SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL
AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project

(Case No. 14NGD-00000-00012)

SCH No. 201412082

February 6, 2015

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PUBLIC REVIEW

A Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (14NGD-00000-00012) has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project (Case No. 14NGD-00000-00012) under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was circulated for public review and comment for 30 days (December 19, 2014 through January 20, 2015). Due to the non-complex nature of the proposed Project, an environmental hearing was not conducted during the public review period.

During the public review period one comment letter was received from the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. This letter is included as Attachment 5 of the proposed Final IS/MND dated, January 30, 2015.

The Draft IS/MND was also circulated through the Governor's Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse. The State Clearinghouse (SCH) number is 2014121082. The State review period was December 23, 2014 through January 21, 2015. A letter acknowledging that the Santa Barbara Flood Control District complied with the review requirements for draft environmental documents pursuant to CEQA is provided as Attachment 6 of the proposed Final IS/MND dated, February 6, 2015. No comment letters were submitted by state agencies.

Comments received during the public comment period on the Draft IS/MND have been considered and no revisions to the IS/MND were required in response. The proposed Final IS/MND, dated February 6, 2015 concludes that with identified mitigation measures and implementation of the required monitoring program, Project impacts on the environment would be less than significant.

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1.0 REQUEST/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 SITE INFORMATION

The Unit 2 Channel (Channel) is a Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District)-owned engineered facility located within an agriculturally developed area west of the City of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County (Figure 1.1-1). The Channel runs north to south between West Main Street and the Santa Maria River Levee. The Channel is a straight, linear earthen channel with the exception of an offset in the Channel of approximately 150 feet at its mid-point. North of the offset, the Channel is "perched" or elevated and was created by constructing embankments or levees on either side of the Channel. The Channel discharges into the Santa Maria River through the existing levee by a 14 foot wide x 6 foot high box culvert. Table 1.1-1 provides a summary of site information.

Table 1.1-1. Summary of Site Information

Comprehensive Plan Designation	A-II-40
Zoning District, Ordinance	AG-II-40
Site Size	Existing Channel: Approximately 25 acres Proposed Project: Temporary Disturbance Area - 4.31 acres, Permanent Right-of-Way Area - 3.58 acres
Present Use & Development	Flood Control Channel Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs): 117-020-058, 117-020-060, 117-160-048, 117-020-042, 117-020-044
Surrounding Uses/Zoning	North: Santa Maria River South: West Main Street East: Agriculture West: Agriculture
Access	Flood Control Easement from West Main Street
Public Services	Water Supply: NA Sewage: NA Fire: NA Other: NA

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The Unit 2 Channel carries stormwater collected from the West Main Street channel, agricultural runoff from adjacent fields, agricultural runoff from the East Channel running parallel to the Santa Maria River, and overflow from Hobbs Basin during large storm events. The purpose of the proposed Channel improvements would be to increase the capacity of the Unit 2 Channel. This is needed to reduce the risk of the Channel overtopping and the potential for property damage.

December 2014
Project No. 1302-2792

padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project

SITE LOCATION MAP
FIGURE 1.1-1

2.0 PROPOSED PROJECT

According to the Unit 2 Channel Improvements and Phase 2 Storm Drain, County of Santa Barbara, Design Alternative Report prepared by Penfield & Smith (P&S) in December, 2014 (text provided as Attachment 1 to this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration); the existing flood control design elements that have been found to negatively affect the existing Unit 2 Channel capacity include: limited capacity of the Channel outfall structures, constricted Channel width, and the Channel offset located midway along the Channel. In order to increase Channel capacity and minimize the risk of bank overflows; several design alternatives were identified and considered in the P&S study. As indicated by P&S; the preferred design Alternative has been identified as 2-A-3.

In accordance with design Alternative 2-A-3, the proposed Project would include acquisition of temporary construction easements (TCEs) and permanent Right-of-Ways (ROWs) as outlined within Table 2.0-1. In summary, approximately 4.31 acres of temporary disturbance and approximately 3.58 acres of permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) would be required to complete the Project. Based upon timing of activities, the Project has been divided into two Phases (Phase 1 - southern portion [upstream work] and Phase 2 - northern portion [downstream work]) as shown in Figure 2.0-1.

Phase 1 would include acquisition of 1.59 acres of permanent right-of-ways (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) for access west of the southern portion of the Channel's western bank to support routine maintenance activities. A portion of this property would remain available for use in support of existing agricultural operations. It should be noted that all physical work activities associated with widening of the southern portion of the Channel as necessary for routine maintenance activities are addressed for the purposes of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for Routine Maintenance Program activities prepared by the District in 2001. This IS/MND addresses the acquisition of the 1.59 acres of permanent right-of-ways in support of routine maintenance activities, as that change in land use was not covered as part of the original FEIR.

Work activities remaining to be conducted and proposed for Phase 2 include the components of Alternative 2-A-3 from just south of the Channel offset northward to the Santa Maria River culvert (northern [downstream] portion of the Channel). Phase 2 would require approximately 4.31 acres of temporary disturbance area as well as approximately 1.99 acres of permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) west of the northern portion of the Channel western bank to allow for construction of proposed improvements and continued maintenance access along the Channel. The proposed improvements would consist of straightening the offset (Reverse Curve Realignment) (see Section 2.2.1 for additional details), increasing the Channel bottom width to 20 feet (see Section 2.2.2 for additional details), replacing and extending the width of the overflow weir (see Section 2.2.3 for additional detail), replacing the existing 54-inch CMP pipe from the East Channel (see Section 2.2.4 for additional detail, opening up an existing buried culvert (see Section 2.2.5 for additional details), and adding a culvert within the existing Santa Maria River levee system (see Section 2.2.3 for additional details).

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Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project

PROJECT COMPONENTS
FIGURE 2.0-1

Table 2.0-1. Temporary and Permanent Land Acquisitions Required for the Project

Property APN	Temporary Disturbance Area (SF)	TCE (AC)	Permanent Right of Way (SF)	ROW (AC)
Phase 2 - Unit 2 North – Channel Improvements Area (Downstream work)				
APN - 117-020-066	176,355	4.05	50,884	1.17
APN - 117-160-027	11,325	0.26	35,916	0.82
	Total Temporary Disturbance Area (AC)	**4.31**	**Total ROW (AC)**	**1.99**
Phase 1 - Unit 2 South - Routine Maintenance (Upstream work)				
APN - 117-160-027	-	0	27,216	0.62
APN- 117-160-039	-	0	42,403	0.97
	Total Temporary Disturbance Area (AC)	**0**	**Total ROW (AC)**	**1.59**

2.1 PHASE 1 - ROUTINE MAINTENANCE ACQUISITION AREA/PERMANENT RIGHT-OF-WAY (SOUTHERN PORTION OF CHANNEL)

As previously discussed, Phase 1 of the proposed work activities is currently scheduled for 2015 and includes purchase of a permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) along the southern [upstream] portion of the Channel (western bank) (Figure 2.1-1). As indicated in Table 2.0-1, approximately 1.59 acres of permanent right-of-way within APNs 117-160-027 and -034 are required in order to complete this work. Work activities associated with Phase 1 are included as part of the District's routine maintenance program, and potential impacts associated with this first phase of work have been previously accounted for in the Final Environmental Impact Report for Routine Maintenance Program activities prepared by the District in 2001. As such, only the change in land use resulting from the purchase of this property, which is not included as part of the FEIR for routine maintenance activities, is discussed within this document.

2.2 PHASE 2 – CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT COMPONENTS (DOWNSTREAM - NORTHERN PORTION OF CHANNEL)

2.2.1 Reverse Curve Realignment

The reverse curve Channel realignment would lengthen the transition of the Channel offset to create a smoother path for water to travel. The new Channel alignment would greatly diminish the existing bend by increasing each curve radius to 1,000 feet. The increased radii would help minimize hydraulic losses, and would increase flow capacity. The County would need to acquire approximately 4.31 acres of temporary construction easement and approximately 1.99 acres of permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) on the western side of the Channel in order to complete this work (Figures 2.2-1 and 2.2-2). Additionally, two side drains from the eastern side would need to be replaced and extended. It is also assumed that the Channel upstream from the new reverse curve would be graded back to the original design plan. The minimal upstream work would be completed under the District's Annual Routine Maintenance Plan. Figure 2.2-1 shows the existing offset that would be reconfigured for the Reverse Curve Realignment.

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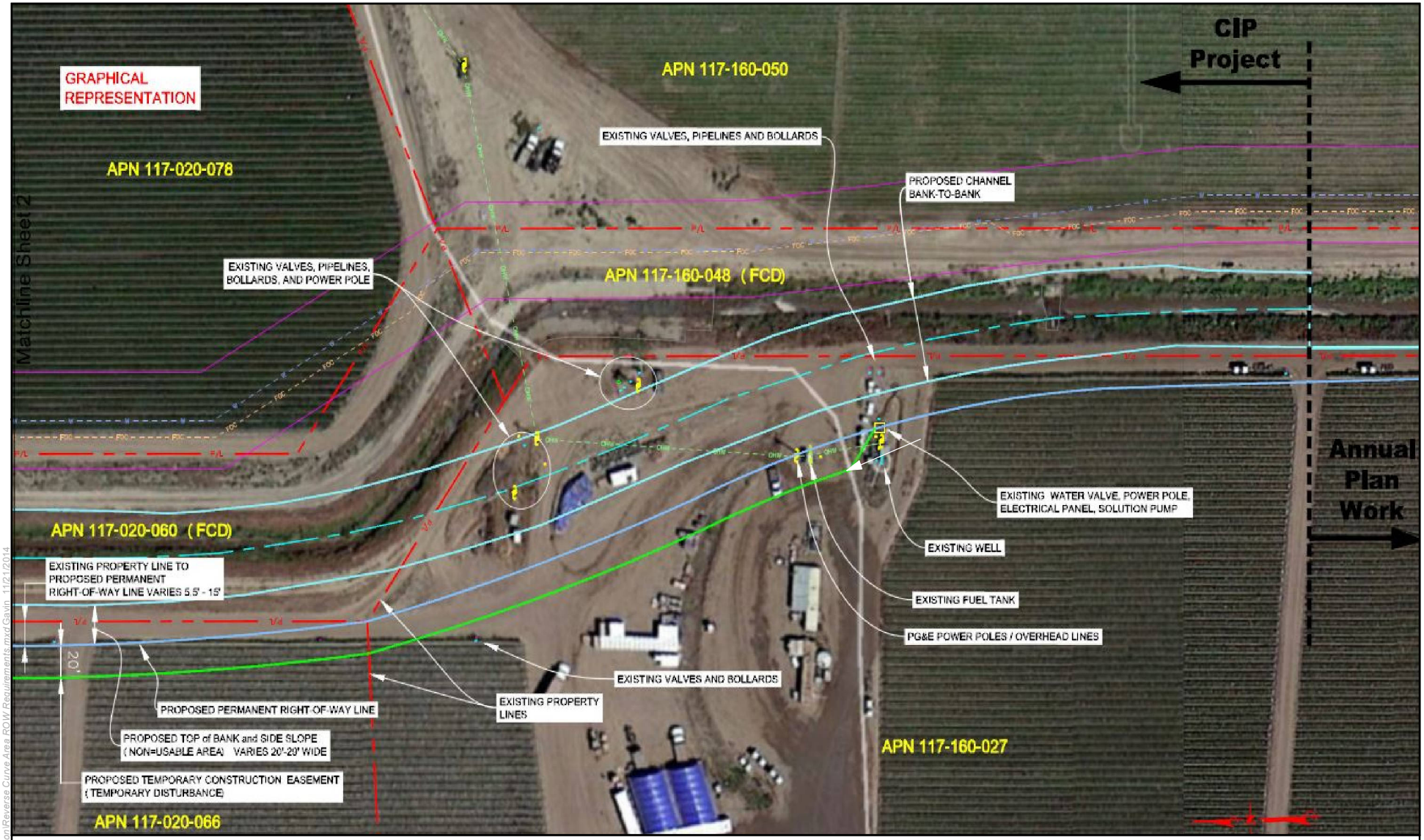
Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project

FCD - Flood Control District
ROW - Right of Way
APN - Assessors Parcel Number
CCWA - Central Coast Water Authority

PHASE 1
RIGHT-OF-WAY AREA
FIGURE 2.1-1

Figure 2.2-1. Reverse Curve Area to be Realigned

(LEFT PHOTO IS LOOKING NORTHWARD, RIGHT PHOTO IS LOOKING SOUTHWARD)



FCD - Flood Control District **CIP** - Capital Improvements Project

ROW - Right of Way

APN - Assessors Parcel Number

CCWA - Central Coast Water Authority

Source: Santa Barbara Flood Control 2014
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet
Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

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PROJECT NAME: UNIT 2 CHANNEL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

PROJECT NUMBER: 1302-2792

DATE: December 2014

REVERSE CURVE AREA ROW REQUIREMENTS

FIGURE 2.2-2

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2.2.2 Increasing Channel Bottom Width to 20 feet

As part of the proposed Channel improvements, the existing Channel bottom width along the entire Phase 2 Project length would be increased to approximately 20 feet. Additional bottom width needed for a consistent 20 foot-wide channel ranges from 0 to 15-feet with an average of 7 feet. Section 3.0 (Project Construction) provides additional information regarding the widening of the Unit 2 Channel.

2.2.3 Replacing and Extending the Width of the Existing Overflow Weir

The existing concrete lateral overflow weir will be removed and a new, longer concrete lateral overflow weir will be constructed at the same location. Any concrete salvaged during weir replacement will be broken up and stockpiled for reincorporation underneath the side drain splash pads and for placement on the land-side of the proposed lateral weir

2.2.4 54-inch Corrugated Metal Pipe Removal and Replacement

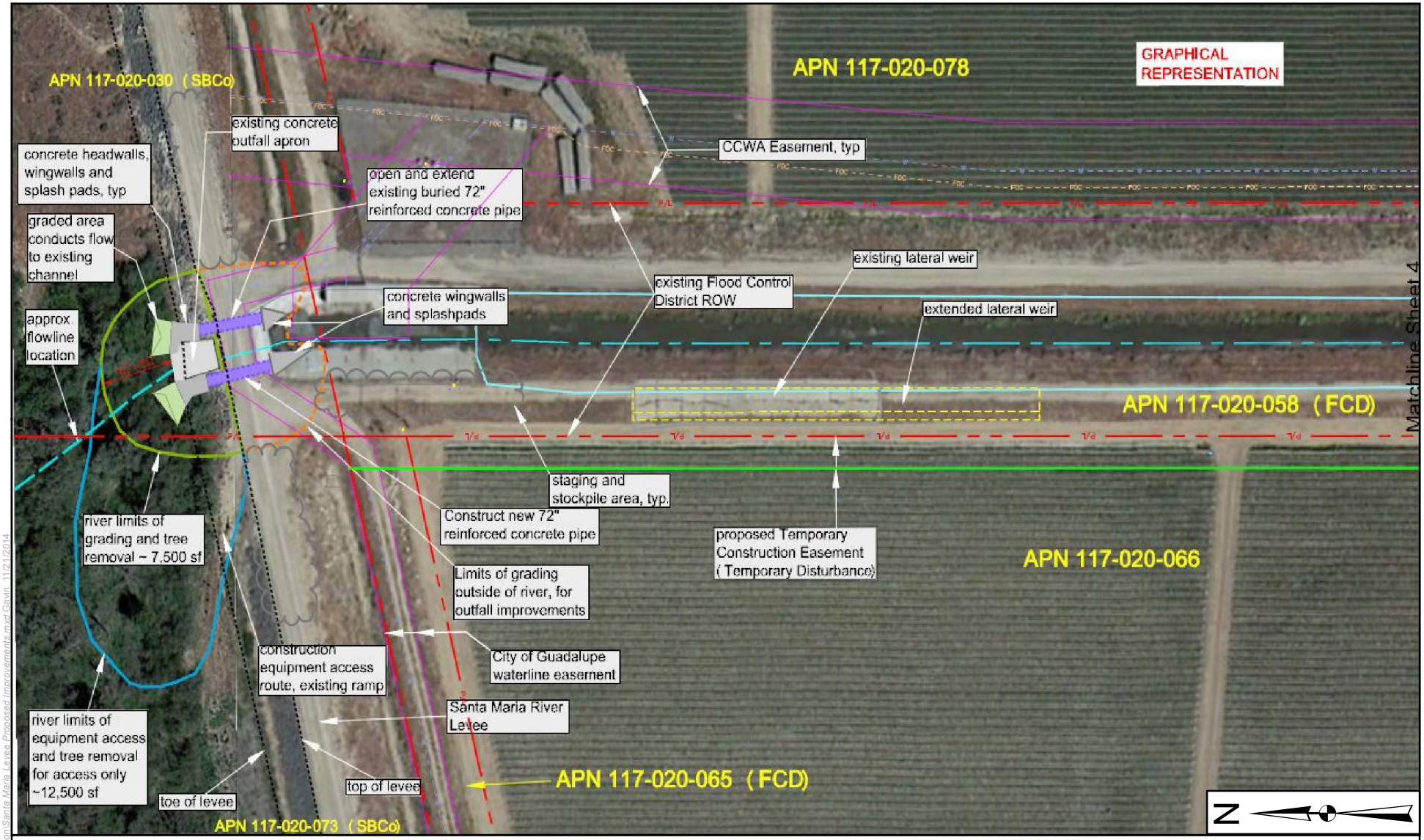
The existing, eroding 54-inch corrugated metal pipe (CMP) that connects the East Channel to the Unit 2 Channel will be excavated and removed concurrently with the levee outfall excavation. A new 54-inch CMP pipe will be placed in the same location as the pipe removed. The levee outfall and the 54-inch East Channel pipe will likely be excavated concurrently with the Channel work.

2.2.5 Additional Culvert

Improvements to the Santa Maria Levee include opening an existing 72-inch reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) culvert and adding a second 72-inch RCP culvert (Figures 2.2-3 through 2.2-5). The new culverts would be configured as shown on Figure 2.2-5. The additional culverts would accommodate the capacity of the realigned and widened Channel.

Figure 2.2-3. Santa Maria Levee Box Culvert Where Unit 2 Flows into Santa Maria River (looking northward)

Figure 2.2-4. Northern Portion of Unit 2 Channel (looking southward)



ROW - Right of Way

APN - Assessors Parcel Number

SF - Square Feet

Source: Santa Barbara Flood Control 2014
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane California V FIPS 0405 Feet
Notes: This map was created for informational and display purposes only

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PROJECT NAME:	PROJECT NUMBER:	DATE:		FIGURE
UNIT 2 CHANNEL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT	1302-2792	December 2014	SANTA MARIA LEVEE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS	2.2-5

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3.0 PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

3.1 CONSTRUCTION METHODOLOGY

The following provides an overview of the construction steps and methodology for the proposed Project:

1. Mobilization: Contractor will mobilize equipment and materials to the job site.
2. Clear water diversion and dewatering: The contractor will set up a clear water diversion system (HDPE pipe, plastic sheeting, sand bags, pumps), and dewater ponded areas upstream and downstream of the levee outfall.
3. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program: Erosion and sediment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be installed (at the least: silt fences surrounding the work site, fiber rolls, stabilized construction entrance/exit, wind erosion control measures [tarping, dust control watering], preservation of existing vegetation [fencing]). Non-stormwater BMP measures and non-visible pollutant monitoring requirements will also be instituted.
4. Clearing and grubbing vegetation.
5. Concrete removal (using a sawcutter, dump trucks, excavator, front-end loader):
    a. The existing concrete lateral overflow weir will be removed.
    b. The levee outfall concrete wingwalls, splashpads, and headwalls will be sawcut and partially removed.
    c. The reinforced concrete channel lining at the reverse curve will be removed and additional incidental surface concrete within the limits of excavation will be removed.
    d. Salvaged concrete will be broken up and stockpiled for reincorporation underneath the side drain splash pads and for placement on the land-side of the proposed lateral weir (for energy dissipation). All rebar from salvaged concrete will be removed and disposed of offsite.
6. Excavation: The levee outfall and the 54-inch East Channel pipe will likely be excavated concurrently with the Channel work. The Channel work includes Channel widening and the reverse-curve realignment (using excavators, backhoes, one water truck, frontend loaders and dump trucks):
    a. Levee outfall: The levee will be excavated and shored around the existing reinforced concrete box, headwalls and wingwalls. Existing riprap and soil will be salvaged and placed in stockpile area. While excavation is occurring, the existing State Water Main will be protected in place while in operation; the existing Guadalupe Water Main will be supported and protected in place while in operation. Additional utilities (air, vacuum valve, storm drain) will either be protected in place.
    b. 54-inch pipe replacement: The existing, eroding 54-inch CMP that connects the East Channel to the Unit 2 Channel will be excavated and removed concurrently with the levee outfall excavation.

c. Channel excavation: The contractor will likely start at the downstream end, excavating upstream, and placing excavated soils in a stockpile. The existing concrete splash pads within the Channel at the side drain outlets will be removed during Channel excavation.

7. Concrete splash pads will be constructed at the side drain outlets with the salvaged broken-up concrete or rip-rap placed at the upstream end. This work could occur coincident with the Channel excavation and fill activities.

8. Channel grading and fill (using excavator, hand compactors, sheep's-foot compactor, and backhoes): The Channel will be graded and compacted to achieve the design side slopes, and the abandoned Channel at the existing reverse-curve will be backfilled and compacted.

9. At the levee outfall, the existing buried 72-inch storm drain pipe that concurrently extends through the levee will be opened up at the upstream and downstream ends of the outfall, and an additional 72-inch storm drain will be installed.

10. A new 54-inch pipe (corrugated metal pipe (CMP) will be placed in the same location as the pipe removed with item number (No.) 6 b.

11. Concrete placement (using concrete mixers, concrete pumpers, concrete vibrators, and an excavator with an attachment -for hoisting and placing rebar-): Concrete headwalls and wingwalls will be formed and constructed around the 72-inch and 54-inch storm drain pipes and a new, longer concrete lateral overflow weir will be constructed at the same location as the existing weir removed with item No. 5.

12. Rip-rap or salvaged broken-up concrete from item No. 5 will be placed along the landside of lateral overflow weir using an excavator.

13. Levee outfall grading and fill (using excavator, backhoes, hand compactors, sheep's-foot compactor, and backhoes): The levee will be reconstructed to U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's standards for levee protection and will reincorporate the salvaged riprap.

14. Lastly, the site will be cleaned up, the water diversion system will be removed and equipment will be demobilized.

During construction activities, the Project will be monitored by the District biologist, District-contracted construction management/inspection team and a geotechnical engineer (for soils and materials testing).

3.2 AREAS OF DISTURBANCE (TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT)

As indicated in the proposed ROW exhibits prepared for the Project by the District (SBCFCD 2014), the proposed Project would require approximately 4.31 acres of area for temporary construction disturbance and 3.58 acres of permanent right-of way area (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) to complete the Project as currently designed. Construction of the Santa Maria River levee improvements would necessitate tree removal within the Santa Maria River riparian corridor for equipment access (approximately 12,500 square feet) and grading for outlet installation (approximately 7,500 square feet). Staging areas would be confined to the existing Channel ROWs and the TCE areas where feasible in order to reduce the potential areas of new disturbance.

3.3 EQUIPMENT/PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

Table 3.3-1 provides an overview of the equipment and personnel requirements for the proposed Project.

Table 3.3-1. Equipment and Personnel Requirements

Equipment	Quantity	Hrs/Day	No. of Days	Total Hrs
Hydraulic Tracked Excavators	2	8	29	464
Backhoes	2	2	29	116
Roller Compactors	1	8	9	72
Sheep's Foot Compactor	1	8	9	72
Loaders (Frontend)	2	8	5	80
Concrete Pouring Equipment	1	8	6	48
Pickup Trucks	1	3	62	186
Truck Trailer	1	4	10	40
Hand Compactors	2	8	10	160
Pumps	2	8	50	800
Chain Saws	2	8	3	48
Sawcutter	1	8	1	8
Dump Truck(s) 10,000 cubic yards excavation at 10 cubic yards/trip capacity	1,000 trips	-	-	-
Personnel	**Quantity**	**Hrs/Day**	**No. of Days**	**Total Hrs**
Foreman	1	8	63	504
Equipment Operators	3	8	63	1,512
Laborers	4	8	63	2,016

3.4 CONSTRUCTION TIMING

Phase 1 of the proposed work activities along the upstream portion of the Channel includes purchase of a permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) along the southern portion of the Channel (western bank) (Figure 2.1-1). All other potential impacts associated with this first phase of work have been previously accounted for in the FEIR for Routine Maintenance Program activities prepared by the District in 2001.

During Phase 2, construction on the northern portion of the Channel is currently anticipated to occur over approximately 63 working days in an approximate 3 month timeframe. Construction would occur during summer and early fall months in order to avoid the rainy season when most runoff would be anticipated.

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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.1 PHYSICAL SETTING

The Unit 2 Channel is located within an agriculturally developed area west of the City of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County (Figure 1.1-1). The Channel runs south to north between West Main Street and the Santa Maria River Levee. The Channel is earthen and trapezoidal-shaped except for the concrete-lined section at the Channel bend. The Channel is surrounded by agricultural fields and supporting agricultural structures to the east and west, and the Santa Maria River Levee to the north. The Channel banks are mostly vegetated with non-native vegetation that is mowed on a yearly basis and the Channel bottom also supports herbaceous, mostly non-native vegetation. High Voltage Transmission Lines run diagonally northeast to southwest approximately perpendicular to the middle of the Channel north of the offset area. East Channel, which drains into Unit 2 just south of the levee runs parallel to the levee to the east of Unit 2. A separate, but non-connected ditch, known as Unit 2 Tailwater Channel runs parallel to the levee to the west of Unit 2 but empties into the Santa Maria River near Bonita School Road.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The environmental baseline from which the Project's impacts are measured consists of the existing flood control Channel and Santa Maria Levee structure as well as existing uses in the Project vicinity, as described above. Additional baseline information is included as appropriate in the issue area discussions within Sections 5.1 – 5.16 below.

4.3 CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines cumulative impacts as "two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other past, present, and probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

4.3.1 Projects Considered for Analysis

The County of Santa Barbara (Planning and Development Division, Flood Control District, and other Public Works Divisions) as well as the City of Santa Maria (Community Development and Public Works Departments), Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), and Caltrans were consulted to obtain a list of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects for consideration in the cumulative impact assessment. A summary of the projects considered for analysis are provided below.

4.3.1.1 County of Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Division. The following table shows a listing of all potential cumulative Projects within approximately five miles of the Project area as identified from the Santa Barbara County Projects Listing and Interactive Projects Map accessed online at http://sbcountyplanning.org/projects/index.cfm (2014).

Table 4.3-1. Santa Barbara County Projects Listing Considered for Cumulative Analysis

Project	Location (APN)	Approximate Distance from Project Corridor	Description	Status
Amrich Energy PreApplication Tognazzini-Adams Lease	113-080-006 113-100-027 113-110-001	3.25 miles	4 oil and gas wells	Proposed
Coastal Growers Evora II Development Plan	111-020-014	2.35 miles	15,000 ft^2 development	In Process
Coastal Growers Supply Storage Yard Project	111-020-013	2.35 miles	7,500 Commercial Development	Under Construction
HIN Development Plan	128-093-021	4.50 miles	9,750 ft^2 Industrial Development	In Process
Johnson Truck Service Center Project	111-030-018	2.35 miles	New Industrial Development Plan 7,200 ft^2	Approved In Progress
OSR Enterprises/NRG Enterprises LP	128-096-001 128-096-004 128-096-005	5.30 miles	Agricultural development (excluding wineries) 237,636 ft^2	Approved
PR Investments/Evergreen Shopping Center Development Plan	109-200-012 109-200-013 109-200-015 109-200-016	4.90 miles	61,958 ft^2 Commercial Space	Under Construction
North County Jail General Plan Amendment	113-210-004 113-210-013	2.40 miles	250,465 ft^2 New Jail facilities	Approved

Santa Barbara County, February 2014

County of Santa Barbara Capital Improvements Program (2014-2019). The County of Santa Barbara Fiscal Years 2014-2015 through 2018-2019 proposed five-year Capital Improvement Program was also reviewed in order to determine other projects to be considered within the cumulative analysis. A summary of projects presented within the Capital Improvements Program that have the potential to utilize or impact the same resources as the Project or occur within the Project vicinity is provided in Table 4.3-2 below.

Table 4.3-2. County of Santa Barbara Capital Improvement Projects Considered for Cumulative Analysis

Proposed Project	Description	Approximate Distance from Project Corridor	Construction Dates	Status
Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail	7.8 mile bike and pedestrian trail	Adjacent to Project Channel	2017-2019	Currently unfunded
Roadway Improvements - Betteravia Safety Improvements	Add rumble strips to edge and center line	2.34 miles	2013-2016	Currently the project was scheduled to begin design in FY 2013-14. Construction is scheduled for FY 2014-15.
Bonita School Road Bridge Replacement	Over Santa Maria River approximately .3 miles north of S.R. 166	1.32 miles	2013-2019	Currently in Project study and scoping phase, construction anticipated in 2018-2019

4.3.1.2 City of Santa Maria

City of Santa Maria Community Development Department. A review of the City of Santa Maria Community Development Department Major Projects List (July 2014) showed a multitude of project permits for primarily residential and commercial developments throughout the City. However, a significant portion of these projects are noted as partially complete and have not applied for permits to complete their build, or have active permits that will expire and work was never initiated. Three potential projects are listed that would utilize S.R. 166/Main Street to gain access to their sites and would likely contribute to potential impacts that are cumulatively considerable. These three projects are outlined in Table 4.3-3 below.

Table 4.3-3. City of Santa Maria Community Development Department Major Projects Considered for Cumulative Analysis

Proposed Project	Description	Approximate Distance from Project Corridor	Approval Date	Status
Hancock Terrace Apartments	268 apartment units	3.5 miles	5/21/13	Grading permits issued, in plancheck
MMC Co-Gen Power Plant Expansion	1,624 sq. ft. building	4.1 miles	4/4/12 - Construction to be completed prior to Fall 2015	Under Construction
Eastridge Estates	120 single family units	5.0 miles	11/7/07	Submitted to plancheck. 6 of 7 model homes are approved

City of Santa Maria Public Works Department. The City of Santa Maria Public Works Department was also contacted to determine if there are any public works projects proposed within the City of Santa Maria that should be considered for cumulative analysis. Per the Acting Director of Public Works (Springer, personal communication, September, 2014); there are no City projects outside of those proposed by SBCAG that should be considered for cumulative analysis.

4.3.1.3 SBCAG

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), Programming Division was contacted to determine if there are any projects associated with their Drive Safe Highway 166 Major Project Allocation that should be considered for cumulative analysis with respect to the proposed Project. According to SBCAG (Luna, personal communication September, 2014), of the six projects funded as part of their Drive Safe project allocation, four are located within the vicinity of the proposed Project. Of those four, two have the potential of being constructed at a similar time as the proposed Project and may have the potential to contribute to short-term transportation impacts. Those two projects include intersection improvements at S.R. 166/West Main Street and Black Road (located approximately 0.25 miles from the Project site), as well as S.R. 166/West Main Street at Highway 1 (located approximately 5 miles from the Project site).

4.3.1.4 Caltrans

As access to the Project corridor is from S.R. 166/West Main Street, Caltrans was also contacted to determine if there are any projects proposed that would also utilize this area during the proposed

Project construction activities. According to an online database of Caltrans projects, there are currently no projects under construction or proposed within the same construction timeframe of the proposed Project along S.R. 166/West Main Street. The closest Caltrans projects are located within the City of Santa Maria along U.S. 101. Table 4.3-3 provides a summary and status of these three projects.

Table 4.3-4. Caltrans Projects Considered for Cumulative Analysis

Proposed Project	Distance From Project Corridor	Description	Construction Dates	Status
EA-05-445904	approximately 3 miles northeast	Replace Structure	Estimated Completion Date 4/25/14	97% Complete
EA-05-1A3904	approximately 7 miles southeast	Rubberized hot mix asphalt	5/23/14 - 9/29/14	22% Complete
EA-05-463814	approximately 8 miles southeast	Irrigation, Planting, Erosion Control	12/2/13 - 5/8/17	0% Complete

Each issue area evaluated in Section 5.0 below includes a discussion of cumulative impacts. A summary of this analysis is presented in Section 7.0 of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration.

5.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and is defined as follows:

- **Potentially Significant Impact:** A fair argument can be made, based on the substantial evidence in the file, that an effect may be significant.
- **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation:** Incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a Potentially Significant Impact to a Less Than Significant Impact.
- **Less Than Significant Impact:** An impact is considered adverse but does not trigger a significance threshold.
- **No Impact:** There is adequate support that the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the subject Project.
- **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.	Less than Signif. With Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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		

5.1.1 Setting

5.1.1.1 Physical

The Project site is located adjacent to the north of West Main Street/Highway 166 in an unincorporated portion of the County of Santa Barbara. The Project site is located within an area characterized by agriculture and is bordered by agricultural fields on the east and west and the Santa Maria River to the north (Figure 5.1-1 below). Public views in this area are predominantly flat, agricultural fields and are accessible primarily from vehicles traveling along West Main Street/S.R. 166. No scenic areas as defined by the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan (Open Space Element, 2009) are located within the Project vicinity.

Photo of the existing channel (looking south) with adjacent agricultural fields on either side.

Photo of the existing channel at the northern-most portion of the Project site. Santa Maria River to the left, Santa Maria River Levee Road to the right and agricultural field to the far right.

Figure 5.1-1. Project Area Views

5.1.1.2 Regulatory

County 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.

5.1.2 Impact Discussion

a, b, and d). Less than Significant Impact. The Project includes the realignment of an existing channel system within an area characterized by agricultural land use. The Project would require approximately 4.31 acres of temporary disturbance during construction, as well as a permanent right-of-way of approximately 3.58 acres along the western side of the Channel. Views of the existing Channel are available from the public roadway, S.R. 166/West Main Street. The Project is not located within a scenic resource area.

Temporary construction equipment (such as excavators, backhoes, compactors, etc.) during downstream work would be required onsite for approximately 3 months until all work activities are completed. Construction equipment may be temporarily visible from along S.R. 166/West Main Street during this timeframe. However, following Project construction, views of the area would be similar to those currently existing at the site. Permanent Channel structures would remain as part of the existing visual character of the area. Due to the temporary nature of construction activities, the fact that the Project would not obstruct any scenic views, and would not result in the introduction of visually incompatible structures; the Project's aesthetic impacts would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures would be required. No residual impact would result.

c). No Impact. Project construction would occur during daytime hours only, no additional lighting is proposed. No glare or nighttime lighting would affect adjacent properties. **No Impact** would result.

5.1.3 Cumulative Impacts

The implementation of the Project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change in the aesthetic character of the area as described above. Permanent features of the Project, including the realigned Channel are compatible with the existing agricultural character of the area. As such, potential cumulative impacts would be limited to short-term, construction equipment use and staging within the immediate Project area. Based on discussions with the County and other relevant agencies, two Projects (both proposed by the County of Santa Barbara) have the potential to cumulatively impact the immediate Project area should they occur simultaneously with the proposed Project. These include the Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail and the Bonita School Road Bridge Replacement Project. However, the Santa Maria Levee Project is not anticipated to begin construction until 2017 and remains unfunded. Similarly, the Bonita School Road Bridge Replacement Project remains in the study and scoping phase. As such, it is not likely that either of these projects will begin construction until after Channel improvements are completed, thus, the Project would not contribute to any cumulative aesthetic impacts.

5.1.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

Impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures would be required. No residual impact would result.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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			

5.2.1 Setting

5.2.1.1 Background

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 $1.4 billion (Santa Barbara County, 2013 Crop Production Report). In addition to the creation of food, jobs, and economic value, farmland provides valuable open space and maintains the County's rural character.

The Santa Maria Valley is the agricultural trade center of the County. This intensive vegetable production region contains the largest area of prime agricultural lands in the County. This area is unique in that many of the farmers' residences, agricultural processing plants and dealerships are located within the City of Santa Maria. The area is well protected from urban encroachment by

nearly complete coverage by agricultural preserve contracts (Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Element, 2009).

5.2.1.2 Physical

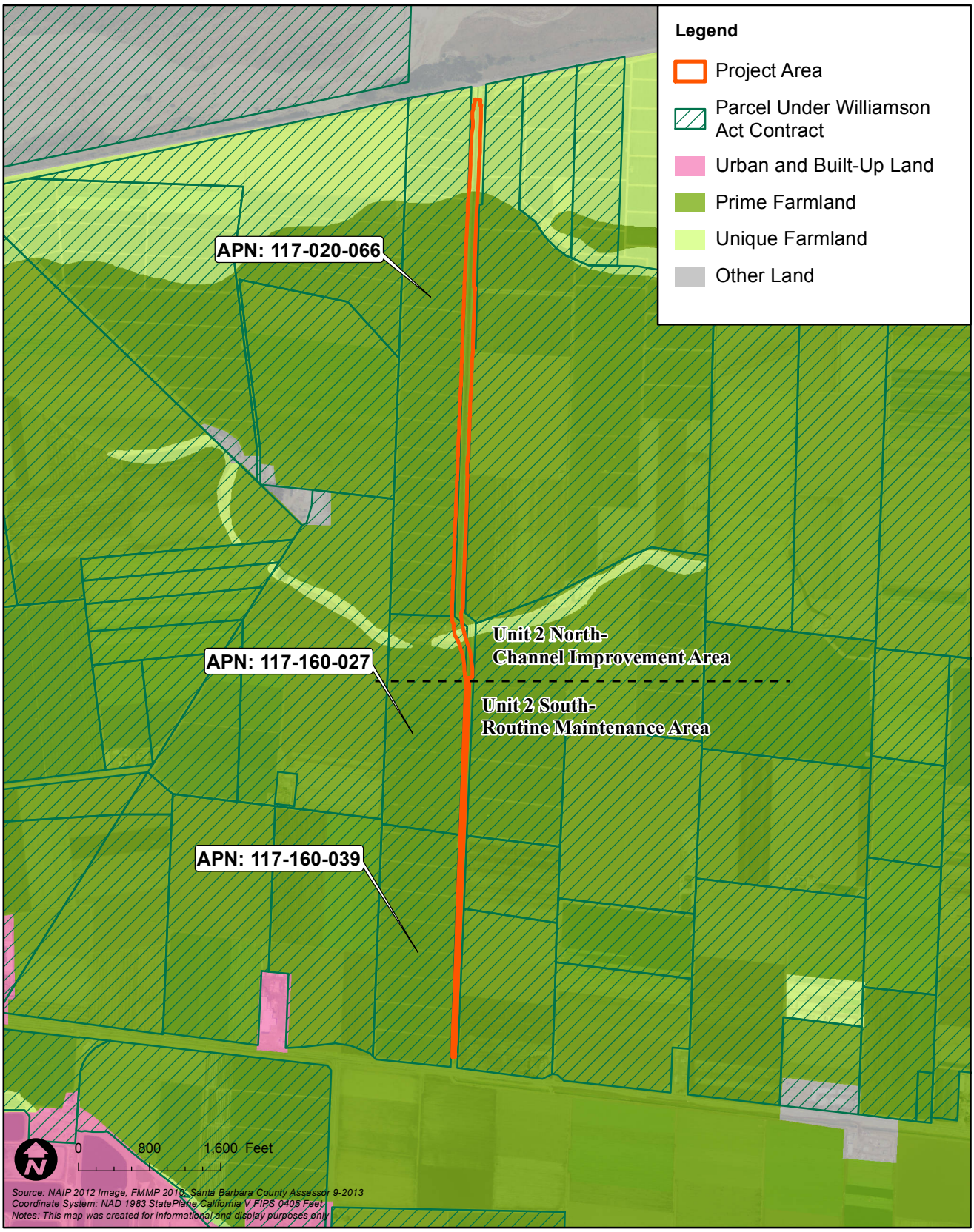
As discussed further within Section 5.11 (Land Use), the Project site has a land use designation of A-II-40. This designation applies to acreages of farm lands and agricultural uses located outside Urban, Inner Rural, and Rural Neighborhood areas. General agriculture is permitted, including but not limited to livestock operations, grazing, and beef production as well as more intensive agriculture uses (Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Element, 2009).

The existing Project corridor consists of a total area of approximately 25 acres. Currently, 20.98 acres (84 percent) of this area overlay prime agricultural soils. Approximately 4.02 acres (16 percent) of this area overlay unique soils. This area is currently being utilized in support of the existing Unit 2 Flood Control Channel. The newly proposed temporary construction easement and permanent right-of-way areas would require approximately 7.90 additional acres. Of this area, approximately 6.73 acres (85 percent) are prime agricultural soils and approximately 1.17 acres (15 percent) are unique soils (Figure 5.2-1). The Channel bisects adjacent agricultural parcels ranging from approximately 60 to 200 acres in size. According to the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner's Office Report, (2014), these neighboring properties to the east and west are used to grow row crops such as strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, and celery and are currently used by Manzanita, Big J, AgroJal, and Cardenas Brothers Farms.

5.2.1.3 Regulatory

County Thresholds. The County's Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Element (2009) and Santa Barbara County Environmental and Thresholds Manual (2008) provide a methodology for evaluating agricultural resource impacts. 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 result in a potentially significant impact. The Point System is intended to measure the productive ability of an existing parcel as compared to post-Project 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.

Preparers of Initial Studies are to use this Point System in conjunction with any additional information regarding agricultural resources. Under the Point System, values are assigned to nine particular characteristics relating to the 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, the parcel is considered viable for the purposes of analysis. A 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 or would include any of the following actions:



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ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

IMPORTANT FARMLAND MAP
FIGURE 5.2-1

1. A division of land (including parcel and tract maps, etc.) that is currently considered viable in a manner that would result in parcels which would not be considered viable using the weighting system.
2. A Development Plan, Conditional Use Permit, or other discretionary act which would result in the conversion from agriculture use of a parcel qualifying as viable using the rating system.
3. Discretionary projects which may result in substantial disruption of surrounding agricultural operations.

5.2.2 Impact Discussion

a, b). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The proposed Unit 2 Flood Control Channel Improvements would require approximately 4.31 acres of temporary construction easement as well as a permanent right-of-way (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) of approximately 3.58 acres on the western side of the Channel between Santa Maria River and West Main Street. The soils within this area are classified by the USDA as prime/unique importance (Figure 5.2-1).

Table 5.2-1 provides a summary of the three existing parcels that encompass the Project area and their agricultural viability based on the County's point system. As shown in Table 5.2-1, each of the three parcels affected are currently agriculturally viable, with scores well over 60 points at 75-79 points respectively. As shown in Table 5.2-2, the proposed Project would not reduce the points assigned to each parcel to less than 60 (in fact they remain unchanged); therefore each parcel would remain agriculturally viable following implementation of the Project. A **less than significant** impact to agricultural resources would result.

Table 5.2-1. Viability of Subject Parcels Prior to Proposed Project

Resource Component and Range of Points that can be Assigned Based on Santa Barbara County Initial Study Guidelines		APN 117-020-066	APN 117-160-027	APN 117-160-039
Parcel size		93.97 acres	53.31 acres	53.27 acres
Less than 5 acres	0-3			
5-10 acres	4-6			
10-40 acres	7-8	**8 points**	**8 points**	**8 points**
Soil classification		Rs - 0 Sh - VII	SuA - II SeD - III	StA - I SvA - I
Class I	14-15	StA-I	SvA - I	
Class II	11-13	MnA-III	StA - I	
Class VII	1-5	SuA - II		
		11 points	**14 points**	**15 points**
Water availability		Adequate Supply	Adequate Supply	Adequate Supply
Adequate supply	12-14	**14 points**	**14 points**	**14 points**
May be marginal	8-11			
Agricultural Suitability (crops)		Highly suitable for irrigated crops	Highly suitable for irrigated crops	Highly suitable for irrigated crops
Highly suitable for irrigated crops	8-10			
Highly suitable for irrigated ornamentals, pasture, dry farming	6-8	**10 points**	**10 points**	**10 points**
Moderately suitable for				

Resource Component and Range of Points that can be Assigned Based on Santa Barbara County Initial Study Guidelines	APN 117-020-066	APN 117-160-027	APN 117-160-039
irrigated. crops 4-5 Low suitability for any crops 1-3			
Existing and Historic Land Use Active agricultural production 5 Maintained range 5 Unmaintained, productive within last 10 years 3-5 Vacant 1-3	Active agricultural production **5 points**	Active agricultural production **5 points**	Active agricultural production **5 points**
Comprehensive Plan Designation A-II 5 A-I 4	A-II **5 points**	A-II **5 points**	A-II **5 points**
Adjacent Land Uses Surrounded by agricultural operations with adequate support uses 9-10 Surrounded by agricultural operations without adequate support uses 7-8	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**
Agricultural Preserve Potential Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve by itself, or is in a preserve 5-7 Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve by itself 2-4 Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels 3-4 Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels 1-3 Cannot qualify 0	Is in an agricultural preserve **7 points**	Is in an agricultural preserve **7 points**	Is in an agricultural preserve **7 points**
Combined Farming Operations* Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation 5 Provides an important component of a combined farming operation 3 Provides a small component of a combined farming operation 1 No combined operation 0	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (Manzanita) **5 points**	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (AgroJal) **5 points**	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (Manzanita) **5 points**
Total Points	**75 points**	**78 points**	**79 points**
Viable	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**

*As defined within the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008), a combined farming operation refers to more than one separate parcel managed as a single agricultural operation.

Table 5.2-2. Viability of Subject Parcels Following Implementation of Proposed Project

Resource Component and Range of Points that can be Assigned Based on Santa Barbara County Initial Study Guidelines	APN 117-020-066	APN 117-160-027	APN 117-160-039
Parcel size Less than 5 acres 0-3 5-10 acres 4-6 10-40 acres 7-8	93.97 acres -1.17 acres 92.80 acres **8 points**	53.31 acres - 1.45 acres 51.86 acres **8 points**	53.27 acres - .97 acres 52.30 acres **8 points**
Soil classification (unchanged) Class I 14-15 Class II 11-13 Class VII 1-5	Rs - 0 Sh - VII StA-I MnA-III SuA - II **11 points**	SuA - II SeD - III SvA - I StA - I **14 points**	StA - I SvA - I **15 points**
Water availability (unchanged) Adequate supply 12-14 May be marginal 8-11	Adequate Supply **14 points**	Adequate Supply **14 points**	Adequate Supply **14 points**
Agricultural Suitability (crops) (unchanged) Highly suitable for irrigated crops 8-10 Highly suitable for irrigated ornamentals, pasture, dry farming 6-8 Moderately suitable for irrigated. crops 4-5 Low suitability for any crops 1-3	Highly suitable for irrigated crops **10 points**	Highly suitable for irrigated crops **10 points**	Highly suitable for irrigated crops **10 points**
Existing and Historic Land Use (unchanged) Active agricultural production 5 Maintained range 5 Unmaintained, productive within last 10 years 3-5 Vacant 1-3	Active agricultural production **5 points**	Active agricultural production **5 points**	Active agricultural production **5 points**
Comprehensive Plan Designation (unchanged) A-II 5 A-I 4	A-II **5 points**	A-II **5 points**	A-II **5 points**
Adjacent Land Uses (unchanged) Surrounded by agricultural operations with adequate support uses 9-10 Surrounded by agricultural operations without adequate support uses 7-8	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**	Surrounded by agricultural operations **10 points**
Agricultural Preserve Potential (unchanged) Can qualify for prime	Is in an agricultural preserve	Is in an agricultural preserve	Is in an agricultural preserve

Resource Component and Range of Points that can be Assigned Based on Santa Barbara County Initial Study Guidelines	APN 117-020-066	APN 117-160-027	APN 117-160-039
agricultural preserve by itself, or is in a preserve 5-7 Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve by itself 2-4 Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels 3-4 Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels 1-3 Cannot qualify 0	**7 points**	**7 points**	**7 points**
Combined Farming Operations* **(unchanged)** Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation 5 Provides an important component of a combined farming operation 3 Provides a small component of a combined farming operation 1 No combined operation 0	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (Manzanita) **5 points**	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (AgroJal) **5 points**	Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation (Manzanita) **5 points**
Total Points	**75 points**	**78 points**	**79 points**
Viable	**Yes-Unchanged**	**Yes-Unchanged**	**Yes-Unchanged**

*As defined within the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008), a combined farming operation refers to more than one separate parcel managed as a single agricultural operation.

Effect Upon Adjacent Agricultural Lands. During construction activities, installation of the Channel improvements may have the potential to result in short-term construction-related impacts to adjacent crops resulting from the generation of dust. Dust on crops increases their susceptibility to pests and result in deterioration of photosynthetic function, among other effects, which could result in a significant impact. However, implementation of BMPs during the construction period including, but not limited to watering of the soils to prevent dust as specified in MM AQ-1 (Dust Control Measures) would reduce this potential to **less than significant with mitigation**.

5.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include thresholds of significance for cumulative impacts to agricultural resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts.

Also, as indicated within the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines (2008), a portion of the weighted point system utilized to assess the agricultural viability of a parcel and in-turn a project's potential significance to agricultural resources takes cumulative impacts into consideration. Specifically, point system item number nine related to combined farming operations. As indicated within the thresholds, "this section is designed to award bonus point to parcels which provide a

component of a combined farming operation. The reason these points are assigned as a bonus is to address cumulative impacts and to recognize the importance of combined farming operations in Santa Barbara County". The parcels affected by the proposed Project have been assigned 5 points (highest amount) in this category as providing a significant component of a combined farming operation; therefore as indicated, the potential for cumulative impacts to agricultural resources has been accounted for.

Additionally, after construction is completed, the proposed Project is intended to improve existing flood control to increase conveyance and protect adjacent uses (agricultural development) from flooding. As such, a benefit to the adjacent agricultural developments would result. Therefore, the Project's cumulative effect on regional agriculture would be less than significant.

5.2.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

Other Measures:

- MM AQ-2. Dust Control Measures. (see Section 5.3)

Residual impacts would be less than significant.

5.3 AIR QUALITY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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		
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	**Poten. Signif.**	**Less than Signif. with Mitigation**	**Less Than Signif.**	**No Impact**	**Reviewed Under Previous Document**
d. Emissions equivalent to or greater than 10,000 metric tons of CO2 per year from stationary sources during long-term operations?			X		
e. Emissions equivalent to or greater than 1,100 MT of CO2e per year or 4.6 MT CO2e/Service Population (residents + employees) per year from other than stationary sources during long-term operations?			X		
f. Emissions equivalent to or greater than 6.6 MT CO2e/Service Population (residents + employees) per year for plans (General Plan Elements, Community Plans, etc.)?			X		

5.3.1 Setting

5.3.1.1 Physical

The Project site is located in Santa Barbara County within the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) which encompasses three counties: San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura. The Santa Barbara County portion of the SCCAB periodically fails to meet air quality standards and is a designated non-attainment" area for the State 8-hour ozone standard and particulate matter (PM_{10}) standard. The

National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS and CAAQS) relevant to the proposed Project are provided in Table 5.3-1.

5.3.1.2 Regulatory

Air pollution control is administered on three government 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 the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD) shares responsibility with the CARB for ensuring that all State and Federal ambient air quality standards are attained within the Santa Barbara County portion of the SCCAB.

Table 5.3-1. Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	Federal Standards (NAAQS)	
			Primary	Secondary
Ozone (O_3)	1-hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m^3)	--	--
	8-hour	0.07 ppm (137 µg/m^3)	0.075 ppm (147 µg/m^3)	Same as primary
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	24-hour	50 µg/m^3	150 µg/m^3	Same as primary
	Annual	20 µg/m^3	--	--
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	24-hour [3]	--	35 µg/m^3	Same as primary
	Annual	12 µg/m^3	12 µg/m^3	Same as primary
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm (23 µg/m^3)	35 ppm (40 mg/m^3)	--
	8-hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	--
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)	1-hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m^3)	0.10 ppm (188 µg/m^3)	Same as primary
	Annual	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m^3)	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m^3)	Same as primary
Sulfur dioxide (SO_2)	1-hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m^3)	0.075 ppm (196 µg/m^3)	--
	3-hour	--	--	0.50 ppm (1300 µg/m^3)
	24-hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m^3)	0.014 ppm (for certain areas)	--
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	--	0.030 ppm (for certain areas)	--
Lead (Pb)	30-Day	1.5 µg/m^3	--	--
	Quarterly	---	1.5 µg/m^3	Same as primary
	3-Month	---	0.15 µg/m^3	Same as primary

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	Federal Standards (NAAQS)	
			Primary	Secondary
Sulfates	24-hour	25 µg/m^3	--	--
Hydrogen sulfide (H_2S)	1-hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m^3)	--	--
Visibility Reducing Particles (VRP)	8-hour	Extinction coefficient of 0.23 per kilometer	--	--
Vinyl Chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m^3)	--	--

Source: CARB, 2014 (A)

The SBCAPCD and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments adopted the 2010 Clean Air Plan in January 2011, which was prepared to address the requirements of the Clean Air Act. The 2010 Clean Air Plan provides an update to the County's emissions of ozone precursors by at least 5 percent each year. Overall, air quality in Santa Barbara County is improving, as the number of County exceedances of the State 1-hour ozone standard has declined from 37 days in 1990 to three days or less in recent years.

According to Santa Barbara County's 2010 Clean Air Plan (SBCAPCD and SBCAG, 2011, the largest human-generated contributors to locally generated air pollution in Santa Barbara County are on-road mobile sources (cars and trucks). Other mobile sources (planes, trains, boats, off-road equipment, farm equipment), the evaporation of solvents, combustion of fossil fuels, surface cleaning and coating, prescribed burning, and petroleum production and marketing combine to make up the remainder (SBCAPCD and SBCAG, 2011). The primary sources of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ include mineral quarries, grading, demolition, agricultural tilling, road dust, and vehicle exhaust.

Air quality in Santa Barbara County is monitored by a network of 18 stations. The nearest air quality monitoring station to the Project is located approximately 3.3 miles to the southeast at 906 South Broadway Street in Santa Maria, California 93454. Table 5.3-2 provides an air quality summary for non-attainment pollutants at the Santa Maria Station.

Table 5.3-2. Air Quality Summary for Non-Attainment Pollutants at Nearest Air Monitoring Station (Santa Maria)

Parameter	Standard	Year		
		2011	2012	2013
Ozone – parts per million (ppm)				
Maximum 1-hr concentration monitored		0.065	0.057	0.064
Number of days exceeding CAAQS	0.09	0	0	0
Maximum 8-hr concentration monitored		0.061	0.051	0.060
Number of days exceeding 8-hour NAAQS	0.075	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding 8-hour CAAQS	0.07	0	0	0

Parameter	Standard	Year		
		2011	2012	2013
PM_{10} – micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$)				
Maximum sample		64.2	72.0	109.3
Number of samples exceeding CAAQS	50	6	10	23
Number of samples exceeding NAAQS	150	*	*	*

Note: * means there was insufficient data available to determine the value.
Source: CARB 2014(B).

No thresholds have been established for short-term impacts associated with construction activities. However, the County's Grading Ordinance requires standard dust control conditions for all projects involving grading activities. Long-term/operational emissions thresholds have been established to address mobile emissions (i.e., motor vehicle emissions) and stationary source emissions (i.e., stationary boilers, engines, paints, solvents, and chemical or industrial processing operations that release pollutants).

5.3.2 Impact Discussion

a, b, and c). Less than Significant. The Project would not result in significant new vehicle emissions. It would not involve new stationary sources (i.e., equipment, machinery, hazardous materials storage, industrial or chemical processing, etc.) that would increase the amount of pollutants released into the atmosphere. The Project would also not generate additional smoke, ash, odors, or long term dust after construction.

Potential Air Quality Impacts (Criteria Pollutants)

Project-related construction would require grading that has been minimized to the extent possible under the circumstances. Earth moving operations at the Project site would not have the potential to result in significant project-specific short-term emissions of fugitive dust and $PM_{10,}$ with the implementation of standard dust control measures that are required for all new development in the County.

Emissions of ozone precursors (NO_x and ROC) during Project construction would result primarily from the on-site use of heavy earthmoving equipment. Due to the limited period of time that grading activities would occur on the Project site, construction-related emissions of NO_x and ROC would **not be significant** on a project-specific or cumulative basis. However, due to the non-attainment status of the air basin for ozone, the Project should implement measures recommended by the APCD to reduce construction-related emissions of ozone precursors to the extent feasible. Compliance with these measures is routinely required for all new development in the County. These measures may include, but would not necessarily be limited to an Emissions Reduction Plan (**MM AQ-1**) and standard dust control measures (**MM AQ-2**). Although impacts associated with construction activities would be **less than significant**, the implementation of **MM AQ-1** and **MM AQ-2** would further reduce potential impacts.

Long-term emissions are typically estimated using the URBEMIS computer model program. However, the proposed Project is short-term in nature and would not have any long-term operational emissions. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have a potentially significant long-term impact on air quality. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

d, e, and f). Less than Significant. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) include carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3). Combustion of fossil fuels constitutes the primary source of GHGs. GHGs accumulate in the atmosphere, where these gases trap heat near the Earth's surface by absorbing infrared radiation. This effect causes global warming and climate change, with adverse impacts on humans and the environment. Potential effects include reduced water supplies in some areas, ecological changes that threaten some species, reduced agricultural productivity in some areas, increased coastal flooding, and other effects.

In 2009, the California Natural Resources Agency amended the Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA regarding the evaluation of greenhouse gases. Specifically, these amendments established that lead agencies …"make a good faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project" (Section 15064.4). These amendments obligate lead agencies to determine whether the estimated amount of greenhouse gas emissions from a project would exceed a threshold of significance and consider the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement regional and local goals for reducing or mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

The County's methodology to address Global Climate Change in CEQA documents is still evolving. Currently, neither the County Planning Division nor the SBCAPCD have adopted thresholds for determining significance values of greenhouse gases. However, as recently as September 2014 public hearing were conducted on behalf of the development of an inventory of GHG emissions and a Climate Action Strategy and Climate Action Plan. The District is proposing to update its Environmental Review Guidelines to include guidance for evaluating the significance of the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions from new or modified stationary sources. Stationary sources projects include land uses with processes and equipment that require a District permit to operate, such as oil and gas facilities, landfills, and facilities with large combustion devices.

Until County-specific data becomes available and significance thresholds applicable to GHG emissions are developed and formally adopted, the County is following an interim approach to evaluating GHG emissions. This interim approach has been looking to criteria adopted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the San Luis Obispo County Air Quality Management District (SLOCAPCD) for guidance on determining significance of GHG emissions. As shown in Table 5.3-3 (Significance Determination Criteria for Greenhouse Gas Emissions), a 10,000 MTCO2e/r threshold for stationary sources is being used for this interim approach. Total annual GHG emissions for the Project are estimated to be 62 metric tons of CO2e/year, which is below the currently used threshold (Attachment 2). GHG Emissions would be **less than significant.**

Table 5.3-3. Significance Determination Criteria for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Significance Determination Criteria	
GHG Emission Source Category	**Operational Emissions**
Non-Stationary Sources	1,100 metric tons (MT) of CO_2e/yr[1] OR 4.6 MT CO_2e/Service Population[2]/year (yr) (residents + employees)
Stationary Sources	10,000 MT/yr
Plans	6.6 MT CO_2e/Service Population[2]/yr (residents + employees)

1: CO_2e, or carbon dioxide equivalent, is a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. The idea is to express the impact of each different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO_2 that would create the same amount of warming.

2: Significance criteria for GHGs may be based on either a per capita basis (residential only Projects) or a service population basis (sum of the number of jobs and the number of residents provided by a mixed-use project). Santa Barbara County along with BAAQMD utilizes a service population metric for calculating emissions inventory.

5.3.3 Cumulative Impacts

Based on the nature of air basins, air quality impacts associated with GHGs must be considered on a cumulative basis. Combustion of fossil fuels constitutes the primary source of GHGs. GHGs accumulate in the atmosphere, where these gases trap heat near the Earth's surface by absorbing infrared radiation. This effect causes global warming and climate change, with adverse impacts on humans and the environment. The County's Environmental Thresholds for greenhouse gases 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, including GHGs, is not cumulatively considerable, and its cumulative effect is **less than significant**.

5.3.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce the Project's air resource impacts to a less than significant level:

> **MM AQ-1. Dust Control Measures.** Dust generated by construction activities shall be kept to a minimum with a goal of retaining dust on site. During construction, clearing, grading, earth moving, excavation, or transportation, water trucks or sprinkler systems shall be used to prevent dust from leaving the site and create a crust after each day's activities cease. At a minimum, this should include wetting down such areas in the late morning and after work is completed for the day. Additionally, the following measures shall be implemented to further reduce the potential for dust generation on site:
>
> - Minimize amount of disturbed area and reduce on site vehicle speeds.
> - If importation, exportation and stockpiling of fill material is involved, soil stockpiled for more than two days 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.
> - Gravel pads shall be installed at all access points to prevent tracking of mud onto public roads.

- After clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation is completed, treat the disturbed area by watering, or revegetating, or by spreading soil binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed so that dust generation would not occur.
- The district shall designate a person or persons to monitor the dust control program and to order increased watering, 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 start of construction.

Plan Requirements: Measures shall be shown on grading and building plans. **Timing**: Measures shall be adhered to throughout grading, hauling, and construction activities. **Monitoring**: The District shall perform periodic site inspections to ensure compliance with approved plans. APCD inspectors shall respond to nuisance complaints.

The following mitigation measure would further reduce the Project's less than significant short-term air quality impacts associated with ozone precursor emissions:

MM AQ-2. Emissions Reduction Measures. The District will prepare an emissions reduction plan to be submitted to the SBCAPCD for review and approval 60 days prior to the commencement of Project work activities. The Emissions Reduction Plan may include, but will not be limited to the following.

- 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.
- All portable diesel-powered construction equipment shall be registered with the state's portable equipment registration program OR shall obtain an SBCAPCD permit.
- Mobile construction equipment will be subject to the CARB Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles (the purpose of which is to reduce diesel particulate matter [PM] and criteria pollutant emissions from in-use [existing] off-road diesel-fueled vehicles).
- To the extent feasible, all commercial diesel vehicles will limit engine idling time to five minutes or less while loading and unloading; electric auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible.
- Diesel construction equipment meeting the CARB Tier 1 emission standards for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines shall be used. Equipment meeting CARB Tier 2 or higher emission standards should be used to the maximum extent feasible.
- Diesel powered equipment should be replaced by electric equipment whenever feasible.
- Catalytic converters shall be installed on gasoline-powered equipment, if feasible.
- 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.

Plan Requirements: Measures shall be shown on grading and building plans. **Timing:** Measure shall be adhered to throughout grading, hauling, and construction activities. **Monitoring:** The District shall perform periodic site inspections to ensure compliance with approved plans. APCD inspectors shall respond to nuisance complaints.

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif.with Mitigation	Less than Signifi.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
Flora					
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		
Fauna					
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			
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		

5.4.1 Setting

5.4.1.1 Environmental

The Unit 2 Channel is a generally linear, regularly maintained earthen trapezoidal flood control channel located in an intensely cultivated area, and extends from S.R. 166/West Main Street north to the Santa Maria River. The Unit 2 Channel collects storm run-off and agricultural irrigation run-off from the West Main Street channel (located south of and parallel to S.R. 166/West Main Street) and East Channel (located south of and parallel to the Santa Maria River).

Ongoing Channel Maintenance. The Unit 2 Channel is annually cleared of obstructive vegetation and excess sediment to maintain capacity. Maintenance activities are conducted in compliance with a Biological Opinion (no. 8-8-11-F-66) issued by the USFWS to minimize take of the threatened California red-legged frog (CRLF). The Biological Opinion requires implementation of the following terms and conditions (among others):

- Biologists used to conduct capturing, handling, relocating and monitoring of California red-legged frogs must be approved by USFWS.

- If CRLF are found in a maintenance area and are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the USFWS-approved biologist must relocate them to suitable habitat where they will not be affected.
- A USFWS-approved biologist must survey for CRLF 48 hours before maintenance work begins, and if found, must relocate them to suitable habitat where they will not be affected.
- A USFWS-approved biologist must be present at the work site until all CRLF have been relocated and workers have been instructed, and stop work if take of CRLF would exceed authorized levels.
- A USFWS-approved biologist must conduct a training session for all maintenance personnel, including measures to be implemented to conserve CRLF.
- If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes must be screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.125 inches.
- All equipment maintenance and refueling will be conducted in a designated area with appropriate containment.
- Any equipment or vehicles driven and operated within or adjacent to drainages will be checked daily to ensure there is no leak of fuel/oils.
- The District will implement best management practices (BMPs) that are appropriate to the situation at each Project area to reduce soil erosion, sedimentation, and adverse effects to water quality.

Vegetation Communities and Flora. The Project site supports two types of vegetation, a ruderal community that colonizes the Unit 2 Channel, and arroyo willow thickets (*Salix lasiolepis* Shrubland Alliance) found in the Santa Maria River. The Unit 2 Channel supports mostly ruderal (weedy) species, including ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), summer mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) and wild radish (*Raphanus sativus*). Small patches of wetland vegetation occur in the channel bottom, including poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), willow weed (*Persicaria lapathifolia*), rabbits-foot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*) and barnyard grass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*). Nearly perennial surface flow (from agricultural tailwater) from the Unit 2 Channel discharging to the dry streambed supports a small thicket (about 5 acres) of arroyo willows in the Santa Maria River.

Based on a botanical survey conducted by Padre Associates in July 2014, a total of 48 plant species were recorded within the Project site, with 16 species (33 percent) encountered considered native and the remaining 32 species (67 percent) considered non-native and/or naturalized into the area. Seventeen of these 32 non-native plant species have been listed as invasive in the 2006 California Invasive Plant Inventory. Due to the seasonal timing (summer) of the botanical survey, it is anticipated that most spring-flowering herbaceous species (if present) were not detected. Sensitive plant species observed or potentially occurring at the Project site are discussed in Table ~~5.4-2~~ 5.4-1.

Table 5.4-1. Sensitive Plant Species Known or Potentially Occurring within the Project Region

Species	Status	Habitat Description	Nearest Reported Location to Unit 2 Channel
Sand mesa manzanita (*Arctostaphylos rudis*)	List 1B	Sandy soils in chaparral, coastal scrub	Point Sal ridge, 8.8 miles to the southwest (CNDDB, 2014)
Blochman's leafy daisy (*Erigeron blochmaniae*)	List 1B	Coastal dunes	Near Black Road, 1.8 miles to the south (CNDDB, 2014)
Gaviota tarplant *(Deinandra increscens* ssp. *villosa)*	FE, SE, List 1B	Coastal scrub, coastal bluff scrub, grassland	Casmalia Hills, 7.4 miles to the southwest (CNDDB, 2014)
Davidson's saltscale (*Atriplex serenana* var. *davidsoni*)	List 1B	Coastal scrub, coastal bluff scrub	Near Highway 1, 5 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
La Graciosa thistle (*Cirsium scariosum* var. *loncholepis*)	FE, ST, List 1B	Coastal dunes, brackish marsh, riparian scrub, woodland	Guadalupe, 5.6 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Coastal goosefoot (*Chenopodium littoreum*)	List 1B	Coastal dunes	Nipomo Dunes, 8.3 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Crisp monardella (*Monardella undulata* ssp. *crispa*)	List 1B	Coastal dunes, coastal scrub	Nipomo Dunes, 6.6 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Short-lobed broomrape (*Orobanche parishii* ssp. *brachyloba*)	List 4	Coastal scrub, coastal dunes, coastal bluff scrub	Oso Flaco Lake, 8.0 miles to the west-northwest (CNDDB, 2014)
Dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi* ssp. *blochmaniae*)	List 1B	Chaparral, coastal dunes	Santa Maria area (CNDDB, 2014)
Black-flowered figwort (*Scrophularia atrata*)	List 1B	Coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal dunes, coastal scrub	Casmalia Hills, 7.6 miles to the southwest (CNDDB, 2014)

Status Key

FE:	Federally-listed as Endangered
List 1B:	California Native Plant Society (CNPS), plants Rare, Threatened or Endangered in California and elsewhere
List 4:	CNPS, plants of limited distribution, a watch list
SE:	California-listed as Endangered
ST:	California-listed as Threatened

Fauna. The Unit 2 Channel and adjacent areas are of low value for wildlife species, due to the lack of persistent vegetation, regular channel maintenance and surrounding agricultural fields that provide minimal habitat value. However, patches of riparian vegetation along the Santa Maria River provide foraging and breeding habitat for wildlife. Due to the fragmented nature of these habitat patches, habitat value is considered low to moderate.

Fish. The Unit 2 Channel supports mosquitofish, and could be colonized by other fish species from the Santa Maria River during high flow periods. Flows are typically ephemeral in the Santa Maria River near the confluence with Unit 2, while flows near the River mouth are nearly perennial. Fish known from the lower Santa Maria River include arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*), mosquitofish (*Gambusia*

affinis), partially-armored 3-spined stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus microcephalus*) and tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*) (Swift et al., 1993). Mosquitofish were observed in the northern portion of the Unit 2 Channel during the field survey. Fish sampling was not conducted and it is possible that other species are present

Amphibians. All amphibians require moisture for at least a portion of their life cycle, with many requiring a permanent water source for habitat and reproduction. Some terrestrial amphibian species have adapted to more arid conditions and are not completely dependent on a perennial or standing source of water. Amphibian species known or expected to occur in the Unit 2 Channel and/or adjacent Santa Maria River include western toad (*Bufo boreas*), western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondii*), Baja California treefrog (*Pseudacris hypochondiaca*), California treefrog (Pseudacris cadaverina), and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). The California red-legged frog is a Federally-listed threatened species and is routinely observed in the Unit 2 Channel during biological surveys conducted in support of channel maintenance activities ~~(see Table 5.4-3)~~.

Reptiles. Reptile species known or expected to occur in the Unit 2 Channel and/or adjacent Santa Maria River include western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), side-blotch lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), Santa Cruz garter snake (*Thamnophis atratus*), coast garter snake (*Thamnophis elegans terrestris*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*) (CNDDB, 2014; Corps of Engineers, 2009). Western pond turtle has been observed in the Unit 2 Channel during biological surveys conducted in support of channel maintenance activities. Western fence lizard was observed along the Santa Maria River levee during the field survey. Several special-status reptile species have the potential to occur in the region, and are discussed in Table 5.4-2.

Birds. Birds observed along the Unit 2 Channel and nearby portions of the Santa Maria River during field surveys by Flood Control District biologists or surveys conducted for this Project or the Santa Maria Levee Improvement Project include American crow, American goldfinch, Anna's hummingbird, barn swallow, black phoebe, black-chinned hummingbird, brewer's blackbird, red-winged blackbird, tri-colored blackbird, bushtit, California quail, California thrasher, California towhee, cliff swallow, common yellowthroat, European starling, great horned owl, burrowing owl, greater roadrunner, herring gull, horned lark, house finch, house wren, lark sparrow, lesser goldfinch, loggerhead shrike, mallard, mourning dove, northern mockingbird, Nuttall's woodpecker, red-tailed hawk, Eurasian collared dove, rock dove, Say's phoebe, song sparrow, turkey vulture, western scrub jay and Wilson's warbler. Active cliff swallow nests were observed within the Unit 2 box culvert at the Santa Maria River levee during the field survey. Several special-status bird species have the potential to occur in the region, and are discussed in Table 5.4-2.

Mammals. Mammals observed along the Unit 2 Channel and nearby portions of the Santa Maria River during field surveys conducted for this Project or the Santa Maria Levee Improvement Project include Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), long-tailed weasel (*Mustela frenata*), brush rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmani*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beechyi*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), feral house cat (*Felis silvestris*), Pacific kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys agilis*) and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*). Numerous ground squirrel burrows were observed on the banks of the Unit 2 Channel during the field survey. Several special-status mammal species have the potential to occur in the region, and are discussed in Table 5.4-2.

Table 5.4-2. Regional Special-Status Wildlife Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat	Status	Nearest Known Location
Monarch butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	Eucalyptus groves	SA	Preisker Park, 2.6 miles to the east (Meade, 1999)
Arroyo chub	*Gila orcuttii*	Low elevation streams	CSC	Lower Santa Maria River (CNDDB, 2014)
Tidewater goby	*Eucyclogobius newberryi*	Coastal estuaries & streams	FE, CSC	Santa Maria River estuary, 7 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Western spade-foot toad	*Spea hammondii*	Vernal pools	CSC	Santa Maria River, 700 feet west of the confluence with Unit 2 (CNDDB, 2014)
California red-legged frog	*Rana draytonii*	Instream pools	FT, CSC	Observed within the Unit 2 Channel by County biologists
California tiger salamander	*Ambystoma californiense*	Seasonal ponds	FE, ST CSC	Breeding pool, 4.1 miles to the south (Hunt & Associates, 2000)
Silvery legless lizard	*Anniella pulchra*	Sandy woodlands, chaparral	CSC	Guadalupe/Nipomo Dunes, 7.3 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Coast horned lizard	*Phrynosoma blainvillii*	Coastal scrub, chaparral	CSC	Along Santa Maria River, 2.3 miles to the east (CNDDB, 2014)
Western pond turtle	*Emys marmorata*	Vegetated ponds	CSC	Observed within the Unit 2 Channel by County biologists
California least tern	*Sternula antillarum browni*	Beaches, estuaries, coastal lakes	FE, SE, FP	Santa Maria River estuary, 8.5 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Western snowy plover	*Charadrius nivosus*	Beaches, coastal dunes	FT, CSC	Santa Maria River mouth, 9.1 miles to the west (CNDDB, 2014)
Burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia*	Grasslands, open scrubland	CSC	Observed near the Unit 2 Channel by County biologists in 2012
California horned lark	*Eremophila alpestris actia*	Grasslands, open scrubland	WL	Observed near the Unit 2 Channel during field survey for the Project
Loggerhead shrike	*Lanius ludovicianus*	Grassland, open scrub	CSC	Observed along the Santa Maria River, 3 miles to the east (Corps of Engineers, 2009)
Tri-colored blackbird	*Agelaius tricolor*	Marshes	CSC (nesting colony)	Observed near the Unit 2 Channel by County biologists
American badger	*Taxidea taxus*	Grasslands, scrub, open woodlands	CSC	U.S. 101 at Main Street, 3.8 miles to the east (CNDDB, 2014)

Status Codes:
CSC California Species of Special Concern (CDFW)
FE Federal Endangered (USFWS)
FT Federal Threatened (USFWS)
SA Special Animal (CDFW)
SE State Endangered (CDFW)
ST State Threatened (CDFW)
FP Fully protected under the California Fish & Game Code
WL Watch list (CDFW)

Sensitive Biological Resources. The California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), administered by the CDFW, provides an inventory of plant and animal species as well as vegetation communities, which are considered sensitive by state and federal resource agencies, academic institutions, and conservation groups such as the California Native Plant Society (CNPS).

In general, the principal reason an individual taxon (species, subspecies, or variety) is considered sensitive is the documented or perceived decline or limitation of its population size or geographical extent and/or distribution resulting in most cases from habitat loss. In addition, wildlife movement corridors or linkages are considered sensitive by local, state, and federal resource and conservation agencies because these corridors allow wildlife to move between adjoining open space areas that are becoming increasingly isolated and fragmented due to the existing rugged terrain combined with expanding urbanization or changes in vegetation (Beier and Loe 1992).

Sensitive Plant Communities. Sensitive plant communities are vegetation assemblages, associations, or sub-associations that have experienced cumulative losses within the region and/or have relatively limited distribution. Arroyo willow thickets, which occur within the Project site, have been assigned a rarity ranking of G4/S4, meaning at least 100 viable occurrences exist State-wide and the plant community is secure (not declining or threatened).

Special-Status Plants. For purposes of this Initial Study/Mitigated negative Declaration, plant species are considered sensitive if they are (1) listed or proposed for listing by state or federal agencies as threatened or endangered; (2) on List 1B (considered endangered throughout its range) or List 2 (considered endangered in California but more common elsewhere) of the CNPS *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS 2014); or (3) considered rare, endangered, or threatened by the State of California or other local conservation organizations or specialists.

The Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County 1992, updated 2008) also considers native specimen trees to be important and impacts to these trees can be potentially significant. Native specimen trees are defined for biological assessment purposes as mature trees that are healthy and structurally sound and have grown into the natural stature particular to the species.

A list of special-status plant species that have the potential to occur within the Project region (western Santa Maria Valley, see Table 5.4-1) was developed based on review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base, review of environmental documents prepared for other projects in the area and a plant species list provided by Flood Control District biologists. Gaviota tarplant and La Graciosa thistle are the only Federally or State-listed plant species known from the region.

Special-status plant species were not found along the Unit 2 Channel during a botanical survey conducted for the Project. Suitable habitat for sand mesa manzanita, Blochman's leafy daisy, Gaviota tarplant, Davidson's saltscale, coastal goosefoot, crisp monardella, short-lobed broomrape, dune larkspur and black-flowered figwort does not occur in proximity to the Unit 2 Channel. La Graciosa thistle has the potential to occur in riparian scrub along the Santa Maria River. However, la Graciosa thistle does not occur along the Unit 2 Channel and was not observed during the botanical survey. Therefore, special-status plant species are considered absent from the Project site.

Native Trees. Native trees (arroyo willow) occur with the Project site, primarily within the Santa Maria River. A total of 24 arroyo willow trees (at least 4 inches in diameter at breast height) occur within the Project site, including one at the reverse curve realignment site and 23 within the Santa Maria River. Fourteen of these trees are at least 8 inches in diameter at breast height and are considered specimen trees for the purposes of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Special-Status Wildlife. For purposes of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, wildlife species are considered sensitive if they are (1) listed or proposed for listing as threatened or

endangered under the Federal or California ESA; (2) designated as California fully protected by CDFW; (3) raptors (birds of prey) and active raptor nests protected by the California Fish and Game Code 3503.5; (4) designated as a California species of special concern by CDFW; and/or (5) designated as locally important species. Table 5.4-2 identifies special-status wildlife species that are known to occur or have the potential to occur within the Project region (western Santa Maria Valley).

The Unit 2 Channel and adjacent areas do not include any tree groves that could support Monarch butterfly. However, it is possible that Monarch butterflies roosting at Preisker Park or migrating through the area may forage along the Santa Maria River.

Arroyo chub may occur in the Santa Maria River at the Unit 2 Channel confluence during periods when a surface water connection exists to downstream perennial reaches. Tidewater goby is expected to be limited to the Santa Maria River estuary and adjacent portions of the River, and is unlikely to occur as far upstream as the Unit 2 Channel confluence.

Western spade-foot toad has been reported from the Santa Maria River (1 tadpole found during high rainfall year: 1995), just west of the Unit 2 Channel confluence. This species typically breeds in seasonal ponds, which are not found in the immediate Project area. It is unclear if western spade-foot toad successfully breeds in the Santa Maria River.

CRLF is known to occur in the Unit 2 Channel, and is recorded by biological monitors during maintenance activities. The maintained Unit 2 Channel is relatively low quality habitat, however the CRLF persists from year to year due to the standing water provided by agricultural runoff. The animals in the Channel are likely part of a metapopulation that includes influx of individuals from higher quality habitat at the channel outlet in the Santa Maria River and other nearby agricultural drainage channels. Table 5.4-3 provides a summary of CRLF observations during maintenance of the Unit 2 Channel. Note that the Unit 2 tailwater channel is located parallel to the Santa Maria Levee west of the Unit 2 Channel but is not hydraulically connected to the Unit 2 Channel. The West Main Street channel is located upstream of the Unit 2 Channel. CRLF is considered present at proposed channel improvement areas. The nearest designated critical habitat (Unit STB-2) for CRLF is located 4.9 miles to the south-southwest.

Table 5.4-3. Summary of California Red-legged Frog Observations During Maintenance

Maintenance Season	Number CRLF Observed in Unit 2 Channel	Number CRLF Observed in Unit 2 Tailwater Channel	Number CRLF Observed in West Main Street Channel
2006/2007	2	5	0
2007/2008	6	0	0
2008/2009	5	5	0
2009/2010	0	7	7
2010/2011	2	17	5
2011/2012	3	2	0
2012/2013	0	1	29

The range of the California tiger salamander has been established by the USFWS and Santa Barbara County and lies approximately 1.4 miles south of the Unit 2 Channel. The nearest known

breeding pond (GUAD-3) is located approximately 4.1 miles south of the Unit 2 Channel. There is no data on average movement distance between the breeding pool and terrestrial retreat sites for California tiger salamander populations, but Trenham et al. (2001) found no dispersal between ponds separated by distances greater than approximately 3,300 feet (0.6 miles). Areas surrounding the Unit 2 Channel (excluding the Santa Maria River) are under cultivation and no evidence of breeding habitat (seasonal ponds) was found during the field survey. Due the lack of breeding habitat within dispersal distance (0.6 miles), California tiger salamander is considered absent from the Project site.

Suitable habitat for silvery legless lizard, coast horned lizard, California least tern, western snowy plover, loggerhead shrike and American badger does not occur in proximity to the Unit 2 Channel, and these species are considered absent from the Project site. Western pond turtles have been observed in the Unit 2 Channel and this species is considered present at proposed channel improvement areas.

Burrowing owl was has been observed in the vicinity of the Unit 2 Channel in late 2012, and appropriately sized ground squirrel burrows occur on the channel banks. However, focused surveys for burrowing owl in 2013 and 2014 along the Unit 2 channel did not detect any. In addition, no evidence of occupation of these burrows by burrowing owl was observed during the field survey. However, suitable burrow habitat is available along the Unit 2 Channel and this species could be present during Project construction activities.

Tri-colored blackbird has been observed foraging in the vicinity of the Unit 2 Channel. However, vegetation present in the Unit 2 Channel is not suitable for breeding due to regular removal of vegetation and sediment. The nearest suitable breeding habitat for this species is located in the Santa Maria River approximately 7 miles west of the Unit 2 Channel.

California horned lark was observed foraging in the vicinity of the Unit 2 Channel during the biological field survey, primarily in the adjacent strawberry fields. The nearest suitable breeding habitat for this species is located approximately 4 miles east of the Unit 2 Channel.

Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors. Wildlife movement corridors or linkages are considered sensitive by local, state, and federal resource and conservation agencies because these corridors allow wildlife to move between adjoining open space areas offsetting the effects of isolation as open space becomes increasingly fragmented from urbanization, rugged terrain, or changes in vegetation (Beier and Loe 1992).

Highly mobile species such as larger mammals and birds are expected to move between inland areas (Los Padres National Forest) to coastal areas (Santa Maria Valley, Casmalia Hills) via the Sisquoc River and the Solomon Hills. The Project site is limited to a maintained drainage channel and adjacent agricultural fields, and does not provide any features that would focus or facilitate wildlife movement.

Wetlands and Jurisdictional Waters. Santa Barbara County has adopted the following wetland definition:

1. At least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes (i.e. plants adapted to moist areas),
2. The substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil, and
3. The substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year (Cowardin et al., 1979; County 1992, updated 2008).

Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 requires a permit for dredge/fill activities within waters of the U.S. As defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (33 CFR 328.3(a)(3)), "waters of the United States" are those that are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide; tributaries and impoundments to such waters; all interstate waters including interstate wetlands; and territorial seas.

Recent Supreme Court decisions (*Rapanos* and *Carabell*) have modified the requirements and process to establish jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act. Based on these court decisions, a water body must meet at least one of the following two standards; 1) the water body must be "relatively permanent" (flows at least 3 months per year); and 2) must have a "significant nexus" with traditional navigable waters (TNW). Significant nexus means the effect of the water body on the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the TNW must be significant (not speculative or insubstantial).

In non-tidal waters, the lateral extent of Corps jurisdiction is determined by the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) which is defined as the: "…*line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas."* (33 CFR 328[e]).

The Corps and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency define wetlands as:

> *"…those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."*

Jurisdictional wetlands are determined to be present if evidence of all three Federal criteria are observed (hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology). The National Wetland Inventory maps were reviewed to determine if mapped wetlands occur within the Project site. A wetland (palustrine scrub-shrub seasonally flooded, excavated) has been mapped immediately west of the Unit 2 reverse curve to be improved. However, this area appears to have been an irrigation reservoir that has been filled in since mapping was conducted in the 1980's. The Unit 2 flow channel north of the levee has been mapped as a wetland (palustrine scrub-shrub seasonally flooded) by the National Wetland Inventory.

Unit 2 Channel. The Unit 2 Channel drains to the Santa Maria River and the Pacific Ocean. For the purposes of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, the TNW is the Pacific Ocean, and tidally influenced portions of the Santa Maria River. Although the Unit 2 Channel is man-made, it is considered a tributary to a TNW for the purposes of Federal jurisdiction. As the Unit 2 Channel has relatively permanent flow into waters of the U.S. (Santa Maria River), it is considered Federally jurisdictional under the Clean Water Act (Corps of Engineers, 2007). This includes the confluence with the Santa Maria River within the Project site (north of the levee).

Soils along the Unit 2 Channel (south to north) have been mapped as Sorrento loam (0-2 percent slopes), Sorrento sandy loam (0-2 percent slopes), Salinas and Sorrento loams (9-15 percent slopes), Metz loamy sand (0-2 percent slopes), and sandy alluvial land. The soils of the Santa Maria River have been mapped as Riverwash. Salinas and Sorrento loams (drainages only), Metz loamy sand (drainages only), sandy alluvial land (drainages only) and Riverwash are considered hydric by the Natural Resources

Conservation Service (1992). Note that the Unit 2 Channel is not a natural drainage and soils mapping is conducted on a regional scale, such that actual soil in the channel may not reflect soil series listed above. In addition, sediment is routinely removed from the channel, which would also result in the loss of hydric soils, if present.

Hydrophytic (wetland) vegetation observed within the Unit 2 Channel was limited to small patches, less than 10 square feet per 100 feet of channel (roughly 3 percent cover). Therefore, the Unit 2 Channel does not support predominantly hydrophytes and is not considered a County-defined wetland. In addition, the Unit 2 Channel does not meet the hydrophytic vegetation criteria and does not support hydric soils. For the past twenty years of maintenance, Army Corps of Engineers has agreed with the conclusion that this is Water of the U.S. but not a wetland. Therefore, Federally jurisdictional wetlands do not occur in the Unit 2 Channel. Therefore, Federally jurisdictional wetlands do not occur in the Unit 2 Channel.

Santa Maria River. For the purposes of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, the limit of ordinary high water (OHW) is the margin of the active channel during storm events, evidenced by a wide, sandy channel. The width of OHW near the confluence with the Unit 2 Channel is about 850 feet. The Project site is located outside OHW and is not within waters of the U.S. However, consultation with the Corps of Engineers would be required as part of Project implementation to verify this conclusion. A preliminary wetland delineation was conducted by Padre Associates in July 2014 within the proposed work area north of the levee according to the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual, and wetlands were not identified due to the lack of hydric soil.

5.4.1.2 Regulatory

The criteria for determining significant impacts on biological resources were developed in accordance with Section 15065(a) and Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines and the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual Biological Resources Section (Santa Barbara County 1992, updated 2008).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a). A project may have a significant impact on the environment if the project has the potential to (1) substantially degrade the quality of the environment, (2) substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, (3) cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below a self-sustaining level, (4) threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, and/or (5) reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species.

An evaluation of whether an impact on biological resources would be substantial must consider both the resource itself and how that resource fits into a regional or local context. A substantial impact is an impact that diminishes, or results in the loss of, a sensitive biological resource or that significantly conflicts with local, State, or Federal resource conservation plans, goals, and/or regulations. Sometimes impacts can be locally adverse, but not significant. In such a case, the impacts may result in an adverse alteration of a local biological resource, but they may not substantially diminish or result in the permanent loss of an important resource on a population- or region-wide basis.

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. Implementation of the proposed project may have potentially significant adverse impacts on biological resources if it would result in any of the following:

- Have a substantial adverse impact, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFW or the USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse impact on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFW or the USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse impact on State or federally protected wetlands as defined by USACE, CDFW, RWQCB, or California Coastal Commission, including but not limited to marsh, coastal, etc., through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; and/or
- Conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State HCP.

Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual Biological Resources. 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.

The following types of project-created impacts to wetlands may be considered significant:

- Projects which result in a net loss of important wetland area or wetland habitat value, either through direct or indirect impacts to wetland vegetation, degradation of water quality, or would threaten the continuity of wetland-dependent animal or plant species are considered to have a potentially significant effect on the environment.
- Projects which substantially interrupt wildlife access, use and dispersal in wetland areas would typically be considered to have potentially significant impacts.

The following types of project-related impacts to riparian habitats may be considered significant:

- Direct removal of riparian vegetation.

- Disruption of riparian wildlife habitat, particularly animal dispersal corridors and or understory vegetation.
- Intrusion within the upland edge of the riparian canopy (generally within 50 feet in urban areas, within 100 feet in rural areas, and within 200 feet of major rivers[1] listed in the previous section), leading to potential disruption of animal migration, breeding, etc. through increased noise, light and glare, and human or domestic animal intrusion.
- Disruption of a substantial amount of adjacent upland vegetation where such vegetation plays a critical role in supporting riparian-dependent wildlife species (e. g., amphibians), or where such vegetation aids in stabilizing steep slopes adjacent to the riparian corridor, which reduces erosion and sedimentation potential.
- Construction activity which disrupts critical time periods (nesting, breeding) for fish and other wildlife species.

In general, the loss of 10 percent or more of the trees of biological value on a project site is considered potentially significant.

5.4.2 Impact Discussion

Flora

a, and c). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Special-status plant species were not found along the Unit 2 Channel during a botanical survey conducted for the Project. However, culvert installation at the Santa Maria River levee would require temporary removal of native vegetation (arroyo willow thickets) (*Salix lasiolepis* Shrubland Alliance). This plant community has been assigned a rarity ranking of G4/S4, meaning at least 100 viable occurrences exist State-wide and the plant community is secure (not declining or threatened). Mitigation measures (**MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-5** would reduce impacts to native vegetation and potential species habitat. **MM BIO-1** requires the restoration of channel banks containing riparian or wetland vegetation temporarily disturbed by maintenance or construction activities.

MM BIO-2 (Tree Avoidance and Replacement) would require that all willows in construction work areas shall be left in place and cut to the ground surface when feasible to facilitate re-growth. Willow trees greater than 6" DBH completely removed shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio.

MM BIO-3 (Minimize Vegetation Removal) would minimize vegetation removal to the extent feasible. **MM BIO-4** (Construction Monitoring) would require construction monitoring of all Project activities by a qualified Biologist to ensure compliance with all measures within the MND. **MM BIO-5** (Pre-Construction Biological Surveys) would require pre-construction surveys in order to identify potential species or habitat areas of concern prior to Project work activities. Impacts would be **less than significant** following implementation of these measures.

b). Less than Significant. Special-status plant species or suitable habitat for such species was not found during the field survey. Impacts to special-status plant species are not anticipated.

d). Less than Significant. Channel improvements would require temporary removal of non-native vegetation that has colonized the channel banks and bottom between maintenance events. This vegetation has minimal habitat value due to its ephemeral nature and lack of structure for nesting. Most of this

[1] The Project Site is located adjacent and within the Santa Maria River, which is a major river listed above. It is therefore within 200 feet of a "major river" for the purposes of this analysis.

vegetation is comprised of annual species which readily return to the area in the following season. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

e). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Proposed realignment of the reverse curve and adding a culvert at the Unit 2 confluence with the Santa Maria River would involve removal of approximately 24 native arroyo willow trees, including 14 specimen native trees. Mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-5** would be implemented to reduce impacts to native vegetation and potential species habitat. **MM BIO-1** (Restoration of Temporarily Disturbed Areas) requires the restoration of channel banks containing riparian or wetland vegetation that are temporarily disturbed by maintenance or construction activities associated with the following: channel shaping, placement of bank protection, ramp construction, and repair or construction of bank protection and grade stabilizers.

MM BIO-2 (Tree Avoidance and Replacement) would require restoration of this area. Specifically, all willows in construction work areas shall be left in place and cut to the ground surface when feasible to facilitate re-growth. Willow trees greater than 6" DBH completely removed shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio.

MM BIO-3 (Minimize Vegetation Removal) would minimize vegetation removal to the extent feasible. **MM BIO-4** (Construction Monitoring) would require construction monitoring of all Project activities by a qualified Biologist to ensure compliance with all measures within the MND. **MM BIO-5** (Pre-Construction Biological Surveys) would require pre-construction surveys in order to identify potential species or habitat areas of concern prior to Project work activities. Impacts would be **less than significant** following implementation of these measures.

f). Less than Significant. The Project site and adjacent areas are highly disturbed by periodic channel maintenance and ongoing crop cultivation and harvesting. The proposed Project would not increase herbicide or pesticide use, introduce invasive plants or animals or otherwise alter existing habitat value. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Fauna

g). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The Unit 2 Channel is known to support California red-legged frog (Federal Threatened) and western pond turtle (California Species of Special Concern). Proposed channel improvement may result in direct mortality of these species and temporary loss of habitat. **MM BIO-4** (Construction Monitoring) and **MM BIO-5** (Pre-Construction Surveys) would require construction monitoring and surveys of all Project activities by a qualified Biologist which would result in avoidance of these species. In addition, the terms and conditions of the Biological Opinion would be fully implemented to ensure impacts to red-legged frog and western pond turtle are avoided to the extent feasible. Impacts associated with Project activities are temporary. Impacts are anticipated to be similar to those seen following routine maintenance events. Critical habitat would remain in place following completion of Project activities. Impacts would be **less than significant** following implementation of these measures.

h). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Construction of proposed channel improvements would result in a temporary reduction in wildlife foraging opportunities along the channel, and could result in direct mortality of fish and amphibians. However, mitigation measures **MM BIO-3** through **MM BIO-5** including pre-construction biological surveys (measure **MM BIO-5**) and construction monitoring (**MM BIO-4**) would result in avoidance and minimization of impacts to these species through detection and relocation. In addition, the terms and conditions of the Biological Opinion would be fully

implemented to ensure impacts to red-legged from and western pond turtle are avoided to the extent feasible. Impacts would be **less than significant** following implementation of these measures.

i). Less than Significant. Construction of proposed channel improvements would result in a temporary reduction in wildlife habitat value, primarily for foraging. Three special-status bird species (burrowing owl, California horned lark and tri-colored blackbird) have been observed in proximity to the Unit 2 Channel. Disturbance (noise, dust, human activity) associated with proposed channel improvements would prevent foraging by these species. In addition, bird breeding habitat occurs within the affected channel and loss of reproduction could occur. However, Project-related construction activities would be conducted outside of the bird breeding period, and loss of foraging habitat would be temporary as vegetation would readily colonize the affected area. Therefore, the Project-related temporary loss of foraging habitat and disturbance of reproduction would not result in a significant deterioration of wildlife habitat, including adverse effects to burrowing owl, California horned lark and tri-colored blackbird. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

j). Less than Significant. Highly mobile species such as larger mammals and birds are expected to move between inland areas (Los Padres National Forest) to coastal areas (Santa Maria Valley, Casmalia Hills) via the Sisquoc River and the Solomon Hills. The Project site is limited to a maintained drainage channel and adjacent agricultural fields, and does not provide any features that would focus or facilitate wildlife movement. The Project does not include any barriers that would hinder movement of fish or wildlife. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

k). Less than Significant. In the long-term, the Project would not include any fencing, lighting, noise or human presence along the Unit 2 Channel. However, noise and human presence would be elevated during the construction period, but would be very similar to existing maintenance activities. As no change in land use is proposed, the Project would not hinder normal wildlife activity. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

5.4.3 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed Project may incrementally contribute to the biological impacts of the cumulative projects identified in Section 4.3.1. It is anticipated that some of the cumulative projects could result in loss of native specimen trees, including the Santa Maria River Levee Multi-Use Trail (however currently unfunded) and the Bonita School Road Bridge replacement projects. In the event that these projects are implemented, the cumulative impact to native specimen trees would be significant, and the Project's incremental contribution is considerable. However, mitigation identified for the proposed Project would substantially reduce the Project's contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

Additionally, if they occur; it is likely that the Santa Maria River Levee Multi-Use Trail and the Bonita School Road Bridge replacement projects would result in the loss of arroyo willow thickets along the Santa Maria River. The cumulative impact to arroyo willow thickets would be less than significant as this plant community is not rare or declining, and the Project's incremental contribution is not considerable.

It is possible that the North County Jail and the Bonita School Road Bridge replacement projects could result in construction-related mortality of arroyo chub and/or western pond turtle. The cumulative impact to these species would be significant, and the project's incremental contribution considerable. Mitigation identified for the proposed Project would substantially reduce the project's contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

It is possible that the North County Jail, Santa Maria River Levee Multi-Use Trail (if funded) and the Bonita School Road Bridge replacement projects could result in habitat loss and/or construction-related mortality and adversely affect the local California red-legged frog population. The cumulative impact to this species would be significant, and the Project's incremental contribution considerable. Mitigation identified for the proposed Project would substantially reduce the Project's contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

It is likely that the North County Jail, Santa Maria River Levee Multi-Use Trail (if funded) and the Bonita School Road Bridge replacement projects could result in habitat loss for burrowing owl, California horned lark and tri-colored blackbird and adversely affect local populations. The cumulative impact to these species would be less than significant due to the relatively small habitat area affected, and the Project's incremental contribution not considerable.

5.4.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce the Project's biological impacts to a less than significant level:

MM BIO-1: Restoration of Temporarily Disturbed Areas. The District shall restore channel banks containing riparian or wetland vegetation that are temporarily disturbed by maintenance or construction activities associated with the following: channel shaping, placement of bank protection, ramp construction, and repair or construction of bank protection and grade stabilizers.

MM BIO-2: Tree Avoidance and Replacement. The construction work area within the Santa Maria River shall be delineated to avoid inadvertent removal of trees. All willows in construction work areas shall be left in place and cut to the ground surface, when feasible. Willow trees greater than 6 inches in diameter removed shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio. **Timing.** Immediately prior to and during work in the Santa Maria River. Willows would be planted following the completion of construction, preferably in the fall. **Monitoring.** The District shall prepare and implement a mitigation and monitoring plan to determine the number of willows removed, the number of willows planted and the number of willows surviving in the long-term.

MM BIO-3: Minimize Vegetation Removal. The District shall minimize vegetation removal from the channel bed and banks to the least amount necessary to achieve Project objective for the reach. Brushing and herbicide application for vegetation control (if necessary) shall be conducted in a non-continuous, mosaic-like manner, to the extent feasible, allowing small patches of in-channel native vegetation to persist. **Timing.** Prior to and during work in the Channel. **Monitoring.** The District shall prepare and implement a mitigation and monitoring plan to determine the amount of vegetation to be removed and will conduct and/or oversee the work to ensure that vegetation removal occurs as intended under this measure.

MM BIO-4: Construction Monitoring. The District Biologist shall monitor all construction activities daily to ensure that the appropriate methods and activities are performed in accordance with the Project Mitigated Negative Declaration. Results of the monitoring shall be included within a post-Project report. **Timing.** Prior to and during work in the Channel. **Monitoring.** The District Biologist shall monitor all Project activities and will report on the results in a post-Project report.

MM BIO-5: Pre-Construction Biological Surveys and Avoidance Measures. The District Biologist shall inspect all maintenance areas prior to the start of Project activities and in the Spring during annual spring assessments (April and May) to determine if any sensitive plants, fish, or

wildlife species are present. If species are present, the District shall modify construction activities to avoid removal or substation disturbance of the key habitat areas or features. If a rare plant could be affected, the District shall relocate the plant by cultivation or seeding methods to a suitable site nearby. If a sensitive fish or wildlife species is present during work activities, the District shall schedule work to avoid the species if possible. If not possible, the District shall attempt to relocate the species or population with approval from the Department of Fish and Wildlife, or the National Marine Fisheries Service or other appropriate agency. Endangered species with handling permits shall be consulted during relocation efforts to provide additional assurances that relocation, if necessary, is effective. Such consultation shall include assistance in the field efforts as warranted. **Timing.** Prior to and during work in the Channel. **Monitoring.** The District Biologist shall monitor all Project activities and will document occurrences of sensitive species in or near Project work areas prior to the start of Project construction. Avoidance and impact minimization measures will be specified in Project work plans as necessary. District staff will monitor the avoidance as part of the channel work. The District Biologist shall monitor all Project activities and will report on the results in a post-Project report.

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
Archaeological Resources					
a. Disruption, alteration, destruction, or adverse effect on a recorded prehistoric or historic archaeological site (note site number below)?			X		
b. Disruption or removal of human remains?		X			
c. Increased potential for trespassing, vandalizing, or sabotaging archaeological resources?			X		
d. Ground disturbances in an area with potential cultural resource sensitivity based on the location of known historic or prehistoric sites?		X			
Ethnic Resources					
e. Disruption of or adverse effects upon a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic group?		X			
f. Increased potential for trespassing, vandalizing, or sabotaging ethnic, sacred, or ceremonial places?			X		
g. The potential to conflict with or restrict existing religious, sacred, or educational use of the area?			X		

5.5.1 Setting

The following information is based on the Phase I Cultural Resources Study completed for Unit 2 Channel Drainage Capacity Improvements Project by Padre Associates Archaeologist Rachael J. Letter, M.S., RPA (Padre Associates, 2014). Please refer to Attachment 3 for detail.

5.5.1.1 Background

The Project area is within the San Luis Range of the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province, a north-northwest trending range along the California coast between Santa Maria and the Oregon border (Schoenherr, 1992). More specifically, the Project area is located within the Santa Maria Valley, an east-west trending alluvial valley bounded on the north by the San Rafael Range and to the south by the

Casmalia Range and the Solomon Hills. The Project is located within a largely undeveloped portion of Northern Santa Barbara County and is mostly comprised of agricultural land.

For at least the past 10,000 years, the area that is now Santa Barbara County has been inhabited by Chumash Native Americans and their ancestors. Due to the presence of known cultural and archaeological resources in Santa Barbara County, a Phase I cultural resources study was conducted for the proposed Unit 2 Channel Drainage Capacity Improvements Project (Padre Associates, 2014) (Attachment 3). The Study included an archaeological records search, Native American consultation, and a Phase I pedestrian survey as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on the results of the Study, there are no known cultural resources located in the vicinity of the proposed Project. Artificial Fill (Af) (sand) and Alluvium (Qal) deposits underlay the area. Previous ground disturbance on the subject parcel is extensive and is predominantly related to the agricultural industry (in the form of irrigated row crops) and from the construction of the Unit 2 Channel.

5.5.1.2 Regulatory

County Thresholds. The County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008) contains guidelines for identification, significance determination, and mitigation of impacts to important cultural resources. Chapter 8 of the Manual, the *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". A project that may cause a substantial adverse effect on an archaeological resource may have a significant effect on the environment.

5.5.2 Impact Discussion

a, c, f, and g). Less than Significant Impact. According to the Phase I Cultural Resources Study for Unit 2 Channel Drainage Capacity Improvements Project (Padre Associates, 2014) no known culturally significant resources; or religious, sacred or educational sites, are located within or adjacent to the Project site. The Project would not increase the potential for disruption of a site or increase the potential for vandalism or trespassing. As a result, impacts would be **less than significant.**

b, d, and e). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Due to the current agricultural land use of the Project site as well as the presence of artificial fill, the potential for undiscovered cultural resources to exist onsite is low. However, in the event that previously unidentified cultural resources are discovered during site development, the standard archaeological discovery condition (**MM CUL-1**) would mitigate impacts to cultural resources to **less than significant** levels.

Similarly, in the unlikely event that human remains were to be discovered during Project construction activities, 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 the 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 (**MM CUL-2**).

5.5.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative thresholds of significance for cumulative impacts to cultural resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts. Although the Project is not located in an area with identified cultural resources, it has the potential to impact previously unidentified cultural resources which was considered a significant project-specific impact. Should this occur, it would it may be considered a cumulatively considerable effect on the County's cultural resources. However, in the unlikely event that undiscovered cultural resources or human remains were to be discovered during Project construction activities, implementation of the Project mitigation measures (**MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2**) would mitigate impacts to cultural resources to **less than significant** levels on a Project-specific and cumulative basis.

5.5.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce the Project's cultural resource impacts to a less than significant level:

MM CUL-1. In the event archaeological remains are encountered during grading, work shall be stopped immediately or redirected until a Planning and Development qualified archaeologist and Native American representative are retained by the applicant to evaluate the significance of the find pursuant to Phase 2 investigations of the County Archaeological Guidelines. If remains are found to be significant, they shall be subject to a Phase 3 mitigation program consistent with County Archaeological Guidelines and funded by the applicant. **Plan Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be printed on all building and grading plans. **Monitoring:** The District shall check plans prior to Project construction and shall spot check in the field.

MM CUL-2. 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 origins 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. **Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be printed on all building and grading plans. **Monitoring:** The District shall check plans prior to approval and shall spot check in the field.

With the incorporation of this measure, residual impacts would be less than significant.

5.6 ENERGY

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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	

5.6.1 Setting

Private electrical and natural gas utility companies provide service to customers in Central and Southern California, including the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. The proposed Project consists of improvements to an existing flood control channel. The only increases in demand for energy would occur during construction of these improvements. Following construction, utilization and maintenance of the Channel would not require utility service.

The County has not identified significance thresholds for electrical and/or natural gas service impacts (Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, 2008).

5.6.2 Impact Discussion

a). Less than Significant. During construction, the Project would require the use of heavy construction equipment that would be fueled by gas and diesel. However, the Project does not include any permanent components that would increase demand for existing sources of energy. No significant impact to energy resources would result.

b). No Impact. The proposed Project would not require electrical or natural gas service and therefore would not cause the need for development of new sources of energy or extension of energy sources. No impact would result.

5.6.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative or Project-specific thresholds of significance for energy resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, according to the County of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County, 2010) a project which has no effect above threshold values individually or cumulatively shall generally be determined not to have any significant effect.

The Project does not include any permanent components that would increase demand for existing sources of energy. Potential impacts to energy resources are therefore limited to temporary construction activities only when heavy construction equipment that would be fueled by gas and diesel energy resources. Based on the less than significant impact of Project activities on existing energy resources, as well as the temporary nature of Project activities, the Project's contribution energy resource impacts is not cumulatively considerable.

5.6.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

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

5.7 FIRE PROTECTION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area?				X	
b. Project-caused high fire hazard?			X		
c. Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for firefighting?				X	

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
d. Introduction of development that will hamper fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas?				X	
e. Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time?				X	

5.7.1 Setting

5.7.1.1 Physical

The Project area is located outside of any State or local fire hazard area (CalFire, 2008). According to the Santa Barbara County Fire Department (Captain Vince LaRocco, personal communication, 2014), the Project is accessible by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department (via Fire Station No. 22) within approximately 12-15 minutes, the City of Guadalupe within approximately 7-8 minutes (located at 918 Obispo Street, Guadalupe, CA 93434) and by the City of Santa Maria (via Fire Station No. 1) in approximately 8 minutes.

5.7.1.2 Regulatory

County Thresholds. The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative or Project-specific thresholds of significance for fire protection resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, the following County Fire Department standards are applied in evaluating impacts associated with a proposed development:

- The emergency response thresholds include Fire Department staff standards of one on-duty firefighter per 4,000 persons (generally 1 engine company per 12,000 people, assuming three firefighters per station). The emergency response time standard is approximately 5-6 minutes.
- Water supply thresholds include a requirement for 750 gallons per minute at 20 pounds per square inch for all single family dwellings.
- The ability of the County's engine companies to extinguish fires (based on maximum flow rates through hand held line) meets state and national standards assuming a 5,000 square foot structure. Therefore, in any portion of the Fire Department's response area, all structures over 5,000 square feet are an unprotected risk (a significant impact) and therefore should have internal fire sprinklers.
- Access road standards include a minimum width (depending on number of units served and whether parking would be allowed on either side of the road), with some narrowing allowed for driveways. Cul-de-sac diameters, turning radii and road grade must meet minimum Fire Department standards based on project type.
- Two means of egress may be needed and access must not be impeded by fire, flood, or earthquake. A potentially significant impact could occur in the event any of these standards is not adequately met.

5.7.2 Impact Discussion

a). No Impact. The Project is not located within a High Fire Hazard Area (CalFire, 2008). **No impact** would result.

b). Less Than Significant Impact. Following construction, no increased risk of fire would result. During construction, there is a slight increase in fire risk due to the presence of diesel fuel for construction equipment. However, the majority of construction equipment (haul trucks) would be fueled offsite. The temporary nature of construction activities as well as the minimal amount of fuel associated with Project activities would result in a **less than significant** impact related to introduction of a high fire hazard.

c, d). No Impact. The Project does not include the development of any new facilities requiring fire-fighting equipment. Realignment of the existing channel would not hamper existing fire prevention in the area. **No impact** would result.

e). No Impact. Project construction would not alter or hinder existing emergency response times. **No impact** would result.

5.7.3 Cumulative Impacts

The Project does not include any permanent components that would increase demand on existing fire department resources. Due to the nature of the Project as flood control channel improvement (i.e., it would not introduce structures that require fire protection, or interfere with fire prevention), impacts associated with fire would be limited to risk associated with the presence of diesel fuel for construction equipment. These risks are minor and would be limited to the Project site. The Project area is an agricultural field and is not at risk for wildfires or the spread of fire. Risks would be limited to the Project site and would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on fire safety within the County.

5.7.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

No impacts are identified. No mitigation is necessary.

5.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. 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. Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading?		X			
c. Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise?			X		
d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic, paleontologic or physical features?				X	
e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?		X			
f. 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			

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
g. The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent?				X	
h. Extraction of mineral or ore?				X	
i. Excessive grading on slopes of over 20 percent?				X	
j. Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil?			X		
k. Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas?			X		
l. Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden?			X		

5.8.1 Setting

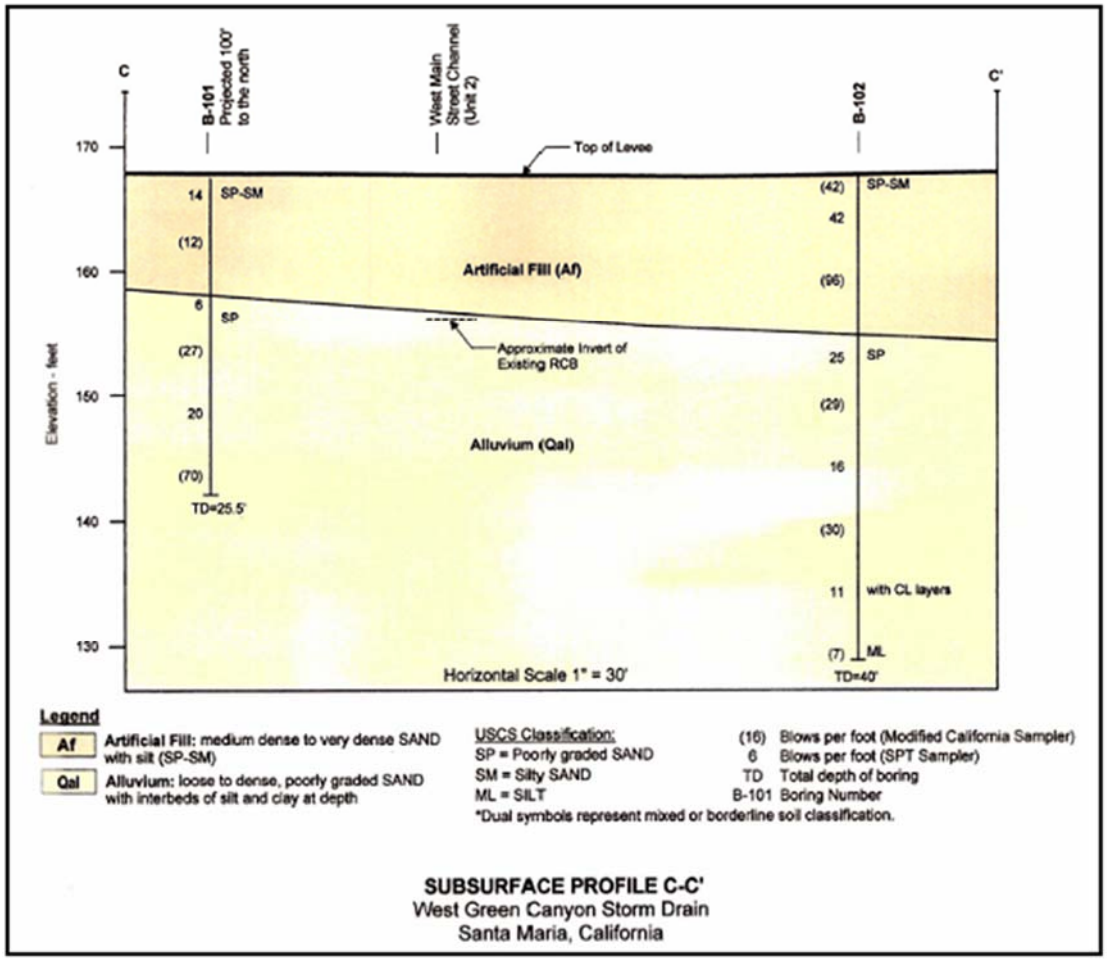
5.8.1.1 Physical

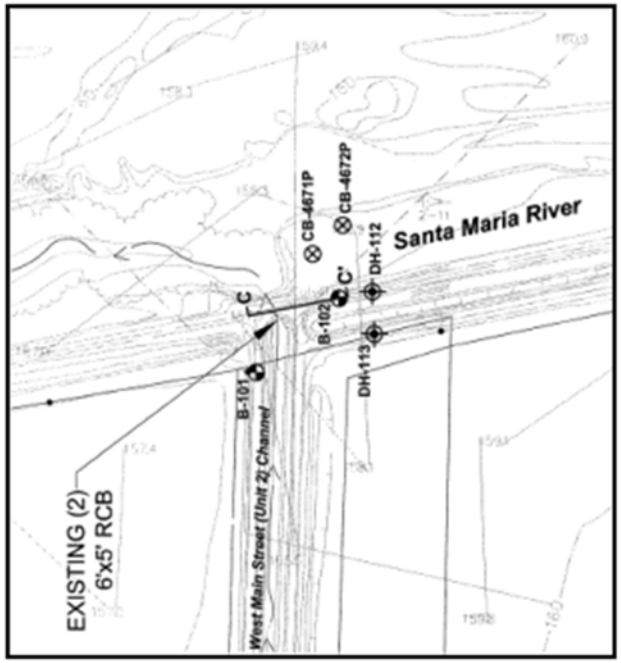
Soils beneath the Project site are comprised primarily of Artificial Fill (Af) (sand) and Alluvium (Qal) deposits (Fugro West, 2003; Figure 5.8-1) (Attachment 4). Soil borings at the Project site indicate that groundwater is located approximately 40 feet below the existing ground surface (Fugro West, 2003). According to the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, Seismic Safety Element (Santa Maria/Orcutt), the Project site is located within an area that has a low potential for compressible-collapsible and expansive soils. The Project site is also located within an area that has a low potential for liquefaction and soil creep. Based on the relatively flat topography within the Project area, little to no potential exists for landsliding. As shown in Figure 5.8-2, faults located within the vicinity of the Project site include the Santa Maria River Fault, Oceano Fault and Santa Maria Fault which are located within 1-3 miles north and east of the Project site.

5.8.1.2 Regulatory

County Thresholds. Pursuant to the County's Adopted 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:

1. The project site or any part of the project is located on land having substantial geologic constraints, as determined by Planning and Development or Public Works Division. 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.
2. 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.
3. The project proposes construction of a cut slope over 15 feet in height as measured from the lowest finished grade.
4. The project is located on slopes exceeding 20 percent grade.





Fugro Geotechnical Boring Locations

Source: Fugro, 2003

Figure 5.8-1. Subsurface Profile

December 2014
Project No. 1302-2792

padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project

FAULTING MAP
FIGURE 5.8-2

5.8.2 Impact Discussion

a). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Although the Project site is not located within an area of suspected unstable earth conditions, as noted within the 2003 geotechnical investigation previously prepared by Fugro, the proposed Project improvements (including fill placement and grading) would need to be constructed in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications and ASTM compaction specifications as detailed within the 2003 report in order to avoid potential impacts. During construction activities, the Project would be monitored by a Flood Control contracted construction management/inspection team and a geotechnical engineer (for soils and materials testing) in order to adhere to these specifications (**MM GEO-1**). A **less than significant** impact would result following implementation of this measure.

b). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The proposed Project would require approximately 7,000 cubic yards of excess materials to be permanently removed from the Project site. During construction, a significant amount of cut/fill and grading would occur in order to complete the proposed drainage improvements within Unit 2. This disruption and displacement during grading cut and fill activities would result in a potentially significant impact. However **MM GEO-1** as well as those identified in Section 5.16 (Water Resources/Flooding) outlined below would reduce the potential for erosion at the Project site. A **less than significant** impact would result following proposed mitigation.

c). Less than Significant. The proposed Project would result in a permanent change in the topography within the areas converted for flood control improvements through Channel widening and reconfiguration of the reverse curve area. However, following construction these changes would not contribute to additional soil erosion or change the existing site topography significantly as they are similar to the existing Channel configuration and design. A **less than significant** impact would result.

d). No Impact. There are no unique geologic, paleontological, or physical features in the Project area which would be disturbed by the proposed Project. The Project site is underlain by Alluvium soils, Sandy loams, and Artificial Fill that do not support these features. Additionally, the Project site has been previously disturbed by decades of agricultural operations that would repeatedly disrupt native soils. **No impact** would result.

e, f). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Grading operations that would occur on the Project site would remove vegetative cover and disturb the ground surface, thereby increasing the potential for erosion and sedimentation impacts. However, the potential for the Project to cause substantial erosion and sediment transport would be adequately mitigated by the County's standard erosion control and drainage requirements as outlined in mitigation measure **MM GEO-2**. Additionally, as discussed within Section 5.4 (Biological Resources) mitigation measures would be required for restoration of the areas cleared of vegetation within the Santa Maria River. A **less than significant** impact would result following proposed mitigation.

g). No Impact. The Project would not result in the use of septic systems. **No impact** would result.

h). No Impact. The Project would not involve mining or sand or gravel removal. **No impact** would result.

i). No Impact. The proposed Project would require approximately 7,000 cubic yards of excess materials (topsoil) to be permanently removed from the Project site. This cut material would not occur on slopes over 20 percent. **No impact** due to excessive grading on slopes of over 20 percent would result.

j). Less than Significant. The proposed Project would require approximately 7,000 cubic yards of excess materials (topsoil) to be permanently removed from the Project site. Some of this material is sandy or sandy loam, and would contain topsoil. However, this material would be transferred to the adjacent property for use as fill in support of existing agricultural operations. Therefore a **less than significant** impact relating to permanent loss of topsoil would result.

k). Less than Significant. The proposed Project would be conducted within 63 working days in an approximate 3 month timeframe. During this time, heavy equipment such as backhoes and excavators would be utilized that would have the potential to generate vibrations. However, as discussed within Section 5.12 (Noise), the closest receptor is located approximately 1,000 feet from the Project construction corridor. Due to the distance to this receptor; a **less than significant impact** from vibration would result.

l). Less than Significant. The proposed Project would require approximately 7,000 cubic yards of excess materials (topsoil) to be permanently removed from the Project site. During construction, a significant amount of cut/fill and grading would occur in order to complete the proposed drainage improvements within Unit 2. This material would be transferred to the adjacent property for use as fill. As such, no excessive spoils, tailings, or over-burden would be generated. A **less than significant** impact would result.

5.8.3 Cumulative Impacts

Most geologic processes impacts are site-specific and are not subject to cumulative analysis. Environmental issues such as erosion are mitigated by standard erosion control measures for all development projects; as would be anticipated for those projects considered for cumulative analysis within Section 4.3 (Cumulative Projects). Additionally, although the proposed Project would have the potential for short-term impacts during construction resulting from disruption and displacement of soils leading to an increased potential for erosion and increased sedimentation; these potential impacts would be mitigated to less than significant through implementation of **MM GEO-1 and MM GEO-2** as well as those identified within other resource sections (**MM AQ-1, MM BIO-2, and MM WQ-1**). No geologic impacts would result during Project operations. Consequently, a **less than significant** cumulative impact would result.

5.8.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following Project-incorporated mitigation measures would reduce the Project's geologic impacts to a less than significant level:

MM GEO-1. During construction activities, the Project would be monitored by a District contracted construction management/inspection team and a geotechnical engineer (for soils and materials testing). **Plan Requirements:** This measure will be included on all Project grading plans. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring**: The County-appointed inspector will perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

MM GEO-2. The County's standard erosion control and drainage requirements would be adhered to during construction in order to reduce potential erosion. These measures include, but are not limited to the following:

- Preservation of existing vegetation (where possible)
- Use of silt fences, fiber rolls, and/or gravel bag berms

- Use of geotextiles
- Wetting of exposed soils in order to reduce dust and erosion
- Stockpile Management

Plan Requirements: This measure will be included on all Project grading plans. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring**: Planning and Development staff shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

Other Measures:

- MM AQ-2. Dust Control Measures. (see Section 5.3)
- MM BIO-2. Tree Avoidance and Replacement. (see Section 5.4)
- MM WQ-1. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). (see Section 5.16)

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **less than significant**.

5.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. 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. The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials?		X			
c. 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			
d. Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?			X		
e. The creation of a potential public health hazard?		X			
f. Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)?				X	
g. Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities?				X	
h. The contamination of a public water supply?				X	

5.9.1 Setting

5.9.1.1 Physical

Historic Site Uses (Agriculture). The Project site is located within an area that is currently and has been historically in agricultural production. Currently, agricultural properties are located immediately east and west of the channel. As such, there is a high potential that hazardous materials in the form of pesticides are located within soils proposed for excavation as part of the proposed Project. According to the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner's Office (August 2014), a multitude of pesticides, herbicides, rodenticides, etc., are currently registered for use at these adjacent parcels.

Registered Hazardous Materials Sites. A search of the Department of Toxic Substances Control Envirostor Database of Federal Superfund Sites (NPL), State Response Sites, Voluntary Cleanup

Sites, School Cleanup Sites, Permitted Sites and Corrective Action Sites for the Project area showed no hazardous materials sites located within the vicinity of the Project corridor (California Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2014).

A search of the California State Water Resources Control Board Geotracker database covering leaking underground storage tank (LUST) cleanup sites, other cleanup sites, land disposal sites, military sites and monitoring wells for the Project area yielded a multitude of sites within the vicinity of the Project corridor that are registered under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). To prevent agricultural discharges from impairing the waters that receive these discharges, the ILRP regulates discharges from irrigated agricultural lands. This is done by issuing waste discharge requirements (WDRs) or conditional waivers of WDRs (Orders) to growers. These Orders contain conditions requiring water quality monitoring of receiving waters and corrective actions when impairments are found.

Oil or Gas Wells. A review of the California Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) online database of oil and gas facilities (2014), indicates there are no active or abandoned oil or gas wells located within the Project corridor. The closest wells are abandoned wells located approximately 0.5-mile from the Project site and are identified in Table 5.9-2.

Table 5.9-2. Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells Located Within the Project Vicinity (DOGGR, 2014)

Operator and ID	Location in Proximity to Project Site	Status
Shell Western "Nipomo C.H."	0.5 miles S	Plugged and Abandoned
James Irish "Bognuda"	0.5 miles NW (S.M. River)	Plugged and Abandoned
Phillips "Souza"	0.5 miles SW	Plugged and Abandoned
Union "Haslam"	0.75 miles W	Plugged and Abandoned

5.9.1.2 Regulatory

As defined by the State of California, a hazardous material is a substance that is toxic, ignitable or flammable, or reactive and/or corrosive. The primary concern associated with the release of a hazardous material is the short- and long-term effects that exposure to a hazardous substance may have on the public and the environment.

County Thresholds. 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.

5.9.2 Impact Discussion

a). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The Project site is located within an area that is currently and has been historically in agricultural production. As such, there is a high potential that hazardous materials in the form of pesticides are located within soils proposed for excavation as part of the Project. This is a potentially significant impact to workers onsite as well as to habitat within the Santa Maria River area north and downstream of the site. As such, procedures including (but not limited to) use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with Cal-OSHA health and safety guidelines **(MM HAZ-1)** with respect to residual pesticide exposure would be utilized during construction to reduce the potential for health risks. Additionally, measures outlined within Sections 5.4 (Biology) and 5.16 (Water

Resources) and in the Project design BMP's would be adhered to in order to minimize soil disturbance and potential erosion into adjacent areas. A **less than significant** impact would result with incorporation of these mitigation measures.

b, c). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The use, maintenance and fueling of equipment has the potential to result in the discharge of hazardous material to the environment from leaks and accidental spills. Equipment associated with the Project for channel improvements include: excavators, backhoes, compactors, front end loaders, concrete trucks, dump trucks, pickup trucks, pumps, chainsaws, and a sawcutter. Due to the sensitivity of the Project environment near the Santa Maria River Levee, any discharge of hazardous materials may be potentially significant. As such, several safeguards are presently in effect to prevent the contamination of soil or water resources. As discussed in Section 3.0 (Construction Procedures) and Section 5.16 (Water Resources/Flooding), these include Project-incorporated measures for erosion and sediment control BMPs to be installed. Non-stormwater BMP measures and non-visible pollutant monitoring requirements would also be instituted. A **less than significant impact** is anticipated following implementation of these measures.

d). Less than Significant. Traffic that would be generated by the Project would not substantially interfere with emergency response capabilities to the Project site or to other properties in the Project area. A **less than significant** impact would result. Please refer to Section 5.15 (Transportation/Circulation) for additional detail.

e). Less than Significant with Mitigation. The use, maintenance and fueling of equipment has the potential to result in the discharge of hazardous material to the environment from leaks and accidental spills. However, the Project site is located within an agriculturally developed area that is not heavily populated. The nearest residence is located approximately 1,000 feet away. In the event of an unauthorized release, the contaminated materials would likely remain onsite and would not create a public health hazard. Additionally, several safeguards are presently in effect to prevent the contamination of soil or water resources. As discussed in Section 5.16 (Water Resources/Flooding), these include Project-incorporated measures for implementation of BMP's and a SWPPP (**MM WQ-1**). A **less than significant impact** is anticipated following implementation of these measures.

f, g). No Impact. Based upon a review of DOGGR mapping (2014), there are no active or abandoned oil or gas wells located within the immediate vicinity (within 0.5-mile) of the Project corridor. Additionally, there are no registered hazardous materials sites or public safety hazards within the vicinity of the Project site (CDTSC, 2014). **No impact** would result.

h). No Impact. There are no public water supply wells located within the vicinity of the Project corridor. Although construction equipment has the potential to result in a release to the environment, it is not anticipated that this release would have the ability to impair a public water supply. **No impact** would result.

5.9.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include thresholds of significance for cumulative impacts to hazardous materials within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts.

Project-related hazardous materials impacts are associated with the potential exposure of people to pesticides at the Project site and potential discharge of fuel and lubricants from equipment. In so much as workers and the public are routinely exposed to hazardous materials since they are ubiquitous in the environment and that most development projects result in the potential for leakage of fuels and lubricants into the environment, these impacts may be considered cumulatively significant. Mitigation provided to reduce project-specific impacts **MM HAZ-1** as well as **MM WQ-1** would also reduce Project-related cumulative impacts to a **less than significant** level.

5.9.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce the Project's effects regarding hazardous materials and/or risk of upset to a less than significant level:

MM HAZ-1: Procedures including (but not limited to) use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with Cal-OSHA health and safety guidelines with respect to residual pesticide exposure should be utilized to reduce the potential for health risks. **Plan Requirements:** None. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring:** A County-appointed inspector shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

Other Measures:

MM WQ-1. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). (see Section 5.16)

5.10 HISTORIC RESOURCES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Adverse physical or aesthetic impacts on a structure or property at least 50 years old and/or of historic or cultural significance to the community, state or nation?				X	
b. Beneficial impacts to an historic resource by providing rehabilitation, protection in a conservation/open easement, etc.?				X	

5.10.1 Setting

5.10.1.1 Background

The Project is located within the Santa Maria, California. Specifically, the Project area is located in the unsectioned Rancho Punta de la Laguna Land Grant, Townships 10 and 11 North, Range 34 West in Santa Barbara County as shown on the USGS 7.5-Minute Series topographic quadrangle map. The Unit 2 Channel runs south to north within an agriculturally developed area west of the City of Santa Maria at an approximate elevation of 160 feet above mean sea level.

On July 16 and 23, 2014, on behalf of the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, a Padre archaeologist ordered a records search from the Central Coast Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CCIC-CHRIS) 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 Area, as well as a review of known cultural resource surveys and technical reports. The records search was included within a Phase I

Cultural Resources Study submitted to the County. According to the Phase I, no historical resources are located within the immediate Project area.

5.10.1.1 Regulatory

County Thresholds. A summary of the significance thresholds provided within the County is Santa Barbara's Historic Element of the County Guidelines is provided below. Any structure 50 years or older is considered potentially significant and shall be subjected to the following criteria:

- A significant resource a) possesses integrity of location, design, workmanship, material, and/or setting; b) is at least fifty years old[2], and c) demonstrates one or more of the following:

  a) Is associated with an event, movement, organization, or person that/who has made an important contribution to the community[3], state or nation;

  b) Was designed or built by an architect, engineer, builder, artists, or other designer who has made an important contribution to the community, state, or nation;

  c) Is associated with a particular architectural style or building type important to the community, state, or nation;

  d) Embodies elements demonstrating a) outstanding attention to design, detail, craftsmanship, or b) outstanding use of a particular structural material, or method of construction or technology;

  e) Is associated with a traditional way of life important to an ethnicity, national, racial, or social group, or to the community-at-large;

  f) Illustrates broad patterns of cultural, social, political, economic, or industrial history;

  g) Is a feature[4] or cluster of features which convey a sense of time and place that is important to the community, state or nation;

  h) Is able to yield information important to the community or is relevant to the scholarly study of history, historical archaeology, ethnography, folklore, or cultural geography.

5.10.2 Impact Discussion

a). No Impact. The existing channel is earthen and trapezoidal-shaped except for the concrete-lined section at the channel bend. According to the County Flood Control District (Maureen Spencer, personal communication, 2014), the existing channel was constructed in 1973, however the concrete outlet through the levee and immediately upstream was re-configured in 2004. According to the Phase I Cultural Resources Study completed for Unit 2 Channel Drainage Capacity Improvements Project by Padre Associates Archaeologist Rachael J. Letter, M.S., RPA (Padre Associates, 2014), because the channel was constructed in 1973, it is less than 45 years old and is not considered a cultural or historic resource (please refer to Attachment 3 for detail). No additional historic resources are located within the Project area. **No impacts** to historic resources would result.

b). No Impact. Project design does not include any beneficial impacts to historical resources.

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2 A historic resource less than fifty years old may be considered significant if it is unique or possesses extraordinary elements of integrity, design, construction, or association.

3 Community is defined as a neighborhood, town, city for district.

4 A feature may be defined as a structure, building, structural element, object, tree, garden, etc.

5.10.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative thresholds of significance for historic resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts. Since the Project is not located in an area with identified historic resources, it would not have a significant Project-specific impact and would not contribute to any cumulative historic resource impacts.

Cultural Resources (archaeological and ethnic) are discussed in Section 5.5.

5.10.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

No impacts are identified. No mitigations are necessary.

5.11 LAND USE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Structures and/or land use incompatible with existing land use?			X		
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		
c. The induction of substantial growth or concentration of population?				X	
d. The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?				X	
e. Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal?				X	
f. Displacement of substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X	
g. Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X	
h. The loss of a substantial amount of open space?			X		
i. 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	
j. Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones?				X	

5.11.1 Setting

5.11.1.1 Physical

The Unit 2 Channel (Channel) is a District-owned engineered facility located within an agriculturally developed area west of the City of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County (Figure 1.1-1). The Channel runs south to north between West Main Street and the Santa Maria River Levee. The Channel is surrounded by agricultural fields and supporting agricultural structures to the East and West, S.R. 166/West Main Street to the South, and the Santa Maria River Levee to the North. The Channel banks are mostly vegetated with weeds that are mowed on a yearly basis and the Channel bottom supports herbaceous, mostly non-native vegetation. High Voltage Transmission Lines run diagonally northeast to southwest approximately perpendicular to the middle of the Channel north of the offset area.

As indicated in the proposed ROW Exhibits prepared for the Project by SBCFCD (2014), the proposed Project would require approximately 4.31 acres of area as temporary construction easements; and 3.58 acres of permanent ROW acquisition area (permanent easements and/or fee acquisition areas) to complete the Project. Construction of the Santa Maria River levee improvements would necessitate tree removal within the Santa Maria River riparian corridor habitat for equipment access (~12,500 sf) and grading for outlet installation (~7,500 sf). Staging areas would be confined to the existing Channel ROWs where feasible in order to reduce the potential areas of new disturbance.

5.11.1.2 Regulatory

County 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.

5.11.2 Impact Discussion

a). Less Than Significant. The proposed Project would modify the existing flood control channel to accommodate and improve existing stormwater runoff. No structures are being proposed that are incompatible with existing land uses. A **less than significant** impact would result.

(b). Less Than Significant. As discussed within Section 10.0 (Initial Review of Project Consistency), the proposed Project is consistent with all applicable land use policies and regulations with jurisdiction over the Project. Although the Project would require the permanent right-of-way of approximately 1.99 acres (Phase 2) and 1.59 acres (Phase 1) totaling 3.58 acres of agricultural soils of prime/statewide importance, the proposed Project is intended to improve flood control and would benefit adjacent land uses. Therefore, a **less than significant** impact would result.

c-g). No Impact. The Project does not include housing, nor would it remove an impediment to population growth. No housing would be required or displaced. During construction, the 8 construction workers would come from the local population and would not require additional housing. **No impact** would result.

h). Less Than Significant. As discussed within response b. above, although the Project would require the permanent right-of-way of approximately 1.99 acres (Phase 2) and 1.59 acres (Phase 1) totaling 3.58 acres of existing agricultural open space; the proposed Project is intended to improve flood control and benefit adjacent land uses. Therefore, a **less than significant** impact would result.

i). No Impact. Due to the nature of the Project which is limited to improvements of existing drainage infrastructure, the proposed Project would have any adverse economic or social effects that would result in a physical change to the environment. **No impact** would result.

j). No Impact. The proposed Project is not located within the vicinity of an airport safety zone.

5.11.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include thresholds of significance for project-specific or cumulative impacts to land use within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, implementation of the Project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change to the site's conformance with environmentally protective policies and standards, or result in the loss of a cumulatively considerable amount of open space. Additionally, the Project would not result in growth inducing or housing impacts. Thus, the Project would not cause a cumulatively considerable effect under any land use category. **No significant cumulative impact** would result.

5.11.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

No impacts are identified. No mitigations are necessary.

5.12 NOISE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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		

5.12.1 Setting

5.12.1.1 Background

Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound which is measured on a logarithmic scale and expressed in decibels (dB). Typically noise levels are identified as A-weighted decibels, abbreviated dBA, or dBa, or dB(a), which are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear.

The duration of noise and the time period at which it occurs are important factors in determining impacts on noise-sensitive land 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. Table 5.12-1 below shows the distances of sensitive receptors to the nearest Project component. The ambient noise sources in the Project area primarily consist of agricultural noise from the adjacent fields with some contributing traffic noise from S.R. 166/West Main Street.

Table 5.12-1. Nearest Sensitive Receptors

Receptor Description	Approximate Distance From Nearest Project Component
Bonita Elementary School 2715 West Main Street	1.46 miles (7,733 feet)
Residence at 2309 Bonita Lateral Road	0.39 mile (1,940 feet)
Residence at S.R. 166/ West Main Street	0.19 mile (977 feet)
Residence between Channel and Main Street	0.22 mile (1,140 feet)

5.12.1.1 Regulatory

County Thresholds. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}) are noise indices which account for differences in intrusiveness between day- and night-time uses. The Santa Barbara County 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 for new development. In addition to the thresholds for new development, the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008) includes thresholds of significance for construction activities. Specifically, Part D, (below) states that construction occurring within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors would be considered a significant impact and would require mitigation.

- Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual Part D.: Noise from grading and construction activity proposed within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors, including schools, residential development, commercial lodging facilities, hospitals or care facilities, would generally result in a potentially significant impact. According to EPA guidelines average construction noise is 95 dB(A) at a 50 foot distance from the source. A 6 dB(A) drop occurs with a doubling of the distance from the source. Therefore locations within 1,600 feet of the construction site would be affected by noise levels over 65 dB(A). To mitigate this impact, construction within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors shall be limited to weekdays between the hours of 8 AM to 5 PM only. Noise attenuation barriers and muffling of grading equipment may also be required. Construction equipment generating noise levels above 95 dB(A) may require additional mitigation.

5.12.2 Impact Discussion

a). No Impact. The proposed Project includes the realignment of an existing channel system located in a predominantly agricultural area. Long-term noise generated onsite would be limited to minor maintenance activities and covered under the existing Routine Maintenance Program. No additional long term noise would result and noise sensitive receptors would not be exposed to or impacted by noise levels exceeding County thresholds. **No impacts** would result.

b). Less Than Significant with Mitigation. The proposed Project includes the use of standard construction equipment. Noise associated with bull dozers, front-end loaders, cranes, dump trucks, excavators and other construction equipment generally ranges from approximately 80 dBA to approximately 85 dBA (FHWA, 2006). Several noise sensitive receptors (residences) are located within 1,600 feet of the proposed construction area and would be affected by noise associated with the temporary

use of construction equipment. However, noise levels diminish at a rate of approximately six decibels (dB) per doubling of distance. Based on this general principle, construction noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptor (a residence located approximately 977 feet to the east of the Channel) could be reduced by more than 24 dBA due to the distance from Project activities. However, because Project activities would be located within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors, Santa Barbara County's Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008) and the County Standard Mitigations Guidebook (2010) require mitigations to reduce the impacts to less than significant. This includes mitigations limiting work hours and requiring that construction equipment and haul trucks be equipped with functioning and properly maintained muffler systems **(MM NOISE-1)**. Implementation of the County measures would reduce noise impacts from construction activities to **less than significant**.

c). Less Than Significant. No nighttime work is proposed. Construction activities are temporary and would occur during daytime hours only. Construction activities are anticipated to last approximately 3 months until all work activities are completed. Adjoining land uses are agricultural and are not zoned for noise sensitive land uses. Due to the temporary nature of Project, as well as the current use of adjacent lands, construction impacts would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures would be required.

5.12.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative thresholds of significance for noise impacts within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts.

The implementation of the Project is not anticipated to result in any substantial long-term noise effects. As such, noise impacts from Project activities would be limited to construction activities only.

Based on how noise propagates, a 6 dB drop occurs with a doubling of the distance from the source. Therefore, for noise sensitive receptors this would require the analysis of any projects occurring within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors or project construction areas. Simultaneous construction activities within 1,600 feet of these sensitive receptors would be considered cumulatively considerable. Based on discussions with the County and other relevant agencies, only one project (Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail proposed by the County of Santa Barbara) has the potential to cumulatively impact the immediate Project area should it occur simultaneously with the proposed Project. However, the Santa Maria Levee Project is not anticipated to begin construction until 2017 and remains unfunded. As such, it is not likely that construction associated with the Santa Maria Levee Project will begin until after Channel improvements are completed. Thus, the Project would not contribute to any cumulative noise impacts.

5.12.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following Project-Incorporated Measure would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

> **MM NOISE-1.** To minimize potentially significant construction-related noise impacts to nearby residents, construction activity, including equipment maintenance and site preparation, will be limited to the hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. No construction shall

occur on weekends or State holidays. Non-noise generating construction activities are not subject to these restrictions. **Plan Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be included in Project specifications. **Monitoring:** The County-appointed inspector shall ensure the measure is fully implemented. A summary of maintenance work, including a statement on compliance with the above mitigation measure, will be documented in a post-maintenance report.

With the incorporation of this measure, residual impacts would be **less than significant**.

5.13 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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	
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		

5.13.1 Setting

The proposed Project site does not contain any public facilities. Police protection for the area is provided by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. Four landfills operate within the County. These landfills include: the County operated Tajiguas Landfill (serving the South Coast, Santa Ynez Valley, Cuyama and Ventucopa), the City operated Santa Maria Landfill (serving the City of Santa Maria and the unincorporated areas of the Santa Maria Valley), the City operated Lompoc Landfill (serving the City of Lompoc and unincorporated areas of the Lompoc Valley, and the federally operated Vandenberg Air Force Base Landfill (serving Vandenberg Air Force Base). Two waste recycling and transfer stations and two waste transfer stations also serve the County's unincorporated areas including: the South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station (serving the South Coast area), the Santa Ynez Valley Recycling and Transfer Station (serving the Santa Ynez Valley), the Cuyama Transfer Station (serving the Cuyama Valley), and the Ventucopa Transfer Station (serving the Ventucopa area).

County Thresholds. The County of Santa Barbara Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (Santa Barbara County, 2008) does not include thresholds of significance for construction impacts relating to police protection, fire protection or other public facilities. However, Chapter 17 (Solid Waste Thresholds) states that 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 percent 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.

CEQA Guidelines. In addition to the County thresholds, and in accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the project may have a significant impact on public services and utilities if it would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives;
- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities, or the need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives;
- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities, or the need for new or physically altered library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives;
- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board; Require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that is has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;
- Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs; or not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

5.13.2 Impact Discussion

a, b, and d). No Impact. The proposed Project would not result in the construction of land uses that require police protection, fire protection, health care services or other public facilities. The Project would not cause the need for new or altered sewer system facilities as it is a modification of an existing channel system. **No impact** would result.

c). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Construction of the proposed Project would generate some solid waste in the form of concrete and other demolition and construction debris. However, in accordance with the County of Santa Barbara thresholds, to the extent feasible, salvaged concrete would be broken up and stockpiled for reincorporation underneath the side drain splash pads and for placement on land-side of proposed lateral weir (for energy dissipation). All rebar from salvaged concrete would be removed and recycled or disposed of offsite in a permitted landfill. The amount of solid waste generated would not exceed 350 tons, and is anticipated to be far below this threshold. No significant impact would result. Regardless, in order to ensure this threshold is adhered to throughout construction, **MM WASTE-1** requires implementation of a Solid Waste Management Program that would specify proper handling of waste materials to ensure recycling goals are met and that construction debris removal would not exceed

350 tons. Implementation of **MM WASTE-1** would ensure that potential impacts of solid waste generation would be mitigated to **less than significant** levels.

Following the completion of Project activities, solid waste generation associated with the Channel would return to pre-Project construction levels. Impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

e). Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project includes the expansion of an existing channel drainage system. As part of the proposed Channel improvements, the existing Channel bottom width along the entire Project length would be increased to approximately 20 feet where the Channel is not already that wide. The increase in bottom width would not significantly increase impervious surfaces. In addition, improvements to the Santa Maria Levee include opening the existing 72-inch RCP culvert and adding a second 72-inch RCP culvert which are designed to increase the efficiency of the Channel system. The additional culverts would accommodate the capacity of the realigned and widened channel and would capture any existing surface runoff within the Channel. No additional water quality control facilities would be necessary to serve the Project. Impacts associated with drainage are, by project design, an improvement over existing conditions. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

5.13.3 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. For this Project, the only public facility area of potential impact was determined to be waste disposal. However, with the implementation of **MM WASTE-1,** the Project does not exceed the threshold of significance for the disposal of solid waste. Therefore, the Project's contribution to the regionally significant demand for solid waste services is less than significant with mitigation. The Project would not result in any adverse impacts for other public facility issues and therefore would not contribute to cumulative impacts in these areas.

5.13.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce the Project's solid waste impacts to a less than significant level:

> **MM WASTE-1.** A solid waste management plan shall be developed by the District in accordance with any Public Works Department Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division requirements. The Plan will include one or more of the following measures with the intent to reduce any waste going to nearby landfills to less than 350 tons:
>
> - Provision of space and/or bins for storage of recyclable materials within the site.
> - Establishment of a recyclable material pickup area.
> - Development of a plan for accessible collection of materials on a regular basis (may require establishment of private pick-up depending on availability of County sponsored programs).
>
> **Plan Requirements/Timing:** This condition shall be printed on all building and grading plans. **Monitoring:** The District shall check plans prior to Project construction.

5.14 RECREATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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	

5.14.1 Setting

5.14.1.1 Background

The Project site is bordered by agricultural fields to the east and west and by the Santa Maria River to the north. The Channel is accessed by the unofficial Santa Maria Levee Trail Road (as specified in the City of Santa Maria General Plan) which has a closed, locked Flood Control gate near the Project area. The nearest public park is located approximately 1.82 miles (9,500 feet) from the Channel alignment within the nearest residential community. According to the City of Santa Maria General Plan (Circulation Element 2010), trails are planned along the Santa Maria Levee (currently unfunded). No established recreational uses (including parks, biking, equestrian or hiking trails) are currently located on or adjacent to the proposed Project site.

5.14.1.3 Regulatory

County Thresholds. The Santa Barbara County Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (Santa Barbara County, 2008) 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 Parks Department maintains more than 900 acres of parks and open spaces, as well as 84 miles of trails and coastal access easements.

5.14.2 Impact Discussion

a, b). No Impact. The proposed Project site is not located on or near any established recreational uses, including biking, equestrian or hiking trails. The Santa Maria Levee is accessed from a closed, locked Flood Control gate near the Unit 2 Channel to discourage public pedestrian or vehicular traffic along the levee. **No adverse impacts** would result.

c.) No Impact. The proposed Project would not result in any population increase and would have **no adverse impacts** on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities, either in the Project vicinity or County-wide.

5.14.3 Cumulative Impacts

Permanent features of the Project, including the realigned Channel are compatible with the existing character of the area. These changes would not interfere or affect local recreational areas or recreational access. As such, potential cumulative impacts would be limited to those associated with short-term, construction equipment staging within the immediate Project area. Based on discussions with

the County and other relevant agencies, only one Project (the Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail proposed by the County of Santa Barbara) has the potential together with the Project to cumulatively impact the immediate Project area should it occur simultaneously with the proposed Project. However, the Santa Maria Levee Project is not anticipated to begin construction until 2017 and remains unfunded. As such, it is not likely it will begin construction until after Channel improvements are completed. Thus, no cumulative recreational impacts are anticipated.

5.14.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

No mitigation is required, no residual impacts would result.

5.15 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
a. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement (daily, peak-hour, etc.) in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?		X			
b. A need for private or public road maintenance, or need for new road(s)?			X		
c. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?				X	
d. Substantial impact upon existing transit systems (e.g. bus service) or alteration of present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?				X	
e. Alteration to waterborne, rail or air traffic?				X	
f. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians (including short-term construction and long-term operational)?		X			
g. Inadequate sight distance?				X	
ingress/egress?			X		
general road capacity?				X	
emergency access?				X	
h. Impacts to Congestion Management Plan system?		X			

5.15.1 Setting

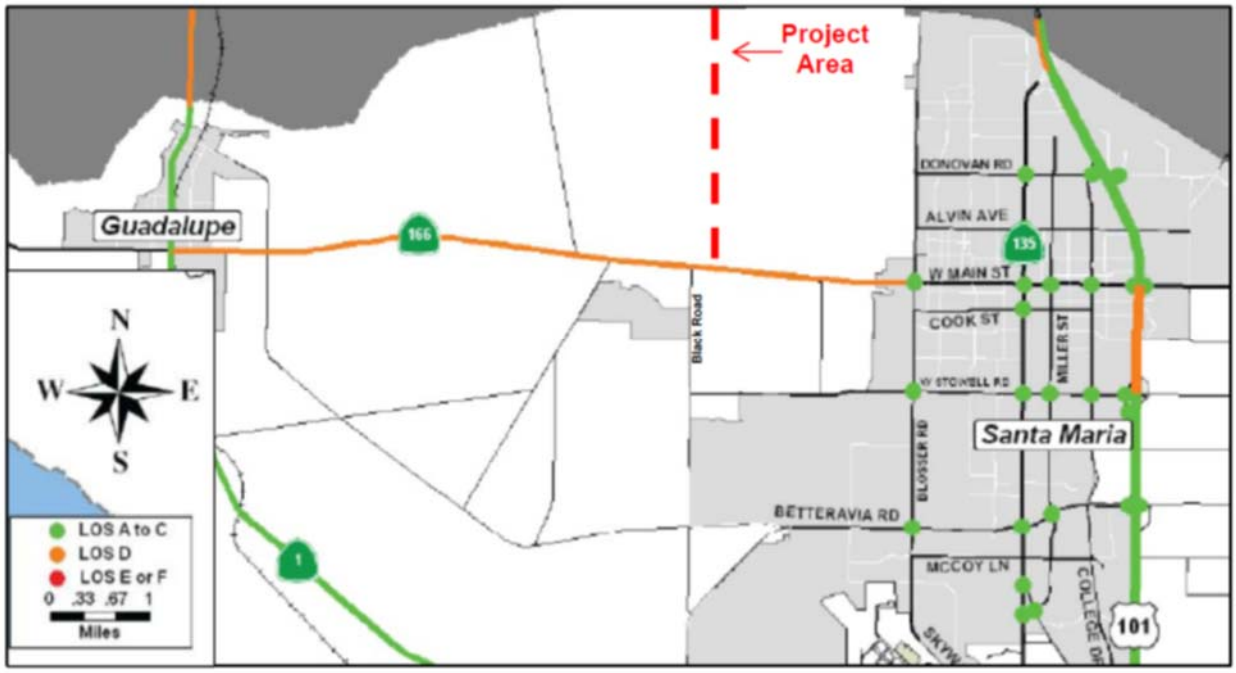
5.15.1.1 Background

The Project site is located in an unincorporated portion of Santa Barbara County approximately 1.8 miles (9,445 feet) from the Santa Maria City boundary. The northern portion of the Project site is located adjacent to the Santa Maria Levee. The City of Santa Maria continues to apply for local, state and federal grants for construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the Santa Maria River Levee (Santa Maria/Guadalupe Dunes Bikeway), however currently access to the site is gained from the south, from S.R. 166/West Main Street to an unpaved farm road/flood control levee road parallel and directly adjacent to the Channel. No public access to the levee is currently available.

According to the City of Santa Maria Circulation Element of the General Plan (2010), S.R. 166/West Main Street, west of U.S. 101, connects the community of Santa Maria to the community of Guadalupe. The City considers the east-west road a “primary arterial road,” and a Class III Bike Route providing for shared use between bicycles and vehicles. Outside of the City limits, Santa Barbara County has designated S.R. 166/West Main Street a two-lane major road with “intersections at grade and partial

control of access," with a capacity of 10,000 average annual daily trips (AADT). According to Caltrans (2012), S.R. 166/West Main Street near the Project site (S.R. 166/West Main Street at Black Road) currently operates at a volume of 8,900 (back AADT)/9,130 (ahead AADT) resulting in a volume to capacity ratio of 0.89/0.91.

Congestion Management Program. S.R. 166/West Main Street from U.S. 101 (in Santa Maria) to Route 1 (in Guadalupe) is included within the County Congestion Management Program (CMP). The CMP utilizes level of service (LOS) measurements to determine congestion levels. According to the County CMP (Santa Barbara County, 2009), the roadway operates at an LOS "D" during the P.M. Peak Hour. Intersections within the Project area, from the Project site through the City of Santa Maria to Highway 101, all currently operate at acceptable levels of service LOS A-C (Santa Barbara County, 2009). In addition, north bound and south bound ramps onto U.S. 101 from S.R. 166 operate at an LOS B



(Santa Barbara County, 2009) (Figure 5.15-1).

Figure 5.15-1. Santa Barbara County, Congestion Management Plan Map Showing LOS levels in the Project Area

5.15.1.3 Regulatory

County Thresholds. According to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant traffic impact would occur when:

a. The addition of Project traffic to an intersection which increases the volume to capacity (V/C) ratio by the value provided below, or sends at least 15, 10 or 5 trips to an intersection operating at LOS D, E or F.

Level of Service (Including Project)	Increase in Volume/Capacity Greater Than
A	0.20
B	0.15
C	0.10
	O the addition of:
D	15 trips
E	10 trips
F	5 trips

b. Project access to a major road or arterial road that would require a driveway that would create an unsafe situation, or would require a new traffic signal or major revisions to an existing traffic signal.

c. Project adds traffic to a roadway that has design features (e.g., narrow width, road side ditches, sharp curves, poor sight distance, inadequate pavement structure) or receives use which would be incompatible with substantial increases in traffic (e.g. rural roads with use by farm equipment, livestock, horseback riding, or residential roads with heavy pedestrian or recreational use, etc.) that would become potential safety problems with the addition of project or cumulative traffic. Exceeding the roadway capacity designated in the Circulation Element may indicate the potential for the occurrence of the above impacts.

d. Project traffic would utilize a substantial portion of an intersection(s) capacity where the intersection is currently operating at acceptable levels of service (A-C) but with cumulative traffic would degrade to or approach LOS D (V/C 0.81) or lower. Substantial is defined as a minimum change of 0.03 for intersections which would operate from 0.80 to 0.85 and a change of 0.02 for intersections which would operate from 0.86 to 0.90, and 0.01 for intersections operating at anything lower.

5.15.2 Impact Discussion

a). Less than Significant with Mitigation

On-Site Sediment Hauling. It is anticipated that approximately 7,100 CY of excess sediment would be created during Project activities. This sediment is expected to be loaded into dump trucks, hauled (up to two miles total) via farm roads to the adjacent agricultural properties and deposited. Haul trucks would not require access to S.R. 166/West Main Street or any other public roadways during hauling activities. No impacts to transportation routes would result from sediment hauling.

Potential Impacts to the Street System. The proposed Project would generate approximately 115 round trip concrete truck loads during the six days required for concrete pouring activities. This would result in approximately 20 round trips per day (40 single trips). In addition, workers commuting to and from the Project site would add an additional eight daily round trips during peak hours. The addition of this traffic onto S.R. 166/West Main Street in the Project area would mean an increase of 28 round trips (56 single trips) per day, or approximately seven per hour during a worst-case scenario.

The Project is located within the County of Santa Barbara and intersects with a segment of S.R. 166/West Main Street under Caltrans jurisdiction. Caltrans does not have any specific thresholds of

significance for construction activities. As such, discussions with Caltrans staff were conducted to determine the level of impact associated with Project construction activities. Caltrans staff indicated that given the temporary nature of Project activities, as well as the minimal number of trips anticipated during a worst-case scenario during peak traffic hour (seven trips), traffic impacts associated with the Project construction would be less than significant (Adam Fukushima, personal communication, 2014).

Furthermore, implementation of **MM TRANS-1** would reduce the number of haul truck on the roadway during peak hours of operation. Implementation of **MM TRANS-1** would reduce Project impacts to **less than significant with mitigation**.

b). Less than Significant with Mitigation. Traffic that would be generated by the Project is temporary and would not generate a need for additional roads or a significant amount of increased public roadway maintenance. Farm roads used during the hauling of sediment would be returned to pre-Project conditions following Project construction (**MM TRANS-2**). Implementation of **MM TRANS-2** would reduce would reduce Project impacts to **less than significant with mitigation.**

c). No Impact. The proposed Project would provide all required parking spaces on-site, within the Channel ROW or within adjacent staging areas. No additional areas of disturbance will be required for Project staging or parking. No staging or truck loading is proposed along S.R. 166 or other roadways or road ROW. **No impacts** would result.

d, e). No Impact. The proposed Project would not result in any impacts to local transit systems. Traffic associated with Project construction would be limited to truck trips and commuter vehicles. **No impact** to existing transit systems would result.

f). Less than Significant with Mitigation. During construction activities, vehicles and equipment would access the Project site from a single-lane, dirt farm road that runs perpendicular to S.R. 166/West Main Street. The majority of Project activities would be completed off-road within the existing agricultural areas located directly adjacent to the Unit 2 Channel. Use of S.R. 166/West Main Street would be limited to Project mobilization/demobilization, ingress/egress of commuter traffic and concrete hauling. Project mobilization/demobilization would be limited to one or two days during the beginning and end of Project activities. Commuter traffic would primarily be limited to eight round trips per day. Concrete haul trucks would access S.R. 166/West Main Street approximately 7-8 times per hour during concrete pouring activities which are anticipated to last 6 days total.

These activities will require vehicles and equipment to reduce speeds on S.R. 166/West Main Street prior to turning onto the single-lane, dirt farm road that runs perpendicular to S.R. 166/West Main Street. S.R. 166/West Main Street currently operates at a speed limit of 55 miles per hour (mph) except where otherwise posted. The slowing of vehicles and equipment along S.R. 166/West Main Street could increase potential traffic hazards for drivers. Subsequently, this increased risk of traffic hazards could affect pedestrians or bicycle traffic sharing the road with motorists.

However, it is important to note that farm equipment and vehicles slowing down to accommodate turns are common in the Project area due to ongoing agricultural activities on either side of S.R. 166/West Main Street. Roadway safety impacts that would result from Project construction equipment mobilization and demobilization would not be dissimilar from that associated with farm equipment actively being used within this area. To reduce the potential for traffic hazards during project activities, **MM TRANS-3** would require use of safety road signage and that all Project vehicles follow strict traffic rules to reduce potential

safety hazards associated with slowing down for the intersection of the farm road with S.R. 166/West Main Street. Impacts associated with traffic would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation**.

Following Project construction, roadway conditions would return to pre-Project conditions. Farm roads used during the hauling of sediment would be returned to pre-Project conditions following Project construction (**MM TRANS-2**). Project activities would not create any long-term or permanent impediments to traffic, pedestrians or bicyclists. The Project therefore would have a **less than significant** impact related to traffic.

g). Less Than Significant. Vehicles and equipment would access the Project site from a single-lane, dirt farm road that runs perpendicular to S.R. 166/West Main Street. From there, vehicles and equipment would travel approximately 0.80 miles to the Channel offset located midway along the Channel. No construction activities will occur at the portion of the Channel located near the farm road turn off at S.R. 166/West Main Street.

Activities at the farm road turn off would be limited to ingress/egress of construction vehicles and equipment. No trees, buildings or other obstructions currently limited or impede the existing site distance at the intersection. Project activities would not require any additional obstruction or site-distance impediments. Vehicles on the farm road currently have a clear view of S.R. 166/West Main Street and would continue to have a clear view following Project construction activities. While on-site, and during Project egress/ingress, **MM TRANS-3** would require that all Project vehicles follow strict traffic rules to reduce potential safety hazards associated with the intersection of the farm road with S.R. 166/West Main Street. Impacts associated with inadequate site distance at the intersection would be reduced to **less than significant with mitigation**.

h). Less Than Significant. Project traffic could affect intersections along S.R. 166/West Main Street, which currently experience levels of service from A-C within the City of Santa Maria and LOS B at the northbound, southbound ramps of U.S. 101. The Project's contribution to peak hour traffic at these intersections would be limited to construction crew personnel commuting. Construction crew workers will likely be from the local area or housed within the City of Santa Maria for the duration of Project activities. Construction crew personnel transportation would be limited to approximately eight round trips per day, and would be temporary lasting approximately 63 days. This increase represents a negligible increase over existing traffic levels and would not exceed the threshold of significance. Impacts would be **less than significant.**

5.15.3 Cumulative Impacts

The implementation of the Project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change in transportation corridors within the Project area. As such, the potential for cumulative impacts would be limited to short-term, construction equipment mobilization, staging and personnel transporting (commuting) within the immediate Project area. Based on discussions with the County and other relevant agencies, several projects will likely be utilizing S.R. 166/West Main Street during Project activities (Table 5.15-1).

Table 5.15-1. Projects Likely Utilizing S.R. 166/West Main Street During Project Activities

Proposed Project	Distance From Project Corridor	Description	Construction Dates	Status
Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail	Adjacent to Project Channel	7.8 mile bike and pedestrian trail	2017-2019	Currently unfunded
Bonita School Road Bridge Replacement	1.32 miles	Over Santa Maria River approximately 0.3 miles north of S.R. 166	Construction Anticipated in 2018-2019	Project study and scoping phase
Hancock Terrace Apartments	3.5 miles	268 apartment units	5/21/13	Grading permits issued, in plancheck
MMC Co-Gen Power Plant Expansion	4.1 miles	1,624 sq. ft. building	4/4/12 - Construction to be completed prior to Fall 2015	Under Construction
Eastridge Estates	5 miles	120 single family units	11/7/07	Submitted to plancheck. 6 of 7 model homes are approved
Intersection Improvements at S.R. 166/West Main Street and Black Road	0.25 miles	NA	2016	NA
Intersection Improvements at S.R. 166/West Main Street at Highway 1	5 miles	NA	2016	NA

As shown in Table 5.15-1, the Santa Maria Levee to Guadalupe Multi-Use Trail and the Bonita School Road Bridge Replacement would not occur during the same time frame as the proposed Project. Other Projects, including Hancock Terrace Apartments, MMC Co-Gen Power Plant Expansion, Eastridge Estates and the intersection improvements at S.R. 166/West Main Street at Highway 1 would occur at such a distance from the Project as to reduce potential cumulative impacts to less than significant. As such, these projects have been eliminated from further analysis.

The Project is located within the County of Santa Barbara and intersects with a segment of S.R. 166/West Main Street under Caltrans jurisdiction. The County of Santa Barbara does not include cumulative thresholds of significance for transportation resources within its Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (County of Santa Barbara, 2008). However, as discussed within the County Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Santa Barbara County, 2010), unless otherwise specified, a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project specific impacts. According to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant traffic impact would occur when the addition of Project traffic to an intersection which increases the volume to capacity (V/C) ratio by specified values (see item a. under County Thresholds above), or sends at least 15, 10 or 5 trips to an intersection operating at LOS D, E or F. This threshold was 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. However, the portion of S.R. 166 proposed for use by the Project is located within Caltrans jurisdiction. Caltrans does not have any specific thresholds of significance for construction activities. As such, discussions with Caltrans staff were conducted to determine the level of impact associated with Project construction activities. Caltrans staff indicated that given the temporary nature of Project activities, as well as the minimal number of trips anticipated during a worst-case scenario during peak traffic hour (seven trips), traffic impacts associated with the Project construction would be less than significant on a project-specific and cumulative basis (Adam Fukushima, personal communication, 2014).

Furthermore, implementation of **MM TRANS-1** would reduce the number of haul truck on the roadway during peak hours of operation. Implementation of **MM TRANS-1** would reduce Project impacts and associated cumulative impacts to **less than significant with mitigation**.

5.15.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

MM TRANS-1. Traffic Hours. Concrete hauling associated with Project activities will be limited to avoid peak traffic hours (7 am – 9 am and 4 pm - 6 pm weekdays) to local intersections. **Plan Requirements:** This measure will be included on all Project grading plans. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring:** The District shall check plans prior to Project construction and shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

MM TRANS-2. Off-Road (Farm Road) Maintenance. During Project activities, the District would maintain all off-road access (farm roads) used by construction equipment and Project personnel for safety purposes. Following Project completion, access roads (farm roads) will be returned to their pre-project condition. **Plan Requirements:** This measure will be included on all Project grading plans. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring**: The District shall check plans prior to Project construction and shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

MM TRANS-3. Farm Road-S.R. 166/West Main Street Access Safety. The following measures will be applicable to all Project vehicles and equipment while accessing the Project site and while on the farm road including ingress/egress from S.R. 166/West Main Street.

- Prior to driving to the Project site, all Project contractors will be advised on the safety rules and requirements to reduce potential traffic impacts associated with ingress/egress onto the farm road.
- Temporary signage alerting drivers to construction activities will be put in place along S.R. 166/West Main Street during Project mobilization/demobilization activities and during any hauling activities to alert drivers of potentially slow-moving construction vehicles or equipment.
- Drivers will be required to follow all existing rules of the road including, but not limited to, slowing down and using appropriate turn signals to alert traffic on S.R. 166/West Main Street of vehicle movements into and out-of the Project area.
- Once on-site, all Project vehicles will abide by a 6 mph speed limit to allow for controlled access to and from the Project site.
- At no time will Project vehicles and equipment be parked or staged in areas immediately adjacent to the farm road intersection with S.R. 166/West Main Street. Drivers will be

advised not to block or impede visual site distance of vehicles coming into or leaving the Project site.

- Vehicles and equipment will not park or be staged along the farm road in such a manner as to block or impede emergency access.
- A temporary stop sign will be placed at the farm road egress point (at a location allowing for proper site distance) onto S.R. 166/West Main Street to ensure that all vehicles and equipment leaving the site stop and evaluate potential hazards (including but not limited to other vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians) prior to turning onto S.R. 166/West Main Street.

Plan Requirements: This measure will be included on all Project grading plans. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring**: The District shall check plans prior to Project construction and shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

With the implementation of these mitigation measures impacts would be reduced to **less than significant**. No residual impacts would result.

5.16 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No 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.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
l. Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water?		X			

5.16.1 Setting

5.16.1.1 Physical

Regional. The Santa Maria Groundwater Basin has three distinguishable units that have only limited interaction: the Main Basin unit, the Nipomo Mesa unit, and the Arroyo Grande unit (Santa Barbara County, 2006). The Project site overlies the Santa Maria Main Groundwater Basin (also called the Santa Maria Basin). The Main Groundwater Basin is bordered by the Nipomo Mesa and Sierra Madre Foothills (to the north), the San Rafael Mountains (to the East) the Solomon-Casmalia Hills (to the south) and the Pacific Ocean (to the west). The basin is approximately 170 square miles and extends from northwest Santa Barbara (County) into the southwestern portion of San Luis Obispo County (Santa Barbara County, 2006).

The Project area is within the Santa Maria Watershed which is drained by the Santa Maria River. The Santa Maria River is formed by the confluence of the Cayuma and Sisquoc Rivers at Fulgar Point approximately 20 miles inland from the coast. The Santa Maria River Valley covers approximately 260 square miles. Much of the valley consists of a broad alluvial area known as the Santa Maria Plain.

The Santa Maria River is currently listed as an impaired water body under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d), (EPA, 2010). Major types of pollution within the Santa Maria River system include agricultural runoff, urban runoff, grazing sources, septic tanks, natural sources and other unknown sources.

Site Specific. The Unit 2 Channel runs north to south between the Santa Maria River (to the north) and S.R. 166/West Main Street (to the south). The primary flows include waters from the West Main Street channel, agricultural run-off, and urban stormwater from the Channel storm drain after large storm events.

The Channel is surrounded by agricultural fields on the eastern and western sides. Agricultural run-off from the eastern side enters the Channel through a series of 18 side drains ranging in size from 12-inches to 24-inches. Additionally, the East Channel collects runoff from the area east of the Unit 2 Channel. The flow from the East Channel enters the Unit 2 Channel through a 54-inch pipe immediately before the Santa Maria River levee outfall structure.

5.16.1.2 Regulatory

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has developed a Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Region (2011) (also referred to as the Basin Plan) to protect the water quality of surface and groundwater within 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.

Water Resources Thresholds. According to the Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (Santa Barbara County, 2008), the threshold of significance for impacts to groundwater is the point at which a Project's estimated contribution to the overuse of groundwater in an alluvial basin or other aquifer is considered significantly adverse. 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.

Water Quality Thresholds. 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 25percent 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 I 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[5] 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.

5.16.2 Impact Discussion

a, e). Less than Significant. The existing Unit 2 Channel carries stormwater collected from the West Main Street channel; agricultural runoff from adjacent fields and the East Channel; and overflow

[5] Beneficial uses for Santa Barbara County are identified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin, or Basin Plan, and include (among others) recreation, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, fresh water habitat, estuarine habitat, support for rare, threatened or endangered species, preservation of biological habitats of special significance.

from Hobbs Basin during large storm events. The goal of the proposed Project is to straighten the offset (Reverse Curve Realignment) of the existing Channel, increase the Channel bottom width to 20 feet and add a culvert within the existing Santa Maria River levee system. Project activities have been developed in accordance with the Design Alternatives Report (Penfield and Smith, 2014) (Attachment 1).

No change in the general course or direction of surface water is proposed. However, straightening of the offset and the installation of the additional culvert would modify the existing currents of water movements as well as increase the rate of water flowing from the Channel into the Santa Maria River. However, these changes in would be minor and would be similar to those that occur during regular storm events where greater capacities of water and thus greater rates of flow, enter the Channel flow through the levee system and flow into the Santa Maria River bed. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

The existing Unit 2 Channel would be reconfigured in order to increase flow rates and outfall through the Santa Maria River Levee. The Project has been designed by P&S in order to accommodate and direct adjacent surface water runoff. The proposed improvements would not change the direction of the surface water runoff, however would facilitate an increased rate of flow into the Santa Maria River. The increased rate of flow would help reduce the likelihood that an extreme rain event would cause an increase in surface water run-off capable of over-topping the banks of the Channel. As such, the Project would help reduce potential flood risks to the surrounding agricultural fields.

b, c). Less than Significant. The purpose and need of the proposed Channel improvements would be to increase the rate of flow and thus the capacity of the Unit 2 Channel system to reduce the risk of the Channel overtopping and the potential for property damage. Additional rate of flow and capacity would result in more efficient drainage into the Santa Maria River. As such, the Project design includes changes in the drainage pattern and rate/amount of surface water runoff. However, the Project has been designed in accordance with detailed engineering reports included within the "Design Alternatives Analysis Report". Impacts caused by increased capacity and surface flow from the Channel into the Santa Maria River would result in a **beneficial impact** to the Channel system.

d, l). Less than Significant with Mitigation. As described further below, the Project could adversely affect surface water quality by increasing the amount (volume) of water flowing into the Channel and into the Santa Maria River. Additionally, water quality could also be affected by Project construction activities or Project operations (following construction).

Construction. During construction, heavy equipment would be required. Heavy equipment working within the Channel or along its banks has the potential to result in contaminants entering surface water in the event of diesel fuel spills or other hydrocarbon leaks. In addition, heavy equipment use may cause increased erosion or bank destabilization. As required by the conditions of the NPDES Permit, grading and construction activities would be conducted in accordance with a Construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (**MM WQ-1**). The construction SWPPP would include a monitoring program and the implementation of Project-specific measures to reduce contaminants to stormwater. The SWPPP would identify pollutant sources, including sources of sediment, that may affect the quality of storm water discharges associated with construction activity (storm water discharges) from the construction site. It would also identify, and require the implementation of best management Practices (BMPs) to reduce or eliminate pollutants in storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges from the construction site during construction. BMPs would include, but not be limited to, stabilized construction ingress/egress, exit tire wash, wind erosion control, stockpile management, and

controlled areas for vehicle and equipment cleaning, maintenance and fueling. The SWPPP would require that all necessary corrections/repairs are made immediate and the Project complies with the SWPPP, construction permits and approved plans at all times. The SWPPP would also include implementation of non-storm water management and materials/waste management activities, including monitoring discharges (dewatering diversion devices), general site clean-up spill control and ensuring no materials other than storm-water are discharged in quantities that would have an adverse effect on receiving waters. Application of standard County grading, erosion, and drainage-control measures included within the SWPPP (**MM WQ-1**) and section 5.8 – Geologic Processes (**MM GEO-2**) would ensure that impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

In addition to heavy equipment, impacts to water quality could result from activities associated with the removal of vegetation along the banks of the Santa Maria River. The Project includes activities that would require the removal of existing native vegetation. Native vegetation often acts as a bank stabilizer to prevent erosion and sedimentation. Restoration of the culvert work area as required by measure **MM BIO-1** would result in replacement of the native vegetation removed.

Following Project activities, revegetation of the area could include the use of herbicides that could cause water quality impacts. The risk of accidental spills of herbicides is considered low because the herbicide containers on backpack units are under constant control of a trained applicator. The District does not apply mix or dispense herbicides directly into the Channel. The volume of herbicide that could be released from a single unit is small (less than 10 gallons) and would likely occur within a dry Channel where the spill could be contained and cleaned up easily.

Operations. The existing Unit 2 Channel system discharges into the Santa Maria River. The Santa Maria River is currently listed as an impaired water body under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d), (2010). The existing discharge from the Channel includes waters from the West Main Street channel, agricultural run-off, and urban stormwater from the Channel storm drain after large storm events.

To prevent agricultural discharges from impairing the waters that receive discharges, the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) (administered by the State Water Resources Control Board) regulates discharges from irrigated agricultural lands. This is done by issuing waste discharge requirements (WDRs) or conditional waivers of WDRs (Orders) to growers. These Orders contain conditions requiring water quality monitoring of receiving waters and corrective actions when impairments are found. According to Geotracker (2014) there are currently eight (8) monitored discharge areas located within approximately 1/3 mile of the Channel on either side. Numerous other monitoring points are located within the drainage area and are subject to testing and regulation in accordance with the ILRP. Following Project completion, the Unit 2 Channel system would continue to be sourced from the same drainages, namely, the West Main Street channel, agricultural runoff from adjacent fields and the East Channel, and overflow from Hobbs Basin during large storm events. No changes in the sources of run-off are proposed. Water quality monitoring and regulation associated with the existing discharge locations would remain intact and sufficient for Project operations. No change in the water quality from the source would occur.

Water quality could, however, be affected within the Santa Maria River. Improvements to the Santa Maria Levee include opening the existing 72-inch RCP culvert and adding a second 72-inch RCP culvert (Figure 2.2-3 and 2.2-5). The additional culverts would accommodate the capacity of the realigned and widened Channel. The addition of the culverts would affect how the water from the Channel is delivered from the levee into the riverbed. This increase in capacity would cause a significant

change in volume (additional 160 cfs) over existing conditions. Specifically, water quality could be affected by changes in dissolved oxygen, turbidity, temperature or thermal water pollution, especially during a significant storm event. However, the Project has been designed in accordance with the "Design Analysis Report" (Penfield and Smith, 2014) (Attachment 1) which utilizes industry standards to minimize the potential for scour and other impacts associated with channeling systems. Furthermore, storm events, which would require the greatest amount of water volume to be moved through the system, are temporary and infrequent in nature. Water quality impacts associated with Project operations are **less than significant**.

f). No Impact. The Project is located adjacent to, and discharges into, the Santa Maria River 100 year floodplain. However, the Project does not include the construction of any buildings, structures or other facilities that would encourage use or habitation by people. No additional risk or exposure to flood areas would result. Furthermore, the Project would improve drainage of the Channel system into the Santa Maria River by increasing the rate of flow for the existing Channel. By increasing the rate of surface water flow, a greater amount of water can pass through the Channel unimpeded and thus reduce the potential for flooding or bank destabilization to the agricultural areas located directly adjacent to the Channel. **No impacts** would result.

g). Less than Significant. The proposed Project does not include changes that would alter the direction or flow of groundwater. The straightening of the offset and the installation of the additional culvert would modify the existing currents of surface water movements as the water flows from the Channel into the Santa Maria River. However, these changes would be surficial and would not have a significant impact on groundwater in the region. Once the channelized water reaches the Santa Maria River bed it would be subject to the existing percolation processes and rates which currently exist for the river. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

h, i, j, and k). No Impact. The Project does not propose the removal or use of any groundwater from the basin. **No impact** would result.

5.16.3 Cumulative Impacts

The County's Environmental Thresholds for water resources 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 have an impact on groundwater water resources. Therefore, the Project would not contribute to any cumulative groundwater resource impacts.

The Project would result in potentially significant surface water quality impacts. However, these impacts, like those of all proposed development, are addressed by the application of standard County grading, erosion, and drainage-control measures. Project implementation of the SWPPP (**MM WQ-1**) and Geologic Processes mitigation measure **MM GEO-2** would ensure that the Project's contribution to cumulative water quality impacts would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

5.16.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

The following mitigation measures would reduce potential water quality impacts to a less than significant level.

MM WQ-1. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). A Project-specific SWPPP will be developed and implemented in accordance with the NPDES Permit. The SWPPP will:

- Identify pollutant sources, including sources of sediment, that may affect the quality of storm water discharges associated with construction activity (storm water discharges) from the construction site.
- Identify, construct, implement in accordance with a time schedule, and maintain Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce or eliminate pollutants in storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges from the construction site during construction. BMPs will be implemented to reduce or eliminate pollutants in storm water discharges during the construction activities and include, but are not limited to:
  - Stabilization of construction ingress/egress routes, implementing an exit tire wash, proper stockpile management, and controlled areas for vehicle and equipment cleaning, maintenance and fueling;
  - Control of solid waste, hazardous waste, sanitary/septic waste and liquid waste;
  - Specifications for concrete curing, mixing and finishing;
  - Proper handling of hazardous materials; and
  - Spill prevention and control measures.
- Implementation of Erosion Control Measures, including but not limited to:
  - Preservation of existing native vegetation where possible;
  - Silt fencing, fiber rolls, gravel bag berms and rumble plates as necessary; and
  - Immediate repairs to the erosion control measures should they become damaged or otherwise compromised.
- SBCFCD will hold all contractors and subcontractors responsible for fully implementing the conditions included within the SWPPP.

Plan Requirements: A Project-Specific Construction SWPPP will be completed prior to the start of Project construction. **Timing:** Throughout construction. **Monitoring**: The District staff shall perform site inspections and review monitoring reports throughout Project construction.

6.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

6.1 COUNTY DEPARTMENTS CONSULTED *(UNDERLINE):*

Police, Fire, Public Works, Flood Control, Parks, Environmental Health, Special Districts, Regional Programs, Other: _Agricultural Commissioner's Office_____

6.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

X	Seismic Safety/Safety Element	X	Conservation Element
X	Open Space Element	X	Noise Element
X	Coastal Plan and Maps	X	Circulation Element
X	ERME		

6.3 OTHER SOURCES

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

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7.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC (SHORT- AND LONG-TERM) AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

Based upon the impact discussions presented within Section 5.1 through 5.16, the following Table (7.0-1) provides a summary of Project-specific short- and long-term and cumulative impacts. As described in the sections referenced above, there are several sub-issues identified in the checklist under each environmental area that were evaluated herein; however, the level of significance indentified in Table 7.0-1 shows the highest level of impact within the environmental issue area as a whole. In other words, an environmental issue area that is designated as "Less than Significant with Mitigation", may include sub-issues where the Project was found to have "Less than Significant" impacts, "No Impact" or possibly beneficial impacts. As shown in Table 7.0-1, no significant residual environmental impacts would result assuming implementation of the mitigation measures presented herein.

Table 7.0-1. Summary of Cumulative Impact Analysis

Resource Area	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. With Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
5.1 - Aesthetics			X		
5.2 - Agricultural Resources		X			
5.3 - Air Quality			X		
5.4 - Biological Resources		X			
5.5 - Cultural Resources		X			
5.6 - Energy			X		
5.7 - Fire Protection			X		
5.8 - Geologic Processes		X			
5.9 - Hazardous Materials		X			
5.10 - Historic Resources				X	
5.11 - Land Use			X		
5.12 - Noise		X			
5.13 - Public Facilities		X			
5.14 - Recreation				X	
5.15 - Transportation/Circulation		X			
5.16 - Water Resources/Flooding		X			

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8.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Will the proposal result in:	Poten. Signif.	Less than Signif. with Mitigation	Less Than Signif.	No Impact	Reviewed Under Previous Document
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?		X			
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?				X	
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.)		X			
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X		
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 ?				X	

1. As discussed within Section 5 (Potentially Significant Effects Checklist), the proposed Project would have less than significant impacts within the following issue areas: Aesthetics (Section 5.1), Energy Resources (Section 5.6), Fire Protection (Section 5.7), Historic Resources (Section 5.10), Land Use (Section 5.11), and Recreation (Section 5.14). Mitigation measures would further reduce impacts to less than significant for Agriculture (Section 5.2), Air Quality (Section 5.3), Biological Resources (Section 5.4), Cultural Resources (Section 5.5), Geologic Resources (Section 5.8), Hazardous Materials and Risk of Upset (Section 5.9), Noise (Section 5.12), Public Facilities (Section 5.13), Transportation (Section 5.15) and Water Resources/Flooding (Section 5.16).

   The implementation of Project mitigation and avoidance measures would reduce potential impact so that degradation of environmental quality would not occur. Specifically, as discussed within Section 5.4 (Biological Resources), the proposed Project would have the potential to result in significant temporary impacts to wildlife species during construction. However, proposed mitigations described in Section 5.4 (Biological Resources) would reduce these potential impacts to a less than significant level.

The Project would not result in a habitat loss or the degradation of a biological community or population habitat to such a degree as to threaten or eliminate sensitive species.

As discussed in Section 5.3 (Air Quality), total annual GHG emissions for the Project are estimated to be 62 metric tons of CO2e/year, which is below the currently used threshold for significance. Energy consumption for the proposed Project is minimal and is limited to Project construction only. As described in Section 5.5 (Cultural Resources), with Project implementation there is the potential for previously unidentified cultural resources to be encountered. However, mitigation would be incorporated into the project to reduce this potential impact to less than significant.

2. The proposed Project is intended to improve existing flood control capacity within the Unit 2 Channel, which is a long-term environmental goal. All significant Project-related impacts would be mitigated. The Project does not include any elements that would be significantly detrimental to long-term environmental goals. The Project-related loss of up to 3.58 acres of prime/unique agricultural land is counter to the County's long-term goal of preserving agriculture. However, the Project would protect adjacent agricultural soils from the erosive effects of flood waters.

3. As discussed within Section 5.0 (Potentially Significant Effects Checklist), the Project would result in less than significant contributions to cumulative impacts relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, loss of agricultural soil, energy, fire protection, land use and historic resources. The Project would result in significant contributions to cumulative impacts in the following areas: biological resources (e.g. native specimen trees, arroyo chub, western pond turtle and CRLF), cultural resources, erosion/sedimentation, human and environmental exposure to hazardous materials, solid waste disposal, transportation, and water quality. However, the Project-specific mitigation measures for these issues would also reduce the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts to less than significant.

4. As discussed within Sections 5.3 (Air Quality) 5.9 (Hazardous Materials/Risk of Upset), 5.12 (Noise) and 5.15 (Transportation/Circulation), the proposed Project would result in short-term construction related impacts to air quality, additional noise and traffic during constructions, and exposure to persons to soils within this agricultural areas that may contain hazardous materials in the form of pesticides. However, the proposed Project activities are not located within a highly populated area and potential air quality and GHG emissions would be less than significant. Additionally noise and traffic during construction are short-term in nature and would not result in significant impacts with mitigation. Potential exposure to hazardous materials would also be mitigated through measures identified within Section 5.9. Therefore, although the Project would adversely impact human beings the effects with mitigation are not considered to be substantial.

5. As described in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, there is no evidence that the proposed Channel improvements would result in environmental impacts than could not be mitigated to less than significant levels. To date, no disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts, or expert opinion supported by facts has been presented that would indicate that preparation of an EIR is warranted.

9.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

9.1 ZONING

The Project site is within an area designated as AG-II-40 under the County of Santa Barbara's zoning ordinance (Santa Maria Valley Rural Regional Zoning Map, Inland Area - 2011). As defined under Chapter 35.21 (Agricultural Zones) of the Santa Barbara County Land Use and Development Code (2011), a Flood Control Project with 20,000 square foot or more total area is an allowed land use within the Agricultural Zone. Typically, a Minor Conditional Use Permit would be required; however as specified this requirement is not applicable to facilities constructed by the County outside of the Coastal Zone. Therefore, the Project is consistent with the zoning requirements as a permitted land use owned and operated by the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation Division.

9.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

State law requires that all cities and counties adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan that outlines the physical development of the county or city expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future public and private land uses. The County of Santa Barbara has adopted a number of “elements” and area plans that comprise the Comprehensive Plan for the County. These elements are identified as follows:

- Conservation (1979 amended 2010) plus Groundwater Resources Section added in 1994 (amended 2009);
- Seismic Safety and Safety (1979 amended 2010) plus supplement prepared in 2000;
- Open Space (1979 amended 2009),
- Noise (1979 amended 2009);
- Land Use (1980 amended 2011),
- Coastal Land Use Plan (1980),
- Air Quality Supplement (1981 republished 2009), plus community and area plans;
- Circulation (1991 republished 2010);
- Housing (2009);
- Scenic Highways (1975 republished 2009);
- Environmental Resource Management (1980 republished 2009);
- Hazardous Waste (1990 republished 2009);
- Agricultural (1991 republished 2009); and
- Energy (1994 republished 2009).

Specific policies of the County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan that are applicable to the proposed Project are identified in Table 9.2-1 along with findings for Project consistency with the identified policies. (Please note that only policies that are relevant to the proposed Project are identified below. Many issue areas considered in the Comprehensive Plan such as housing, public services, etc. do not apply to the Project due to the nature of the Project and/or the location of the Project components.)

Table 9.2-1. County of Santa Barbara General Plan Policy Consistency Matrix

POLICY STATEMENT	PROJECT CONSISTENCY DISCUSSION
Agricultural Element	
Policy IA: The integrity of agricultural operations shall not be violated by recreational or other non-compatible uses.	There are no recreational uses proposed as part of the Project. The Project is an improvement to an existing use (flood control channel) located within an agricultural area. The Project would benefit the nearby agricultural land and would not significantly violate the use of the land for agricultural operations. As such, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
Policy IIA: Santa Barbara County shall require measures designed for the prevention of flooding and siltation from urbanization, especially as such damage related to approved development.	The proposed Project is intended to improve flood control and benefit these adjacent land uses. As such, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
Policy IID: Conversion of highly productive agricultural lands whether urban or rural, shall be discouraged. The County shall support programs which encourage the retention of highly productive agricultural lands.	As discussed within Section 5.2 (Agricultural Resources), the Project would require the permanent conversion of approximately 3.58 acres of agricultural soils of prime/statewide importance. Irrespective of this impact, the integrity of adjacent agricultural operations will not be violated by the Project. The proposed Project is intended to improve flood control and benefit these adjacent land uses. As such, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
Conservation Element	
Policy 2.1: Where feasible, in cooperation with local purveyors and other groundwater users, the County shall act to protect groundwater quality where quality is acceptable, improve quality where degraded, and discourage degradation of quality below acceptable levels.	As discussed within Section 5.16 (Water Resources/Flooding), the proposed Project would not affect groundwater quality. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
Policy 3.5: In coordination with any applicable groundwater management plan(s), the County shall not allow, through its land use permitting decisions, any basin to become seriously overdrafted on a prolonged basis.	The proposed Project would not require the use of substantive water resource supplies due to its nature and is therefore consistent with this policy.
Policy 3.8: Water-conserving plumbing, as well as water-conserving landscaping, shall be incorporated into all new development Projects, where appropriate, effective, and consistent with applicable law…	The Project proposes the use of native plant material for revegetation purposes which are water conserving plants. Such species would require less irrigation than many non-native species. These species are anticipated to persist as mature plants without supplemental irrigation. However, RRWMD and the Santa Barbara County District have found that irrigation during the first 1 to 3 years of planting greatly improves plant survival and minimizes weed invasion. Areas with container plants and shrubs would be temporarily irrigated through a combination of hand watering, water truck, and drip irrigation, depending on weather conditions at the time of planting and distance from the water source. The irrigation system would be extended

POLICY STATEMENT	PROJECT CONSISTENCY DISCUSSION
	incrementally into the restoration areas as plants are installed. Mulch available from the South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station would be used to increase watering efficiency. Although temporary watering would not use recycled water, due to the minimal amount of water required during these restoration periods, these activities are considered to be in compliance with the overall policy.
Energy Element	
Policy 4.1: Construction - Encourage recycling and reuse of construction waste to reduce energy consumption associated with extracting and manufacturing virgin materials.	As discussed within Section 5.13 (Public Facilities), construction materials would be recycled to the extent feasible to reduce construction waste generated from the Project. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this policy.
Policy 4.8: Water Efficient Landscaping - The County shall require (per Government Code, Section 65590, Article 10.8) water-efficient landscape design and irrigation systems in new and renovated developments and at public parks and facilities. [Energy-savings are accrued through reduced water pumping and treatment, and reduced disposal and maintenance.]	See response to Policy 3.8 above.
Seismic Safety and Safety Element	
Geology and Seismic Protection Policy 2 - To maintain consistency, the County shall refer to the California Building Code, the Land Use Development Code, County Ordinances, the Coastal Land Use Plan, and the Comprehensive General Plan when considering the siting and construction of structures in seismically hazardous areas.	As discussed within Section 5.8, the Project would be designed in accordance with CBC and all other Land Use Development codes to prevent potential seismic hazards.
Land Use Element	
Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy 1. Plans for development shall minimize cut and fill operations. Plans requiring excessive cutting and filling may be denied if it is determined that the development could be carried out with less alteration of the natural terrain.	Fill operations are limited to placement of excess soil material on adjacent parcels. Therefore, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy 3. For necessary grading operations on hillsides, the smallest practical area of land shall be exposed at any one time during development and the length of exposure shall be kept to the shortest practicable amount of time. The clearing of land should be avoided during the winter rainy season and all measures for removing sediments and stabilizing slopes should be in place before the beginning of the rainy season.	The proposed Project has been designed to avoid the rainy season. During construction, the smallest practical area of land shall be exposed at any one time to prevent erosion to the extent feasible. Mitigation measures identified in Section 5.16 (Water Resources) would be adhered to in order to further minimize erosion and stabilize slopes during construction. Therefore, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy 5. Temporary vegetation, seeding, mulching, or other suitable stabilization method shall be used to protect soils subject to erosion that have been disturbed during grading or development. All cut and fill slopes shall be	As indicated within Section 3.0; the Project would incorporate BMPs in order to reduce erosion and prevent runoff from the site. Specifically, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program including but not limited to silt fences surrounding work site,

POLICY STATEMENT	PROJECT CONSISTENCY DISCUSSION
stabilized as rapidly as possible with planting of native grasses and shrubs, appropriate non-native plants, or with accepted landscaping practices.	fiber rolls, stabilized construction entrance/exit, wind erosion control measures (tarping, dust control watering), preservation of ex. vegetation (fencing) would be implemented. Additionally, areas of disturbance would be revegetated to pre-Project conditions with appropriate native replacement vegetation. Therefore, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy 7. Degradation of the water quality of groundwater basins, nearby streams, or wetlands shall not result from development of the site…	The Project's impact on water quality and biological resources are addressed in Sections 5.16 and 5.4 respectively of this IS. Based upon the analyses presented therein, the Project would have a significant and unavoidable impact on aquatic wildlife, vegetation and birds in the event of spills of fuel or hydraulic fluid. Additionally, Project activities would disturb sediments impacting water quality and may otherwise result in pollutants entering surface water. However, mitigations provided as part of the Project design and included herein would reduce potential impacts to less than significant. These include the following: • Mitigation Provided by the 2001 Routine Maintenance Program EIR. • MM BIO-2: Tree Avoidance and Replacement. • MM WQ-1. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). With implementation of these measures, the Project is therefore consistent with the intent of this policy.
Streams And Creeks Policy 1. All permitted construction and grading within stream corridors shall be carried out in such a manner as to minimize impacts from increased runoff, sedimentation, biochemical degradation, or thermal pollution.	See response to Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy 7 above.
Flood Hazard Policy 1. All development, including construction, excavation, and grading, except for flood control projects and non-structural agricultural uses, shall be prohibited in the floodway	The Project is a flood control project and is therefore consistent with this policy.
Flood Hazard Policy 2. Permitted development shall not cause or contribute to flood hazards or lead to expenditure of public funds for flood control works, i.e., dams, stream channelizations, etc.	The Project impacts associated with flooding hazards are addressed in Section 5.16 of this IS. Based upon the analysis presented therein, the Project would be consistent with this policy.
Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 2. When developments are proposed for parcels where archaeological or other cultural sites are located, project design shall be required which avoids impacts to such cultural sites if possible.	The Project's impact on cultural resources (archaeological sites) is addressed in Section 5.5 of this IS. The Project is not located near any known cultural resources and includes mitigation to reduce impacts to previously unrecorded cultural resources to the extent feasible. Section 5.10 of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration addresses historic resources. No impacts to historical resources are anticipated.

POLICY STATEMENT	PROJECT CONSISTENCY DISCUSSION
	Therefore, the Project is considered consistent with the intent of this policy.
Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 3. When sufficient planning flexibility does not permit avoiding construction on archaeological or other types of cultural sites, adequate mitigation shall be required.	See response to Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 2 above.
Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 4. Off-road vehicle use, unauthorized collection of artifacts, and other activities other than development which could destroy or damage archaeological or cultural sites shall be prohibited.	The Project's impact on cultural resources is addressed in Section 5.5 of this IS. Based upon the analysis presented, impacts would be reduced to the extent feasible. Therefore, the Project is considered consistent with intent of this policy.
Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 5. Native Americans shall be consulted when development proposals are submitted which impact significant archaeological or cultural sites.	See response to Historical and Archaeological Sites Policy 2 above.
Parks/Recreation Policy 4. Opportunities for hiking and equestrian trails should be preserved, improved, and expanded wherever compatible with surrounding uses.	The Project's impact on recreation is addressed in Sections 5.15, Transportation/Circulation and 5.14, Recreation of this IS. Based upon the analysis presented therein, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Santa Maria/Orcutt Area Community Goal - Land Use. Promotion and protection of agriculture as an industry.	Although the Project would require the permanent conversion of 3.58 acres of agricultural lands, the proposed Project is intended to increase the efficiency of flood control within this area, which would benefit adjacent agricultural uses. As such the Project may be considered consistent with this goal.

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10.0 RECOMMENDATION BY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT 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.

__X__ 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:

_____ With Public Hearing _____ Without Public Hearing

PREVIOUS DOCUMENT: _____

PROJECT EVALUATOR: _____ **DATE:** _____

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11.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER

_____ 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.

PRINTED NAME:_____
SIGNATURE:_____
INITIAL STUDY DATE: _____

PRINTED NAME:_____
SIGNATURE:_____
NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:_____

PRINTED NAME:_____
SIGNATURE:_____
REVISION DATE:_____

PRINTED NAME:_____
SIGNATURE:_____
FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:_____

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12.0 ATTACHMENTS

1. Penfield and Smith Design Report (2014) (Appendices available upon request)
2. Air Quality Calculations (Padre, 2014)
3. Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation (Padre, 2014)
4. Geologic Report (Fugro, 2003)
5. Comment Letter on the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Unit 2 Channel Improvements Project
6. Governor's Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse Letter

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