compliance in construction progress reports			
<b>NOISE</b>								
<p><b>MM N-1: Construction Noise.</b> To minimize potentially significant construction-related noise impacts to adjacent residences, the following measure shall be implemented:</p> <p>Construction activities involving heavy equipment or heavy-duty truck traffic within 1,600 feet of residences shall be limited to 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., with no work on weekends or holidays.</p>	Throughout the construction period, when working near residences	The LCSD project manager will ensure the measure is implemented	Initially and weekly thereafter	LCSD	LCSD staff will document compliance in construction progress reports			

**SANTA MARIA COUNTRY CLUB RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT  
MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM – IMPLEMENTATION TABLE**

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Methods	Monitoring Frequency	Party Responsible for Monitoring	Method of Compliance Verification	Verification of Compliance		
						Signature	Date	Remarks
<b>RECREATION</b>								
<p><b>MM R-1: Minimize Conflicts with Trail Users.</b> To minimize potentially significant temporary conflicts with recreational use of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Trail, the following measure shall be implemented:</p> <p>LCSD shall minimize the size of the pipeline installation work area, including construction laydown areas where feasible, and minimize the duration of time the public is excluded from the trail. Fencing shall be provided around the work area as needed to protect public safety, and signage and noticing provided to make the public aware of the affected areas and the timing and duration of trail closures.</p>	<p>During mobilization of equipment and materials near the Trail, and throughout the construction period when working near the Trail</p>	<p>The LCSD project manager will ensure these measures are implemented</p>	<p>Initially and weekly thereafter</p>	<p>LCSD</p>	<p>LCSD staff will document compliance in construction progress reports</p>			