4.11 PUBLIC HEALTH/NUISANCE

4.11.1 Setting

Nuisances are defined as vectors (insects, rodents, and scavenging birds capable of transmitting disease), odors, dust, litter and illegal dumping. Section 3.6 of 01-EIR-05 for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project provides a discussion of applicable standards and existing conditions related to nuisances associated with handling and processing MSW which remains applicable to the proposed Resource Recovery Project and is hereby incorporated by reference.

Note that worker health and safety is regulated by State and Federal occupational safety organizations and is not an environmental issue addressed under CEQA.

4.11.2 Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

4.11.2.1 Thresholds of Significance

Public Health

The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual addresses public safety in the context of involuntary public exposure to acute risks associated with hazardous materials. The Manual does not provide specific guidance on determining the significance of public health impacts. Therefore, violation of the following regulations pertaining to solid waste processing and composting facilities with regard to public health and nuisance have been adopted as thresholds of significance for this SEIR:

- The solid waste handling and disposal facility operator shall take adequate measures to minimize the creation, emission or accumulation of excessive dust and particulates (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3, Section 17407.4).
- Litter shall be controlled and routinely collected to prevent safety hazards, nuisances and off-site migration (CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3, Section 17408.1).
- Each operation and facility shall be conducted and maintained to prevent the creation of a nuisance (CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3, Section 17408.5).
- The operator shall take adequate steps to control or prevent the propagation, harborage, and attraction of flies, rodents, or other vectors, and animals, and to minimize bird attraction (CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3, Section 17410.4).
- Handling of composting materials shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes vectors, odor impacts, litter, hazards, nuisances and noise impacts, and minimizes human contact with, inhalation, ingestion and transportation of dust, particulates and pathogenic organisms (CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Section 17867).

Odors/Nuisance

The Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (updated 2015 ~~2008~~) requires that environmental documents address odor impacts if a project has the potential to cause an odor or other long-term air quality nuisance problem impacting a considerable number of people. As previously discussed, SBCAPCD is the agency responsible for regulating stationary sources of air pollution in the County. The SBCAPCD CEQA guidelines (SBCAPCD, 2011) state the following with regard to odors:

- If a project has the potential to cause an odor or other long-term air quality nuisance problem impacting a considerable number of people, the environmental document (Initial Study, ND or EIR) should describe the history of complaints from pre-existing conditions, the number of people affected and other relevant information so that the impacts can be mitigated where feasible.
- New projects that have a high probability of emitting objectionable odors or new developments that may be affected because of their location downwind should be identified early in the Initial Study. This may prevent nuisance problems after the project is built. Odor issues can sometimes be resolved by changing the location of the equipment or the process.
- Nuisance impacts need not be quantified at the initial study stage and may be analyzed qualitatively on a case by case basis.

The following SBCAPCD rules that apply to the discharge of odors:

- Rule 303 (Nuisance): this rules states that a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.
- Rule 310 (Odorous Organic Sulfides): this rule prohibits the discharge of excessive amount of hydrogen sulfide and organic sulfides into the atmosphere from any single source or any number of sources within one contiguous property. SBCAPCD provides quantitative thresholds as the ground level concentrations of hydrogen sulfide at or beyond the property line which are 0.06 ppm for an averaging time of 3 minutes and 0.03 ppm for an averaging time of 1 hour.

4.11.2.2 Approved Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project

01-EIR-05 for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project (see Section 3.6.3) identified the following nuisance impacts:

1. The potential for rodents to expose on-site personnel to disease was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-1 (good housekeeping practices) was adopted to minimize the potential for rodent activity.
2. The potential for nuisance insects (e.g., flies, and mosquitoes to be attracted to ponded water was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-1 was adopted to minimize the potential for rodent activity.
3. The potential for impacts (surface water quality degradation, displacement of other bird species, pathogen vector) from large numbers of birds (primarily gulls) attracted to the landfill was considered significant but mitigable (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-2 (bird management plan) was adopted to reduce bird activity at the landfill.
4. The potential for odors to be emitted along roadways during waste transportation was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measures NUI-3 (litter control) and NUI-4 (odor control) were adopted to reduce odors from haul trucks and at the landfill.
5. The potential for odors from landfill gas emissions was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-4 was adopted to reduce odors from the working face and buried waste at the landfill.
6. The potential for litter impacts from uncovered waste loads was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-3 was adopted and requires waste loads to be covered and other litter management activities to minimize off-site transport of litter.
7. The potential for litter impacts from illegal dumping was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-3 was adopted and requires implementation of litter management activities.
8. The potential for litter impacts at the working face was considered a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure NUI-3 was adopted and requires implementation of litter management activities.
9. Dust generated by landfill operations was considered a significant but mitigable nuisance impact (Class II). Mitigation Measure AQ-3 was adopted to reduce dust generation at the landfill.

10. Rodent, odor, and nuisance dust impacts during the closure/post-closure period of the landfill were considered significant but mitigable nuisance impacts (Class II). Mitigation Measures NUI-1, NUI-4 and dust control (AQ-3) measures were adopted to reduce these impacts.

4.11.2.3 Approved Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration Project

Nuisance impacts identified in 01-EIR-05 and summarized above for the approved Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project were determined to be the same for the landfill reconfiguration. No new or additional impacts were expected to occur. However, the reduced grading associated with the reconfigured waste footprint was expected to potentially reduce dust-related nuisance impacts, but the overall impact level was expected to remain significant but mitigable (Class II) and mitigation measures included in 01-EIR-05 to address nuisance impacts would continue to be implemented.

4.11.2.4 Proposed Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project

Fugitive Particulate Matter (Dust) and Odors

Public health and nuisance issues associated with odors and fugitive dust is addressed in Section 4.2 (Air Quality). Compliance with particulate matter emission limits adopted by the SBCAPCD, and State and Federal ambient air quality standards is assumed to avoid excessive fugitive dust that may be considered a nuisance.

Vectors, Pathogens and Litter

Impact TRRP NUI-1: MRF and/or AD Facility operations may attract and harbor vectors that may result in an adverse but less than significant public health/nuisance impact – Class III Impact.

Similar to existing landfill operations, MSW delivered to the site for processing at the MRF, AD Facility and composting area could provide an attractive environment for disease carrying vectors including birds, small mammals and insects, such as flies and cockroaches. In addition, organic waste separated from MSW, and SSOW may also provide a similarly attractive environment for vectors. Under the proposed project, MSW would be deposited on the MRF tipping floor for sorting and processing. The tipping would be conducted indoors which would limit access to MSW by birds and small mammals. However, vectors could enter the building through door openings, window frames, vents, or masonry cracks. Vectors also could be present in the MSW and/or SSOW when delivered to the MRF. The SSOW and organics would be processed with in the AD facility and the anaerobic digestion would be conducted in closed air-tight vessels at elevated temperatures (131-140 ^{o}F) and low oxygen levels, such that vectors are not anticipated to survive. However, aerobic curing of the digestate would occur in outdoor windrows at the proposed composting area, which could be an attractant to vectors.

As discussed in Section 3.5.9.1, the project includes the development of a Vector Management Plan focusing on good housekeeping practices to minimize accessibility of waste as a food source and refuges for breeding. In addition, CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Section 17867 requires composting operations to conduct handling operations to minimize vectors, and prevent unauthorized animal access. Implementation of a Vector Management Plan and compliance with Section 17867 is anticipated to minimize vector populations, and avoid significant public health impacts associated with vector-related spread of disease.

Impact TRRP NUI-2: MSW and/or SSOW may contain pathogens that may result in an adverse but less than significant impact to public health – Class III Impact.

Pathogens may be present in incoming MSW and/or SSOW. The majority of pathogens is expected to be in the organic fraction of the waste and would be processed in the anaerobic digesters. The low oxygen levels and high temperatures in the digesters have the effect of reducing the amount of pathogens in the resulting digestate. In addition, aerobic curing would be conducted at relatively high temperatures (130-140^{o}F), in compliance with CCR Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3.1, Section 17868.3, which is intended to destroy pathogens in the resulting compost. In addition, implementation of the Vector Management Plan would minimize spread of pathogens by vectors.

Pathogens could be carried off-site through surface water and wind; however, the following features have been incorporated into the project to minimize off-site transport of pathogens:

- Unloading of MSW and SSOW indoors at the MRF to prevent storm water contact with waste containing pathogens, reduce the potential for spreading pathogens in fugitive dust, and windblown plastic and paper.
- Trench drains at MRF and AD Facility door thresholds to intercept liquids found in waste (that could contain pathogens) and direct them to the advanced wastewater treatment system.
- Chain link fence around MRF and AD Facility to collect wind-blown plastic and paper that could harbor pathogens.
- Pavement sweeping and vacuum clean-up to remove dust in parking lots, driveways and the composting area that could harbor pathogens.
- Hydrodynamic separators on the storm drain system to remove sediment that could harbor pathogens.
- Sediment traps in concrete swales to intercept sediment from slopes and driveways surrounding the MRF and AD Facility.

Implementation of a Vector Management Plan and project features listed above are anticipated to destroy pathogens, and avoid significant public health impacts associated with spread of pathogens in MSW and SSOW.

Impact TRRP NUI-3: Tipping of MSW indoors at the MRF would reduce the potential for off-site transport of litter from the landfill working face resulting in a beneficial impact – Class IV Impact.

Currently, local collection trucks, and trucks carrying consolidated loads tip MSW at the active face of the landfill, which allows for paper, plastics and similar materials to be blown away before they are covered with soil. Although measures are in place at the landfill to minimize litter (covered trucks, litter fences, litter pick-up), some off-site transport of litter occurs.

The proposed project would involve tipping MSW indoors within the MRF, which would reduce the potential for litter to be produced. Although residual waste from the proposed MRF and AD Facility would be disposed at the active face, the average tonnage would be reduced by about 60 percent and the more mobile fraction of the waste (plastics and paper) would be removed. In addition, a litter control program would be developed and implemented for the proposed project (see Section 3.5.9.2). Overall, the potential for off-site transport of litter would be reduced, and considered a beneficial impact.

Relocated Landfill Facilities

Operations facilities (primarily portable offices) may be temporarily relocated during the project construction period to an area north of the landfill top deck or to the southern portion of the landfill. Landfill equipment maintenance facilities would be relocated to the area north of the landfill top deck (see Figure 3-4). These facilities do not generate public health or nuisance concerns; therefore, relocation of landfill facilities would not result in any increase in public health or nuisance impacts.

4.11.2.5 Proposed Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project with Optional Comingled Source Separated Recyclables (CSSR) Component

The CSSR would not include organic materials and would be relatively free of vectors, pathogens, litter and odors. Processing, short-term storage and transportation of CSSR is not anticipated to alter nuisance impacts of the project as identified in Section 4.11.2.4.

4.11.2.6 Extension of Landfill Life Impacts

Impact TRRP NUI-4: Project-related extension of life of the Tajiguas Landfill would extend significant public health/nuisance impacts (potential for illegal dumping and dust) further in time – Class II Impact.

Due to the project-related increase in diversion of MSW, the active life of the landfill would be extended approximately 10 years and full closure of the landfill would be delayed by approximately 10 years. Phased closure of areas of the landfill that have reached final waste fill elevations would continue during its extended life. The proposed project would involve processing MSW that is currently buried at the landfill. As such, with implementation of the project the nuisance impacts associated with handling this waste would largely occur in the proposed enclosed MRF, enclosed AD Facility and at the composting area (as described and analyzed above) rather than at the landfill working face. Residual material disposed of in the landfill would be largely inert and free of material that would create/contribute to nuisance conditions.

As noted above, operation of the MRF is expected to reduce the amount of windblown litter. In addition, indoor tipping of the MSW at the MRF would also reduce the attractiveness of the site to scavenging birds such as seagulls, which under current landfill operations, are controlled through the landfill's Bird Management Program. Nuisance odors at the landfill working face would be reduced because of the reduced fraction of organic and putrescible waste that would be delivered for disposal but replaced by odors that may occur in association with the MRF and composting area. Landfill operations would continue with the same nuisance controls in place, no additional introduction or generation of vectors, pathogens, litter, dust and odors would occur. Class II nuisance impacts associated with landfill operations such as the potential for illegal dumping, dust from landfill grading and equipment operations (see Section 4.11.2.2) would continue further in time as compared to earlier closure of landfill in the absence of the proposed project.

4.11.2.7 Decommissioning Impacts

The termination of project operation would also terminate nuisance impacts, including disease vectors, pathogens, litter and odors. All remaining solid waste and recovered materials would be removed from the site prior to decommissioning to avoid litter, attracting vectors and spreading pathogens. Overall, decommissioning would not result in any public health/nuisance impacts.

4.11.2.8 Cumulative Impacts of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project

Impact TRRP NUI-CUM-1: Implementation of the proposed project combined with other cumulative projects in the region could generate adverse but less than significant cumulative nuisance litter impacts – Class III Cumulative Impact; Project Contribution – Not Considerable (Class III).

With the exception of the potential construction of individual septic systems, the cumulative projects (see Section 3.6) do not involve waste management or other activities that may generate vectors or pathogens that could impact public health. However, many of these projects may generate litter, at least during construction. Given the dispersed nature of project and the limited scope of most of the projects (single family dwellings), cumulative nuisance impacts would be less than significant for vectors, pathogens and litter.

Cumulative impacts related to odors are addressed in Section 4.2.2.7 (Air Quality).