TAJIGUAS LANDFILL CAPACITY INCREASE PROJECT

FINDINGS PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21081 AND THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15090 AND 15091

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. OVERVIEW

A. Project Description

1. Project Summary

The Tajiguas Landfill is located in a coastal canyon known as Cañada de la Pila, approximately 26 miles west of the City of Santa Barbara and has been in continuous operation since 1967 predating both the California Coastal Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Tajiguas Landfill serves the unincorporated areas of the south coast, Santa Ynez and Cuyama Valleys in Santa Barbara County, and the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Buellton and Solvang. The Tajiguas Landfill is partially located within the Coastal Zone and zoned for agriculture (AG-II-100, AG-II-320), with a Comprehensive Plan "Waste Disposal Facility" overlay over a portion of the Landfill property in the inland area. The portion of the Landfill within the Coastal Zone is closed and has received a final cover. The Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project (now referred to by the County as the ReSource Center) consisting of a Material Recovery Facility (MRF), Anaerobic Digestion Facility (ADF) and Compost Management Unit (CMU), was constructed to comply with state waste reduction and greenhouse gas reduction legislation. The ReSource Center is currently in limited operations and is also located on the Tajiguas Landfill property in the inland area. Disposal of waste that cannot be processed by the MRF (bypass waste) and non-recyclable residuals from ReSource Center operations continue to be buried in the Tajiguas Landfill in the inland area of the property.

The Santa Barbara County Public Works Department Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division (RRWMD) is proposing to increase solid waste disposal capacity to extend the life of the Landfill that was projected to be provided through waste diversion associated with operation of the ReSource Center.

The proposed project would increase the permitted height, disposal area footprint, and design capacity of the Landfill to extend the estimated closure year to approximately 2038 to coincide with the completion of debt service on the ReSource Center. The increased capacity would be provided by increasing the maximum elevation of the Landfill by approximately 30 feet, from 620 to 650 feet above mean sea level. In addition, the permitted disposal area footprint would be expanded to the north and east by approximately 14.25 acres, which would increase the total permitted disposal area from 118 acres to 132.25 acres. There would be no change to the overall permitted operational area of 357 acres.

The proposed capacity increase would provide approximately 6.1 million cubic yards (mcy) of additional airspace for burial of solid waste, which includes bypass waste and residual waste (non-recyclable and non-compostable residue

produced by sorting at the Materials Recovery Facility, and residue from the Anaerobic Digestion Facility and Compost Management Unit [mostly plastics]). The 6.1 mcy additional air space would provide approximately 5.0 mcy of net capacity increase.

No changes to Landfill or ReSource Center operations would occur, including materials transportation, site access, site security, scale house operations, waste handling, waste processing, composting, recyclables recovery, waste disposal, daily cover, maintenance activities, personnel requirements and green-waste processing and distribution, except:

- Waste would be accepted at the scalehouse from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. instead of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday; 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.
- The daily maximum waste receipt limit (1,500 tons) would be changed to a weekly maximum of 9,000 tons.

2. Project Objectives

   - Regain Landfill service life that was planned to be provided by enhanced recovery of recyclable materials and associated reduction in burial of solid waste provided by the ReSource Center.
   - Avoid the ratepayer burden of paying for debt service for the ReSource Center simultaneously with cost for transportation and disposal of residual waste (post-Resource Center processing) at an alternative landfill.
   - Maximize disposal opportunities at the Landfill and avoid environmental impacts associated with off-site hauling and disposal when the Landfill reaches its current permitted capacity.
   - Provide local facilities for an efficient, combined resource recovery and disposal operation to reduce or eliminate the need for solid waste to be delivered to multiple locations for residuals disposal.

3. Entitlements

   No new entitlements or land use permits are required as the proposed Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project is within the inland area of the County and pursuant to the Santa Barbara County Land Use Development Code (Chapter 35, Article 35.1 of the Santa Barbara County Code, Section 35.10.040G.I.b.), the Land Use Development Code is not applicable to "development by the County or any district of which the Board is the governing body." The capacity increase area is also within the designated Comprehensive Plan "Waste Disposal Facility" overlay area. However, the following permits and/or approvals would be needed from the following agencies:

- Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors: certification of the CEQA document and adoption of CEQA findings, project approval, and authority to advertise for construction bids.
- Santa Barbara County Environmental Health (Local Enforcement Agency): revision to the Landfill's current Solid Waste Facility Permit with concurrence from CalRecycle.
- Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District: potential modifications to the Landfill's operating permits (PTO No. 9788-R4) to address changes in landfill gas collection, treatment and control.
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board: potential changes in the Landfill's Monitoring and Reporting Program to address the proposed Lower North Sedimentation Basin; and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for proposed modification of the flow control structure in Pila Creek.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Section 404 nationwide permit verification for proposed modification of the flow control structure in Pila Creek.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Streambed Alteration Agreement for proposed modification of the North Sedimentation Basin and flow control structure in Pila Creek and Incidental Take Permit for the Crotch's bumblebee.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: potential changes to the Habitat Conservation Plan and Incidental Take Permit for the Tajiguas Landfill and ReSource Center.

B. Environmental Review History for the Tajiguas Landfill

The Tajiguas Landfill site has been in operation since 1967 for the disposal of municipal solid waste. The initial siting, design and operation of the Landfill predates adoption of CEQA (1970) and the Coastal Act, which designated Coastal Zones in California in 1976.

In 1987, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified for a proposed lateral expansion of the Landfill into the northern portions of Cañada de la Pila (87-EIR-08). An addendum to 87-EIR-08 was prepared in 1988 and adopted on July 21, 1988 for a vertical expansion of the existing waste footprint to an elevation of 500 feet above mean sea level (msl). The lateral expansion reviewed under the 1987 EIR was never implemented.

On August 3, 1999, the Board of Supervisors directed the RRWMD to proceed with the Tajiguas Landfill Bench Plan. The Bench Plan increased the permitted disposal design capacity of the Landfill from 12.0 million cubic yards to 15.1 million cubic yards by re-grading and filling the outside faces of the Landfill. The Bench Plan

project was determined to be within the scope of the analysis of 87-EIR-08 and the July 21, 1988 addendum.

On August 13, 2002, the Board of Supervisors certified an EIR (01-EIR-05) for, and approved, the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project (Front Canyon Expansion). This project consists of the horizontal and vertical expansion of the Landfill outside of the Coastal Zone, providing 8.2 million cubic yards of additional waste disposal capacity for a total capacity of 23.3 million cubic yards.

On December 5, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved minor changes to the approved Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project. These changes included elimination of the Coastal Zone Southeast Corner Modification and reconfiguration of the North Slope borrow/stockpile area. These project changes were analyzed in a November 8, 2006 Addendum to 01-EIR-05.

On April 18, 2007, Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, the County Environmental Review Officer determined that 01-EIR-05 adequately addressed a proposed change in the location of the Green Waste Processing Area.

On May 5, 2009, the Board of Supervisors certified a Subsequent EIR (08EIR-00000-00007) for, and approved, the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration Project. The project involved the reconfiguration of the waste footprint approved as a part of the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project which provided a number of engineering and environmental benefits and the comprehensive restoration of native habitats on the County-owned Baron Ranch to benefit the federally threatened California red-legged frog. The reconfiguration did not modify any of the operational parameters (e.g., refuse capacity, operating hours, environmental protection systems) reviewed in 01-EIR-05.

On March 18, 2014, Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 (Planning and Development 15162 determination letter dated December 19, 2013), the Board of Supervisors found that no substantial changes were proposed in the project, no substantial changes occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project was undertaken, and no new information of substantial importance was received with respect to the project or the mitigation measures, and therefore, no new Environmental Impact Report was required for the approval the Tajiguas Landfill Phase 3B Groundwater Protection System including a proposed change in the location of temporary soil stockpiles for the project.

A CEQA 15162/15164 determination letter dated September 25, 2014, was accepted by the County Board of Supervisors on June 23, 2015 for modification to the Baron Ranch Restoration Plan associated with the Reconfiguration Project, which found that this modification did not warrant any additional environmental analysis.

On July 12, 2016, a Subsequent EIR (12EIR-00000-00002), EIR Revision Letter and Errata dated May 27, 2016 was certified by the Board of Supervisors for the

operation of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project (now known as the ReSource Center). An Addendum to 12EIR-00000-00002 (dated August 11, 2017, revised October 26, 2017) was prepared for the Revised Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project and considered by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 2017.

An Addendum dated February 12, 2018 to 08EIR-00000-00007 was prepared to address a change in the approved reconfiguration project to substitute 400-foot section of 20-foot-wide reinforced concrete channel with 400 feet of buried 48-inch corrugated HDPE pipe; retrofit the existing temporary flow control structure to serve as permanent control structure, construct a 420-ft section of earthen channel with 20-foot wide bottom and 2:1 side slopes to convey flow control structure spillway discharge and surface runoff to the 48-inch culvert.

Since approval of 12EIR-00000-00002 and the Addendum, several CEQA 15162 determinations have also been prepared to address minor changes in the ReSource Center project description as the final engineering design was completed and start-up operations have begun. The findings of the approved CEQA 15162 determinations indicate the minor project modifications did not warrant any additional environmental analysis or a subsequent environmental document. A second Addendum to 12EIR-00000-00002 dated (August 15, 2023) was prepared to address replacement of the MRF biofilters with a new air management system as a result of damage from the Alisal Fire, addition of a Gore Cover System at the Compost Management Unit and other minor engineering and operational changes.

II. INTRODUCTION TO CEQA FINDINGS

The RRWMD prepared a Draft and Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project (collectively, the "SEIR"). The SEIR addresses the potential environmental effects associated with the project, and five alternatives. The Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations are provided below and are recommended for adoption by this Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) as the County's findings under the CEQA (Public Resources Code, Sec. 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., Title 14, Sec. 15000 et seq.). The Findings provide a written analysis and conclusions regarding the project's environmental impacts, mitigation measures, other alternatives to the project, and overriding considerations, which justify the approval of the project despite significant unavoidable environmental impacts.

A. Procedural Background

Notice of Preparation (NOP)

A NOP was distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, and members of the public on March 23, 2023 for a 30-day comment period. The NOP was mailed or emailed to occupants and property owners within 1,000 feet of the exterior boundary of the Landfill property (extended to include all parcels in the Arroyo Quemada community), to other permitting agencies by certified mail, to community

groups based on lists compiled by the County Planning and Development Department, and to members of the Board of Supervisors. A copy of the NOP was also posted electronically on the State Clearinghouse CEQAnet website, the County Public Works Department RRWMD website and a printed copy was posted at the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

A virtual public scoping meeting was held on April 10, 2023 to accept input on the scope and content of this SEIR. Public testimony was provided in this meeting by Dustin Smith, Mariah S., Tina Segal, Doug Kern (representing the Gaviota Coast Conservancy) and Bruce Hendricks. Concerns expressed included odors associated with current ReSource Center operations, increased dust, litter, visual impacts, water quality and wildfire hazards associated with the proposed project, a prior Board resolution regarding landfill expansion, and consideration of alternatives that include terminating operation of the existing Anaerobic Digestion Facility and Compost Management Unit at the ReSource Center.

Draft Subsequent EIR

As noted in Section I.B. (above) the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors certified an EIR (01-EIR-05) for, and approved, the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project (Front Canyon Expansion) on August 13, 2002. All applicable permits to construct and operate the expansion were received in 2003 and waste disposal is currently occurring in the permitted area (as modified by the Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration Project).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project SEIR (23EIR-00001) was prepared as a SEIR to 01-EIR-05 and 08EIR-00000-00007 because the proposed project would substantially modify waste disposal operations at the Landfill, with resultant changes to the types and severity of impacts identified in the previously certified EIR. A Draft SEIR was prepared and circulated for review by public agencies and interested members of the public for a minimum 45-day period (September 28 to November 13, 2023).

The Notice of Availability of the Draft SEIR was filed with the State Office of Planning and Research under State Clearinghouse no. 2023030563. The Notice of Availability of the Draft SEIR and Notice of Public Hearing was also published in the Santa Barbara Independent on September 28, 2023. The Notice was posted on-line at the Public Works Department RRWMD website and at the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

The Notice of Availability was also mailed to all property owners and occupants within 1,000 feet of the exterior boundary of the Landfill property (extended to ensure all parcels in the Arroyo Quemada neighborhood were noticed if they were not within 1,000 feet) and emailed directly to interested residents of the Arroyo Quemada community. The Notice of Availability was mailed and/or emailed to responsible and interested agencies, neighboring counties and cities, community

groups based on lists compiled by the County Planning and Development Department, members of the Board of Supervisors and to any individual or group who requested to be noticed.

A public hearing was held at the Tajiguas Landfill (Materials Recovery Facility public education room) on October 26, 2023 to accept oral and written testimony regarding the adequacy of the Draft SEIR. In total, seven individuals provided oral comments at the public hearing and 11 written comment letters/emails were received during the public comment period and written responses have been prepared and incorporated into the Final SEIR (Section 9.0).

Final Subsequent EIR

The Final SEIR, which includes the response to comments on the Draft SEIR, was transmitted to public agencies that commented on the Draft SEIR Pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 21092. The Final SEIR was also posted on the Public Works Department RRWMD website concurrently with posting of the Board Letter considering approval of the project

(https://www.countyofsb.org/1165/Environmental-Documents).

III. CEQA FINDINGS

FINDINGS PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21081 AND THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15090 AND 15091:

A. Consideration of the Subsequent EIR

The Final SEIR (23EIR-00001) was presented to the Board of Supervisors which has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final SEIR and its appendices prior to approving the project. In addition, the Board of Supervisors has reviewed and considered testimony and additional information presented at or prior to public hearing on March 19, 2024. The Final SEIR reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board of Supervisors and is adequate for this proposal.

B. Full Disclosure

The Board of Supervisors finds and certifies that the Final SEIR (23EIR-00001) constitutes a complete, accurate, adequate and good faith effort at full disclosure under CEQA. The Board of Supervisors further finds and certifies that the Final SEIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA.

C. Location of Record of Proceedings

The documents and other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are in the custody of the Project Manager: Ms. Joddi Leipner at Santa Barbara County Public Works Department- Resource Recovery Waste Management Division, 130 E. Victoria Street, Suite 100, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

D. Findings that Certain Unavoidable Impacts are Mitigated to the Maximum Extent Feasible

The Final SEIR (23EIR-00001) for the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project identified two environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed capacity increase area and two environmental impacts associated with extending the life of the Tajiguas Landfill which cannot be fully mitigated and are therefore considered significant and unavoidable.

To the extent the impacts remain significant and unavoidable, such impacts are acceptable when weighed against the overriding social, economic, legal, technical, and other considerations set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations included herein. For each of these significant and unavoidable impacts identified by the Final SEIR (23EIR-00001), feasible changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect, as discussed below:

1. Construction of new disposal areas and extended Landfill operations would generate greenhouse gas emissions that would contribute to global climate change (Impact AQ-5)

   This impact is described in the Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.2, page 4.2-39). Continued management and disposal of by-pass and residual waste from the communities served by the Tajiguas Landfill would result in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from anaerobic decomposition of organic material in the waste. Annual GHG emissions associated with implementation of the proposed project would exceed the County's significance threshold in all years except 2025 and 2026 and are considered a significant impact.

   The primary source of the GHG emissions is the community's waste. The RRWMD provides a critical public service by managing this waste in an environmental and fiscally responsible manner. The most substantive mitigation measure for operational GHG reductions has already taken place in the construction and operation of the ReSource Center. The ReSource Center separates organics (food and green waste) from the general municipal solid waste (MSW) stream and sends the organics to the ADF. Separated paper products are routed to the paper dryer for recycling. Diversion of these organics and paper products from the Landfill reduce future methane emissions from the Landfill since there will be less landfilled degradable organic carbon materials. As discussed in Final SEIR Section 4.4.1.4, landfill gas collection and treatment systems are in place to minimize landfill gas emissions and would be extended into the proposed Phase IV waste fill area. Based on annual reports submitted to the EPA, the Landfill control efficiency is 83%. Landfill gas is used to power the ReSource Center MRF and is also converted to electricity in on-site engines and distributed to the grid as a green energy source.

In addition, the Landfill also complies with the following regulations to reduce GHG emissions:

- Landfill gas combustion equipment complies with local (Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District [SBCAPCD]), state (Methane Emissions from Municipal Solid Waste Landfills: Subchapter 10. Climate Change, Article 4. Regulations to Achieve Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Subarticle 6. Methane Emissions from Municipal Solid Waste Landfills), and Federal (New Source Performance Standard (NSPS) 40 CFR Part 60 Subparts WWW, Cf and XXX, 40 CFR Part 98) air quality and GHG regulations. Landfill gas combustion equipment is considered Best Available Control Technology (BACT) as defined by the SBCAPCD.
- On-road and off-road construction equipment complies with applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) and SBCAPCD regulations, such as:
    - All portable diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 brake horsepower shall be registered with the state's portable equipment registration program or shall obtain an SBCAPCD permit.
    - Diesel-powered mobile construction equipment greater than 25 horsepower (hp) are subject to the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation (13 California Code of Regulations (CCR), §2449).
    - Diesel-fueled heavy-duty trucks and buses are subject to CARB's On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles (In-Use) Regulation (13 CCR, §2025).
- The RRWMD is complying with SB 1383 (including the operation of the ReSource Center which is a significant GHG reduction project implemented in the County and included in the County's Climate Action Plan) to reduce landfilling of organics.

Offsite GHG reduction measures, such as contribution to an offsite mitigation project or program to further reduce GHG emissions is not financially feasible. Due to the ReSource Center and the RRWMD's required compliance with a wide variety of environmental regulations, customers of the Tajiguas Landfill have some of the highest disposal costs in the tri-county region (Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo). Contributions to offsite mitigation projects or programs would require further significant increases in tipping fees and ratepayer fees that are subject to approval of the Public Participants (cities of Goleta, Santa Barbara, Solvang, and Buellton) before implementation and may

not be approved by the Public Participants and, therefore, are not financially feasible.

No additional control measures are available to further reduce GHG emissions generated by the waste decomposition; therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. However, mitigation measure *MM AQ-1* would be implemented to minimize construction-related GHG emissions. Residual impacts would be significant.

The Board of Supervisors finds that no other measures are known which would further reduce the impact, and unavoidable GHG emissions have been mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

2. Project implementation could result in the loss of occupied habitat for Crotch's bumblebee, potential loss of individuals and loss of nests within the vegetated areas of the proposed Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project area as a result of construction activities (Impact BIO-6)

   This impact is described in the Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.3, page 4.3-45). Five Crotch's bumblebees (candidate for listing on the California Endangered Species Act) were observed foraging within the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project area. No nests were observed. The proposed project may result in impacts to this species, potentially including loss of individuals, nests if present and previously hydroseeded foraging habitat, and is considered a significant impact. The following mitigation measures would be implemented and would reduce impacts to Crotch's bumblebee to the extent feasible.

   - MM BIO-4a: Crotch's Bumblebee Training and Construction Phasing
   - MM BIO-4b: Crotch's Bumblebee Habitat Replacement
   - MM BIO-4c: Crotch's Bumblebee Habitat Usage Study

   Habitat replacement (MM BIO-4b - Crotch's Bumblebee Habitat Replacement) would restore impacted foraging habitat, however, because of Landfill construction timing and disturbance requirements and the life-cycle of the bumblebee, impacts to one or more life stages of Crotch's bumblebee may not be completely avoidable. Therefore, residual impacts to this species may be significant and unavoidable. If take of Crotch's bumblebee cannot be avoided, the RRWMD will obtain an Incidental Take Permit from CDFW.

   The Board of Supervisors finds that no other measures are known which would further reduce the impact, and unavoidable impacts to Crotch's bumblebee have been mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

3. Extension of GHG Emissions associated with Landfill Operations (Impact AQ-EXT-1)

This impact is described in the Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.2, page 4.2-45). The proposed capacity increase is anticipated to extend the life of the Tajiguas Landfill by about 12.75 years. Upon reaching revised final capacity, the Landfill would be closed and the final cover system installed in the remaining Landfill areas. Emissions would occur in association with final closure activities, and following closure, in association with ongoing Landfill monitoring and maintenance activities. Although the landfill gas collection and treatment systems would continue to operate, fugitive landfill gas (including GHG emissions) from the waste in place would be emitted for decades after closure. GHG emissions from Landfill operations are considered significant and unavoidable. The mitigation measures and operational measures identified for Impact AQ-5 discussed above would reduce Impact AQ-EXT-1, but the project-related extension of Landfill life would also extend the duration of significant and unavoidable climate change impacts associated with operational GHG emissions.

The Board of Supervisors finds that no other measures are known which would further reduce the impact, and unavoidable GHG extension of life impacts have been mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

4. Extension of Biological Impacts associated with Landfill Operations (Impact BIO-EXT-1)

   This impact is described in the Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.3, page 4.3-50). The project-related extension of the life of the Landfill and delay of final closure of the Landfill would extend significant and unavoidable impacts associated with abandonment or avoidance of foraging and breeding habitat by sensitive birds and mammals due to Landfill operations and human activity as identified in the Final EIR (01-EIR-05) for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project.

   Phased closure of other areas of the Landfill that have reached capacity, reduced landfill disposal activity following implementation of the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project and implementation of the following mitigation measures identified in the 01-EIR-05 prepared for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project would continue to reduce conflicts with sensitive wildlife use of the Landfill site and adjacent areas, but no other feasible measures are available to reduce biological impacts below levels of significance. Residual impacts would be significant.

   The following measures from 01-EIR-05 would continue to be implemented:

   - BIO-2: 50-foot oak/riparian habitat setback;
   - BIO-3: oak tree replacement plan;
   - BIO-4: oak tree protection plan;

- BIO-7: revegetation plan to restore native habitats;
- BIO-9: minimize night lighting to reduce adverse effects on nocturnal wildlife activity; and
- BIO-10: control litter to prevent entrapment by wildlife.

The Board of Supervisors finds that no other measures are known which would further reduce the impact, and unavoidable impacts biological resource due to the Landfill's extension of life have been mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

E. Findings that Certain Impacts are Mitigated to Insignificance by Conditions of Approval

The Final SEIR (23EIR-00001) identified several subject areas for which the project is considered to cause or contribute to significant, but mitigable environmental impacts. For each of these impacts identified by the Final SEIR (23EIR-00001), feasible changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect, as discussed below:

1. Biological Resources

   The Final SEIR Volume 1, identified six potentially significant impacts to biological resources that would result from implementation of the project: Impact BIO-2: construction impacts to a sensitive plant community; Impact BIO-4: construction impacts to nesting migratory birds and/or raptors; Impact BIO-5: loss of Santa Barbara honeysuckle plants; Impact BIO-7: loss of mature coast live oak trees; Impact BIO-9: construction impacts to transient California red-legged frogs and Impact BIO-CUM-2: cumulative loss of native plant communities, sensitive habitats and sensitive plants. These impacts are discussed in the Final SEIR (Sections 4.3.2.5 – 4.3.2.7, pages 4.3-40 to 4.3-53). The Board of Supervisors finds that the following mitigation measures would reduce such impacts to insignificant levels.

   - Impact BIO-2: mitigation measures (*MM BIO-1(a)*: Minimize Impacts to Adjacent Habitats and *MM BIO-1(b*): Control Highly Invasive Plants) have been provided to minimize impacts to sensitive plant communities and other native vegetation. In addition, an existing mitigation measure from the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR (BIO-7: Habitat Restoration) has been revised to incorporate project-related mitigation into existing Landfill habitat restoration requirements.
   - Impact BIO-4: mitigation measures (*MM BIO-2*: Breeding Bird Protection) have been provided to minimize construction-related impacts including scheduling construction work to avoid the bird breeding season, conducting

bird breeding surveys and monitoring of active nests to avoid adverse effects.

- Impact BIO-5: mitigation measures (*MM BIO-3*: Rare Plant Replacement) have been provided to replace Santa Barbara honeysuckle plants removed by the project at a minimum 2:1 ratio at the Landfill property or Baron Ranch.
- Impact BIO-7: oak tree planting conducted as part of the Baron Ranch Restoration Project far exceeded the requirements of the Landfill Expansion Project and the Landfill Reconfiguration Project such that additional mitigation (oak tree replacement) is not necessary.
- Impact BIO-9: mitigation measures (*MM BIO-5*: CRLF Avoidance Measures) have been provided to minimize conflicts with and mortality of transient California red-legged frogs (CRLF) including use of U.S. Fish and Wildlife approved biologists, environmental sensitivity training, utilizing protocols for capturing and relocating any CRLF observed at the Landfill, prohibiting ground disturbing activities during the rainy season between sunset and sunrise, conducting surveys to detect CRLF following all rain events of 0.1 inches or greater, conducting CRLF surveys prior to any mechanical ground disturbance, requiring equipment operators to search around the equipment and materials prior to starting work each day during the rainy season, relocation of any observed CRLF to protected areas of Arroyo Quemado, conducting construction activities to prevent creating depressions where water can pond, cover up trenches and excavation each night during the rainy season, limit on-site vehicle speed to 15 mph and conducting refueling and maintenance of equipment and vehicles at least 60 feet from Pila Creek and the sedimentation basins.
- Impact BIO-CUM-2: mitigation measures (*MM BIO-1, MM BIO-2, MM BIO-3, MM BIO-4*) would also minimize the project's contribution to cumulative construction impacts to native plant communities, sensitive habitats and sensitive plants associated with other projects in the region.

2. Hazards & Hazardous Materials

   The Final SEIR Volume 1 (Sections 4.4.2.5 - 4.4.2.7, pages 4.4-18 to 4.4-23) identified three potentially significant impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials that would result from implementation of the project: Impact HAZ-2: encounter hazardous materials during construction; Impact HAZ-EXT-1: extend landfill-related hazards further in time and Impact HAZ-CUM-1: cumulative hazardous materials use, storage and disposal. The Board of Supervisors finds that the following mitigation measures would reduce such impacts to insignificant levels.

- Impact HAZ-2: mitigation measures (*MM HAZ-1*: Hazardous Materials Assessment and Remediation) have been provided including preparation and implementation of a soil management plan to minimize public exposure to contaminated soils (if found).
- Impact HAZ-EXT-1: current hazard mitigation measures in place at the Landfill would continue to be implemented including fire prevention and suppression practices, improved site security to minimize illegal dumping, and landfill gas collection and treatment.
- Impact HAZ-CUM-1: mitigation measures listed under Impact HAZ-2 (*MM HAZ-1*) would also minimize the project's contribution to cumulative hazardous materials impacts associated with other projects in the region.

3. Cultural Resources

   The Final SEIR Volume 1 (Sections 4.6.2.5 - 4.6.2.7, pages 4.6-10 to 4.6-12) identified three potentially significant cultural resources impacts that would result from implementation of the project: Impact CR-1: disturbance of unknown archeological resources; Impact CR-EXT-1: extend Landfill-related indirect impacts to archeological sites further in time and Impact CR-CUM-1: cumulative disturbance of unknown archeological resources. The Board of Supervisors finds that the following mitigation measures would reduce such impacts to insignificant levels.

   - Impact CR-1: mitigation measures (*MM CR-1*: Cultural Awareness Program and Evaluation and Protection of Discovered Resources) have been provided to ensure construction workers are aware of cultural resources that may be discovered and stop work as appropriate, archeological resources discovered during construction would be evaluated to determine the importance of the found resources, and document and/or protect such resources as necessary. Any found human remains would remain in place until the County Coroner has determined the origin and appropriate disposition of the remains.
   - Impact CR-EXT-1: current practices in place at the Landfill would continue to be implemented to minimize disturbance of adjacent archeological sites, including staff training, and stopping or redirecting work if cultural resources are found.
   - Impact CR-CUM-1: measures listed under Impact CR-1 (*MM CR-1*) would also minimize the project's contribution to cumulative disturbance of unreported cultural resources associated with other projects in the region.

4. Noise

   The Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.7.2.5, pages 4.7-10 to 4.7-15) identified one potentially significant noise impact that would result from implementation

of the project: Impact N-4: blasting-related noise and vibration. The Board of Supervisors finds that the following mitigation measures would reduce this impact to an insignificant level.

- Impact N-4: mitigation measures (*MM N-1*: Blasting Hours and Notification) have been provided to limit the hours of blasting to 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and notify local residents of the blasting schedule.

5. Land Use

The Final SEIR Volume 1 (Section 4.8.2.5, pages 4.8-11 to 4.8-13) identified two potentially significant land use impacts that would result from implementation of the project: Impact LU-1: land use conflicts with adjacent and nearby residential uses and Impact LU-2: land use conflicts with adjacent recreational uses. The Board of Supervisors finds that the following mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to insignificant levels.

- Impact LU-1: implementation of mitigation measures identified for hazardous materials (*MM HAZ-1*) would avoid significant residential land use conflicts.
- Impact LU-2: implementation of mitigation measures identified for biological resources and hazardous materials (*MM BIO-1, MM BIO-2, MM BIO-3, MM HAZ-1*) would avoid significant recreational land use conflicts.

F. Findings that Identified Project Alternatives are not Feasible

The Final EIR (23EIR-00001), prepared for the project evaluated five alternatives including a no project alternative, two on-site reduced project alternatives and two waste export alternatives as options to reduce or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts. The Board of Supervisors makes the following findings regarding the feasibility of the project alternatives:

1. Alternative A: No Project Alternative

This Alternative assumes continued disposal of solid waste at the existing, permitted Landfill until the current permitted disposal capacity is reached in approximately March 2026. As the County is required to provide waste disposal services for the communities currently served by the Landfill, after approximately March 2026 the County would need to export solid waste to another approved landfill.

The No Project Alternative is not considered feasible as it would not meet any of the project objectives and some other form of off-site transportation and disposal would be required. The County has a legal obligation to provide waste management services for the community and continued management of the community's waste is necessary to protect public health and safety and the environment pursuant to Chapter 17 of the Code of the County of Santa

Barbara, California. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors finds that the No Project Alternative is not feasible.

2. Alternative B: Reduced Project Alternative – Vertical Only Capacity Increase

   This Alternative involves increasing the maximum elevation of the permitted waste disposal area to 655 feet above mean sea level to provide additional airspace for waste disposal, with no change in lateral footprint. Alternative B would provide approximately 2,153,920 cubic yards of additional airspace and extend the life of the Landfill to approximately November 2031 approximately seven years before debt service on the ReSource Center is retired in December 2038.

   Alternative B was identified as the environmentally superior alternative amongst the alternatives. However, Alternative B would not fully meet the project objective of avoiding ratepayer financial burden because debt service for the ReSource Center would be ongoing when the Tajiguas Landfill's capacity is reached and export to another landfill would be required. In addition, Alternative B would not fully regain Landfill life that was planned to be provided by solid waste diversion associated with operation of the ReSource Center.

   Alternative B would be financially feasible until the additional capacity provided is exhausted and offsite export of waste is required in 2031. As discussed under Alternatives D and E (below), waste delivered to the off-site landfills would contribute to environmental impacts at those landfills, additional transportation related air quality pollutant and GHG emissions would occur when transport begins and costs of transportation and disposal fees at other landfills would require a substantial increase in the tipping fees charged to communities served by the Landfill. Due to the uncertainty of obtaining approvals for such fee increases, off-site export of waste is considered infeasible. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors finds that Alternative B is not feasible.

3. Alternative C: Reduced Project Alternative – Horizontal Only Capacity Increase

   This Alternative would involve extending the footprint of the permitted waste disposal area laterally by approximately 4.5 acres to the north and east to provide to provide 4.4 million cubic yards of additional airspace and extend the life of the Landfill to approximately March 2033 approximately five years before debt service on the ReSource Center will be retired in December 2038. The maximum permitted elevation of the waste disposal area would not change but the design height of the Landfill over the existing waste footprint would increase from the existing peak height of 574 to 620 feet above sea level.

Alternative C would not fully meet the project objective of avoiding ratepayer financial burden because debt service for the ReSource Center would be ongoing when the Tajiguas Landfill's capacity is reached and export to another landfill would be required. In addition, Alternative C would not fully regain Landfill life that was planned to be provided by solid waste diversion associated with operation of the ReSource Center.

Alternative C would be financially feasible until the additional capacity provided is exhausted and offsite export of waste is required in 2023. As discussed under Alternatives D and E (below), additional costs of transportation and disposal fees at other landfills would require a substantial increase in the tipping fees charged to communities served by the Tajiguas Landfill. Due to the uncertainty of obtaining approvals for such fee increases, off-site export of waste is considered infeasible. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors finds that the Reduced Project Alternative – Horizontal Only Capacity Increase is not feasible.

4. Alternative D: No Project Alternative (Scenario 1) - Waste Export to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill

   This Alternative would involve continued waste disposal at the Landfill under the currently permitted capacity and parameters through to approximately 2026 and then transportation of community's bypass and residual waste to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, when the Tajiguas Landfill reaches its permitted capacity. Alternative D is technically feasible as the Chiquita Canyon Landfill is fully permitted and operational and has available capacity.

   Alternative D would not meet any of the project objectives as it involves solid waste transportation and disposal off-site. It would not regain Landfill service life, would impose a significant burden on the rate payer, would result in environmental impacts associated with transportation and disposal at another landfill and eliminate the efficiency of the currently co-located Tajiguas Landfill and ReSource Center.

   Under Alternative D, all residual and bypass waste would be transported to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, with an estimated cost of approximately $4.5 million per year. The cost to dispose of the waste (tipping fees) would be approximately $12.6 million per year for a total transportation and disposal cost of $17.1 million per year at 2023 pricing. By no longer operating the Tajiguas Landfill for waste disposal, operational costs would be reduced by approximately $3.7 million per year due to reduced operational supplies, labor and fuel. This reduction does not include closure, and post-closure maintenance and monitoring as these cost would continue to occur in association with the existing permitted landfill and are not a savings. Accounting for these cost

savings results in a net cost to the community of approximately $13.4 million per year.

In contrast, the cost of constructing the proposed project is estimated to be approximately $20.0 million for an extended Landfill service life of 12.75 years or an annual cost of approximately $1.6 million per year.

The County would have to increase the tipping fee at its facilities from the projected $192 per ton to $280 per ton for fiscal year 2025/2026 to offset increased costs of approximately $13.4 million per year. Increases in tipping fees are regulated in waste delivery agreements with the communities it serves and requires a two-thirds vote (representation based on the quantity of material delivered to the ReSource Center by each public participant) to approve a tipping fee increase. Therefore, the County's ability to increase the tipping fee to offset waste export costs is uncertain and its ability to meet the financial obligations for the ReSource Center could be jeopardized.

In summary, Alternative D is considered financially infeasible as the annual cost would be over eight times ($13.4 million/$1.6 million) that of the proposed project and increases in tipping fees to offset this cost are unlikely to be approved. Further transport and disposal of waste at the Chiquita Canyon Landfill under Alternative D would result in additional transportation air pollutant and GHG emissions (up to 34 average daily truck round trips per day and a round trip distance between 136 and 210 miles, depending on the origin of the waste) and contribute to impacts associated with construction and operation of the Chiquita Canyon Landfill as documented in the section 5.3.4.4 of the Final SEIR.

Therefore, the Board of Supervisors finds that Waste Export to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill is not financially feasible and not environmentally preferable.

5. Alternative E: No Project Alternative (Scenario 2) - Waste Export to Chiquita Canyon Landfill and the Santa Maria Regional Landfill OR the Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility

   This Alternative would involve continued waste disposal at the Landfill under the currently permitted capacity and parameters through to approximately 2026 and then transportation of bypass waste and residual waste to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill and the Santa Maria Regional Landfill (or Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility [IWMF]) based on the origin of the waste. Non-recyclable solid waste generated in the Santa Barbara area collected by MarBorg Industries at its Construction & Demolition Recycling and Transfer Station in downtown Santa Barbara and from South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station that currently bypass the ReSource Center for disposal at the Tajiguas Landfill would be consolidated and exported to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill.

Non-recyclable solid waste from the Santa Ynez Valley Recycling and Transfer Station and bypass and residual waste from the ReSource Center would be exported to the Santa Maria Regional Landfill. In about 2034 when the Santa Maria Regional Landfill closes, solid waste from the Santa Ynez Valley Recycling and Transfer Station and bypass waste and residual waste from the Tajiguas Landfill wasteshed would be transported to the proposed Santa Maria IWMF.

Alternative E would be technically feasible as the Chiquita Canyon Landfill has sufficient capacity, and the Santa Maria Regional Landfill has sufficient capacity until the Santa Maria IWMF becomes operational. Although CEQA review and permitting of the reconfigured IWMF has not been completed, based on the prior approval of the IMWF it is expected that the reconfigured facility would also be approved. If it is not, then all waste would be sent to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill after closure of the Santa Maria Regional Landfill.

Alternative E would not meet any of the project objectives as it involves solid waste transportation and disposal off-site. It would not regain Tajiguas Landfill service life, would impose a significant burden on the rate payer, would result in environmental impacts associated with transportation and disposal at another landfill and eliminate the efficiency of the currently co-located Tajiguas Landfill and ReSource Center.

Under Alternative E, all residual and bypass waste would be transported to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill and Santa Maria area landfills, with an estimated transportation cost of approximately $3.3 million per year. The cost to dispose of the waste (tipping fees) would be approximately $13.5 million per year for a total transportation and disposal cost of $16.8 million per year at 2023 pricing. By no longer operating the Tajiguas Landfill for waste disposal, operational costs would be reduced by approximately $3.7 million per year due to reduced operational supplies, labor and fuel. Accounting for these cost savings results in a net cost to the community of approximately $13.1 million per year. In contrast, the cost of constructing the proposed project is estimated to be approximately $20.0 million for an extended Tajiguas Landfill service life of 12.75 years or an annual cost of approximately $1.6 million per year.

The County would have to increase the tipping fee at its facilities from the projected $192 per ton to $280 per ton for fiscal year 2025/2026 to offset increased costs. Increases in tipping fees are regulated in waste delivery agreements with the communities it serves and requires a two-thirds vote (representation based on the quantity of material delivered to the ReSource Center by each public participant) to approve a tipping fee increase. Therefore, the County's ability to increase the tipping fee to offset waste export costs is uncertain and its ability to meet financial obligations for the ReSource Center could be jeopardized. In summary, Alternative E is considered financially

infeasible as the annual cost would be over eight times ($13.1 million/$1.6 million) that of the proposed project and increases in tipping fees to offset this cost are unlikely to be approved. Further transport and disposal of waste at the Chiquita Canyon Landfill and City of Santa Maria operated landfills under Alternative E would result in additional transportation air pollutant and GHG emissions (up to 34 average daily truck round trips per day and a round trip distance between 64 and 148 miles, depending on the origin of the waste) and contribute to impacts associated with construction and operation of the landfills as documented in the section 5.3.4.5 of the Final SEIR. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors finds that Waste Export to Chiquita Canyon Landfill and the Santa Maria Regional Landfill or the Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility not financially feasible or environmentally preferable.

6. Other Measures Recommended by the Public (Improved Source Separation and Expansion of Curbside Organics Collection)

   Further diversion/separation of solid waste at the source was considered during the initial CEQA review process but was determined not to be feasible and was not studied in detail in the SEIR. As discussed in SEIR Section 1.3.1, source separation is conducted by residential and commercial waste generators as required by State law (Assembly Bills 1826, 876, 1383, 54), which reduces the amount of solid waste landfilled and improves the efficiency of recovery of recyclables by the ReSource Center. The efficiency of source separation is improving as facilities are provided by waste haulers (such as separate bins), and residents and commercial waste generators become accustomed to sorting their solid waste. However, as discussed below additional source separation would not significantly increase waste diversion above that provided by the County's ReSource Center.

   As documented in SEIR Section 5.2.1 curbside or "source-separated" organics collection programs are unable to achieve the same levels of diversion as the ReSource Center's MRF. Source-separated organics programs have historically experienced low participation rates and capture a much lower percentage of organics when compared to a high-diversion organic waste processing facility like the ReSource Center. Curbside organics collection programs involve residents either placing their food scraps into a separate curbside bin or adding it to their existing curbside green waste bin. The former option results in increased vehicle miles traveled and GHG emissions from adding another collection route, while the latter can present challenges for jurisdictions like the County of Santa Barbara that operate a yard waste mulch program. Mixed yard waste and food waste is not able to be mulched and must instead be composted. The increased amount diverted from landfill disposal would be a very small fraction of the anticipated disposal needs and would not have a meaningful effect on extending the Tajiguas Landfill life necessary to meet the project objectives.

Therefore, the Board of Supervisor's finds that further diversion/separation of solid waste at the source cannot be considered a feasible alternative.

IV. STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

A. Project Impacts

As summarized in Section III.A of these findings and as disclosed in the Final SEIR (23EIR-00001) for the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project, four environmental impacts would result from implementation of the Project which cannot be fully mitigated and are therefore considered significant and unavoidable. These four impacts are:

1. Construction of new disposal areas and extended Landfill operations would generate greenhouse gas emissions that would contribute to global climate change (Impact AQ-5)
2. Project implementation could result in the loss of occupied habitat for Crotch's bumblebee, potential loss of individuals and loss of nests within the vegetated areas of the proposed Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project area as a result of construction activities (Impact BIO-6)
3. Extension of GHG emissions associated with Landfill operations (Impact AQ-EXT-1)
4. Extension of biological impacts associated with Landfill operations (Impact BIO-EXT-1)

B. Overriding Considerations

The Final EIR (23EIR-00001) for the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project identifies project impacts to air quality and biological resources (see Section IV.A above) as significant environmental effects which are considered unavoidable. The Board of Supervisors therefore makes the following Statement of Overriding Considerations which warrants approval of the project notwithstanding that all identified effects on the environment are not fully mitigated.

With respect to each of the environmental effects of the project listed above, the Board of Supervisors finds that each benefit set forth below constitutes an overriding consideration warranting approval of the project, independent of the other benefits, despite each and every unavoidable impact. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21081(b) and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15043, 15092, and 15093, any remaining significant effects on the environment are acceptable due to these overriding considerations. The stated overriding benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment and that there is no feasible way to lessen or avoid the significant effects.

The RRWMD provides regional residents and businesses with cost effective, innovative, and environmentally sound solutions to manage the community's waste.

The recycling and organics programs implemented by the Division include: Mandatory Commercial Recycling, Mandatory Commercial Organics Recycling, Green Waste Recycling, Commercial Food Scraps Collection Program, Collection of Manure and Bedding Material and Other Organics, County Building Recycling, School Recycling, Construction Waste Management, Backyard Composting, Food Forward Food Waste Reduction, Mulch Program, Community Hazardous Waste Collection Center, PaintCare, Community Hazardous Waste Collection Events, Electronics Recycling, Carpet Recycling, Mattress Recycling, Textile Recycling, Sharps Collection, Pharmaceuticals Collection, Used Motor Oil Collection and an extensive Public Information and Education programs. In addition, the ReSource Center is a state-of-the-art facility to further recover recyclable materials and produce green energy and compost. The RRWMD operates the Tajiguas Landfill to provide disposal services for waste that cannot be recycled through these extensive programs.

The primary objectives of the proposed Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project are to regain Landfill life that was originally planned to be provided by operation of the ReSource Center and avoid financial burdens to the rate payer associated with paying debt service concurrent with paying for off-site transport and waste disposal. The proposed project meets these objectives. After debt service retirement, the revenue used to pay debt service may then be used to fund the hauling of waste to other landfills in Los Angeles County and/or northern Santa Barbara County or other disposal options (e.g., siting of a new landfill).

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(b) and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15043, 15092 and 15093, any remaining significant effects on the environment are acceptable due to these overriding considerations and the public benefits of the project:

1. Provides a long-term waste management plan (to approximately 2038).

   Assuming approval in 2024, and considering existing remaining capacity, the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project would provide an additional approximately 12.7 years of disposal capacity beyond the current permitted capacity for the communities served by the Tajiguas Landfill including the unincorporated south coast, Santa Ynez and Cuyama Valleys, and the Cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Buellton and Solvang. Accordingly, the project will provide needed facilities and services for County residents.

2. Provides the most cost-effective means of managing the region's waste through approximately 2038.

   Based on analysis included in SEIR section 5.3, projected rates for the construction and operation of the facility are anticipated to be significantly less than the cost to transport and dispose of waste at an off-site landfill. The proposed project is to extend the life of the existing Tajiguas Landfill by approximately 12.7 years so the total cost for disposing waste off-site

(Alternatives D and E of the SEIR) is approximately $167,000,000 to $170,850,000 at 2023 pricing. This is substantially greater than the construction cost of $20,000,000 for the proposed project. The project would maximize the benefit of the County's investment in the Tajiguas Landfill by maximizing the use of this existing facility. The project would also avoid air quality pollutant emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, and increased vehicle miles traveled associated with transporting and disposing of locally generated waste to out of county landfills.

3. Meets the mandate of the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 by contributing to the required 15 years of assured disposal capacity (2023-2038).

   The California Public Resources Code Sections 41701 and 41703, as administered and enforced by CalRecycle, require all jurisdictions in the State to plan for 15 years of disposal capacity for waste "that cannot be reduced, recycled or composted." On a county-wide basis, the proposed project would contribute waste disposal capacity to meet this mandate.

4. Provides disposal capacity for disaster-related debris, such as from fires, floods, and earthquakes.

   Through 2038 the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project is designed to provide approximately 200,000 cubic yards of air space to address receipt of disaster-related debris from fire, flood or earthquakes.

5. Extends and increases the implementation of advanced waste recovery technologies, including the use of renewable landfill gas to produce green power (which would decline when the Landfill reaches its permitted capacity and waste burial ceases).

   The current permitted landfill area and the proposed capacity increase project landfill area will implement a landfill gas collection system, which includes a series of collection wells constructed into the waste, that collect landfill gas (which is then piped to advanced combustion engines that generate renewable electricity). The Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project solid waste would utilize this landfill gas collection system and the two existing on site engines have capacity to utilize this renewable resource for continued electrical power generation.

6. Increases the efficiency of waste burial operations (increasing the amount of solid waste per unit volume of airspace) through additional settlement of existing buried waste associated with increasing the elevation of the permitted disposal area.

   By increasing the height of the waste fill area, the weight will further consolidate previously buried solid waste, causing the density of this weight to increase, thus better utilizing the available permitted airspace. The higher the waste is placed, the more efficient the overall utilization of permitted air space.

7. Contributes to the local economy by continuing to provide local jobs for staff, consultants and contractors supporting Landfill construction and operations.

   The Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project would sustain landfill operations and directly support the local economy by providing stable jobs for staff, consultants and contractors, fostering a reliable source of employment. Landfill operations require a diverse staff, including equipment operators, landfill engineers, and compliance staff, to manage waste deposition, ensure structural integrity, and maintain regulatory compliance. The project would generate up to approximately 20 full time equivalent construction contractor employee jobs during initial project implementation and additional construction contractor jobs for subsequent phased implementation (i.e., liner installation and closure projects), while continuing to provide 17 Landfill operations jobs and associated landfill engineering and compliance jobs to support operation of the Landfill.

8. Provides continued employment of Landfill staff in a safe and humane work environment.

   The Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project would sustain the employment of a specialty-trained workforce, dedicated to implementing rigorous safety protocols and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, that aims to minimize physical risks and prioritizes the well-being of landfill staff. Acknowledging the challenges inherent in waste management, skill development opportunities would continue to be made available, including specialized training programs to equip a labor force with the knowledge and expertise necessary to navigate the complexities of waste management roles safely and effectively. All Landfill operational employees are County hired employees that are eligible for retirement, health benefits, paid time off and other miscellaneous benefits (e.g., life insurance, disability insurance, etc.) and union representation. These benefits along with county, state and federal health and safety compliance ensure the continued employment of landfill staff in a safe and humane work environment which prioritizes employee well-being and also maintains occupational stability. Sustaining these jobs in association with the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase project guarantees livelihoods and fosters a sense of security for workers and their families, contributing to the local economy while upholding ethical labor practices within the waste management industry. This commitment to employee welfare creates a foundation for job security and professional development, promoting a culture of safety and excellence within the workforce.

C. Summary

In summary, the project would allow the County to continue to provide safe, cost effective, environmentally sound and legally mandated waste disposal capabilities;

extend the life of the Landfill (avoid/postpone impacts and costs associated with off-site disposal), extend and increase the implementation of advanced waste recovery technologies, increase the efficiency of waste burial operations, contribute to the local economy and provide continued employment of Landfill staff. However, implementation of the proposed project would result in two significant and unavoidable impacts as discussed in Section III.D (Impacts AQ-5 and BIO-6) and two impact associated with extending the Landfill life (Impacts AQ-EXT-1 and BIO-EXT-1).

The Board recognizes the need to balance the obligation to provide reliable solid waste disposal for the citizens of Santa Barbara County, which is necessary for the protection of life and property against protection of environmental resources. The Board finds that the proposed project mitigates environmental effects to the maximum extent feasible when weighed against legal, technical, social, and economic mandates relative to the protection of public health and safety and the environment through the provision of cost effective and environmentally sound community solid waste management and disposal services. The Board therefore finds that unavoidable significant effects associated with the proposed project are acceptable considering the aforementioned overriding considerations.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING AND MONITORING PROGRAM

Public Resources Code §21081.6 requires the County to adopt a reporting or monitoring program for measures it has adopted or made a condition of approval to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The project description and mitigation measures described in the Final SEIR, with the corresponding monitoring requirements entitled "Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program" is attached hereto, and by this reference, is incorporated herein. As part of this approval, the Board of Supervisors adopts the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program.