DRAFT

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION/INITIAL STUDY

FOR THE CITY OF SOLVANG WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Prepared for:

City of Solvang
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Prepared by:

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DECEMBER 2022

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The City of Solvang (City) has prepared this Initial Study (IS)/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Water Quality Improvement Project (proposed Project).

The proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, achieve required consistent removal of nitrogen, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. The improvements to restore lost capacity will also modify the treatment process to allow for the production of recycled water.

1.2 AUTHORITY

As part of the City's approval process, the proposed Project is required to undergo an environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The preparation of an IS/MND is governed by CEQA[1] and, more specifically, the State CEQA Guidelines,[2] which guide the process for the preparation of a negative declaration (ND) or MND. Where appropriate and supportive to an understanding of the issues, reference will be made to the statute, the State CEQA Guidelines, or the appropriate case law.

This IS/MND, as required by CEQA, contains a project description; a description of the environmental setting; an analysis of potential environmental impacts; mitigation measures for any significant effects; an evaluation of the proposed Project's consistency with applicable plans and policies; and the names of preparers.

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The content and format of this IS/MND are designed to meet the requirements of CEQA. The IS/MND consists of the proposed findings that the proposed Project, as mitigated, would have no significant impacts. The IS/MND contains the following sections and supporting studies:

1 *California Code of Regulations*, sec. 15000, et seq., State *CEQA Guidelines*.
2 *California Code of Regulations*, sec. 15000, et seq.

- **Section 1.0, Introduction**, identifies the purpose and scope of the IS/MND and the terminology used in this IS/MND.
- **Section 2.0, Project Description**, identifies the location, background, and planning objectives of the proposed Project and describes the proposed Project in detail.
- **Section 3.0, Environmental Setting**, describes the existing conditions, surrounding land use, general plan, and existing zoning in the proposed Project area.
- **Section 4.0, Environmental Chec**klist, presents the checklist responses and evaluation for each resource topic.
- **Section 5.0, Environmental Analysis**, includes an analysis for each resource topic and identifies potential impacts of implementing the proposed Project. It also identifies mitigation measures, if applicable.
- **Section 6.0, References**, identifies all printed references and individuals citied in this IS/MND.
- **Section 7.0, List of Preparers**, identifies the individuals who prepared this IS/MND and their areas of technical specialty.
- **Appendices** present data supporting the analysis or contents of this IS/MND. These include:
  - **Appendix A,** CEQA-Plus Documentation
  - **Appendix B**, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Modeling Data
  - **Appendix C,** Biological Resource Survey Report
  - **Appendix C.1,** California Natural Diversity Database Report
  - **Appendix C.2**, eBird Report
  - **Appendix D**, Cultural Resource Report
  - **Appendix E**, Noise Measurement Data

1.4 PUBLIC AND AGENCY REVIEW OF THE DRAFT IS/MND

CEQA requires that the lead agency provide the public and agencies the opportunity to review and comment on a Draft MND. As outlined by CEQA, the City is providing a 30-day period for review and comment on the Draft IS/MND. Upon completion of the public and agency review period, the City, as lead agency, will evaluate comments on environmental issues received from persons who reviewed the Draft IS/MND and prepare written responses. The City will include these comments and responses in a Final MND, along with any changes that will be reviewed and considered for adoption by the City Council.

Interested individuals, organizations, responsible agencies, and other agencies can provide written comments to:

City of Solvang
Utilities Department
411 Second Street
Solvang, CA 93463
Contact: Jose Acosta, Utilities Manager

Comments may also be sent by facsimile to (805)688-2049 or by email at jacosta@cityofsolvang.com. Please put "Wastewater Treatment Plant Water Quality Improvement Project" in the subject line. Agency responses should include the name of a contact person within the commenting agency.

The Draft IS/MND is available for review at the following location:

City of Solvang
Public Counter
1644 Oak Street
Solvang, California 93463

In addition, the Draft IS/MND is available on the City's website at:

- https://www.cityofsolvang.com

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 OVERVIEW

The City of Solvang (City) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) operates under a Waste Discharge Permit (WDP) from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The WWTP collects, treats, and disposes of municipal wastewater generated by the City and by the community of Santa Ynez. The Santa Ynez Community Services District (SYCSD) contracts for wastewater treatment service from the City. The WWTP is located on 17.28-acre site and was constructed in 1963 and upgraded in 1975, 1983, and 1997. Since the 1950's, the City has provided wastewater treatment facilities as a means of protecting receiving waters and compliance with State Waste Discharge Permit requirements. The City's treatment facilities have been improved and/or expanded three times to meet the needs of the growing community of Solvang, as well as the contracting community of Santa Ynez.

The level of wastewater treatment at the WWTP has been increased over the past years from the original primary to full secondary treatment. The WWTP currently operates at 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD) consisting of initial screening and grit removal followed by three sequencing batch reactors (SBRs). Solids are processed in an aerobic digester before dewatering through a belt press. Currently, all three SBRs are in service and no redundancy is provided. The WWTP currently discharges its treated effluent into a polishing pond and then to an evaporation/percolation pond. On high flow days or significant rain events, the large evaporation/percolation pond discharges into a small evaporation/percolation pond for additional storage.

The City's current WDP Order No. R3-2020-0020 was issued by the Central Coast RWQCB in 2020, and in accordance with the WDP, the City initiated the WDP renewal process in May 2017. The City's WDP includes effluent discharge limits on the average daily flow and the concentrations of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) (the amount of dissolved oxygen needed [i.e., demanded] by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material), total suspended solids, total dissolved solids (TDS), pH, settable solids, sodium, and chloride within the effluent of the WWTP.

In August 2016, the RWQCB informally notified City staff that as part of a WDP renewal process, discharge limits for nitrogen and ammonia will be required. The RWQCB also requested that the City's Wastewater Division staff experiment with adjusting the treatment process to begin to de-nitrify the wastewater to allow the nitrogen to be released to the atmosphere in gaseous form and not reach the WWTP percolation ponds. New Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) programming was undertaken to enable significant modification of the treatment process to achieve de-nitrification. After the programming was completed, staff began testing the new reactor sequencing aimed to achieve de-nitrification. This

experimentation took several months and required some additional SCADA programming adjustments. In April 2017, the treatment process was fine-tuned sufficiently to achieve consistent nitrification and de-nitrification of the wastewater to ensure that nitrogen is released into the atmosphere and not reach the percolation ponds.

Prior to de-nitrifying, only two of the three SBR basins were required to handle the current wastewater flow. The third unused SBR basin represented available treatment capacity. However, as a result of the process adjustments required to de-nitrify, all three SBR basins must now be utilized to achieve de-nitrification. Therefore, a significant portion of the City's available treatment capacity has been lost, and the WWTP now has an estimated capacity of 0.9 MGD, or a 0.6 MGD reduction in capacity. Part of the reduced capacity is due to higher waste concentration in the wastewater resulting from water conservation. In addition, California's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) law became effective January 1, 2018, which forced cities to allow additional dwelling units on existing properties. This will increase wastewater flow over the next several years. The City is also interested in producing recycled water.

To achieve these goals, the City conducted a preliminary feasibility study to look at restoring the lost WWTP capacity, possible-enhanced treatment to produce recycled water, and other treatment needs and requirements. The feasibility study also addressed existing WWTP deficiencies, replacement of facilities that have reached the end of their useful life, reliability concerns, and recent and pending regulatory requirements. Three alternatives were identified as most feasible and evaluated in the preliminary feasibility study. The final WWTP Enhanced Treatment Study & Alternative Analysis was completed in July 2018.

The feasibility study determined that the near-term and long-term treatment capacity requirements were calculated to be 1.52 MGD (rounded to 1.5 MGD) and 1.98 MGD (rounded to 2.0 MGD), respectively. Two phased variations of Alternative 3 were also later studied. The feasibility study considered and evaluated alternative methods of secondary and tertiary treatment to restore the lost capacity to the permitted capacity of 1.5 MGD and produce recycled water, as well as recommending the expansion of the existing 17.28-acre WWTP site by up to approximately 2.5 acres. Adjacent land of 2.35 acres has since been acquired by the to implement the proposed Project.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The City is situated in Santa Barbara County along the Santa Ynez River. As illustrated in **Figure 2.0-1: Regional Location**, the City is located approximately midway between the City of Santa Maria and the City of Santa Barbara. State Route (SR) 246 bisects the City and provides a key regional east–west link between US Highway 101 and SR 154. The City is downstream from Bradbury Dam and Lake Cachuma to the east and upstream from the City of Buellton to the west.

As shown in **Figure 2.0-2: Project Site Vicinity**, the proposed improvements to the existing WWTP are located primarily within the existing WWTP site (proposed Project site), southwest of the City on the south side of the Santa Ynez River, west of Alisal Road. **Figure 2.0-3: Aerial of WWTP** presents an aerial view of the location of the existing WWTP in relation to the southern portion of the City.

2.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed WWTP Water Quality Improvement Project (proposed Project) includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, achieve required consistent removal of nitrogen, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. The improvements to restore lost capacity would also modify the treatment process to allow for production of recycled water. Computer models were developed, and simulations run to evaluate the treatment performance of various alternatives. Simulation results indicate that the alternatives would be capable of treating up to 1.5 MGD with the possibility of future expansion.

The proposed Project includes the following components:

- Demolition activities.
- Construction of a new Administration/Laboratory (Admin/Lab) Building, new electrical building, new sludge dewatering, rehabilitation of the aerated digester, renovation of the existing aeration basins (adjacent to the existing Admin/Lab building) for use as sludge or effluent holding basins, and new basin covers to provide for odor control.
- Addition of new facilities to provide for improved secondary treatment to address both RWQCB requirements for water quality discharge and to restore treatment capacity.
- Addition of tertiary filters, chlorine contact basin and accompanying chemical storage to produce recycled water.

Demolition Activities

As part of the proposed Project, portions of the existing WWTP would be demolished to provide better use of available space to accommodate necessary improvements, bring facilities up to code, clean up the site, improve access, and make room for new buildings and housing structures, as shown in **Figure 2.0-4: Demolition Plan**. It is proposed that certain existing structures and buildings be demolished including the abandoned sedimentation basins (tanks) connected to the abandoned aeration basins, existing sludge processing structures, and existing Administration/Laboratory (Admin/Lab) Building.

Structural and Building Improvements

Approximately 2.35 acres of additional land has been acquired to accommodate proposed and future equipment and facilities, provide improved site access and maneuverability, provide for recycled water storage and distribution facilities, and solar panels. The maximum disturbance area associated with the proposed Project, regardless of treatment alternative, is depicted on **Figure 2.0-5: WWTP Components, Land Acquisition, and Maximum Disturbance**. The structural and building improvements would be constructed in the first of two phases along with the recycled water. Recycled water pumping and distribution would be constructed in a third phase.

To effectively facilitate process improvements and possible future expansions, existing deficiencies must be addressed, and the general site conditions must be enhanced with ancillary improvements. This includes installation of new blowers, aerators, mixers, generator, sludge sump pumps, integration for the new equipment controls and communication systems, construction of the new Admin/Lab building, parking lot, sludge processing building, new electrical systems, and new access roads. Refer to **Figure 2.0-6: Project Site Plan** for the general locations of proposed improvements.

Administration/Laboratory Building

The existing Admin/Lab building is outdated, not up to current building code, and has recently experienced serious problems with its antiquated electrical equipment. Additionally, the existing Admin/Lab building is not optimally located and sits at the bottom of the site, provides poor operational visibility, and does not adequately serve for emergency response at its current location.

A new Admin/Lab building would be constructed at the upper (south) end of the WWTP to provide better accessibility, security, process control, and emergency response, as shown in **Figure 2.0-6: Project Site Plan**. New computer and telemetry equipment would be provided, and integration of the new equipment controls and Admin/Lab building and existing garage building to offset the additional power requirements of the proposed Project. A new parking lot would be constructed adjacent to the new Admin/Lab building. Solar panels/collectors would be installed on the rooves of new and existing buildings and on some open areas within the site.

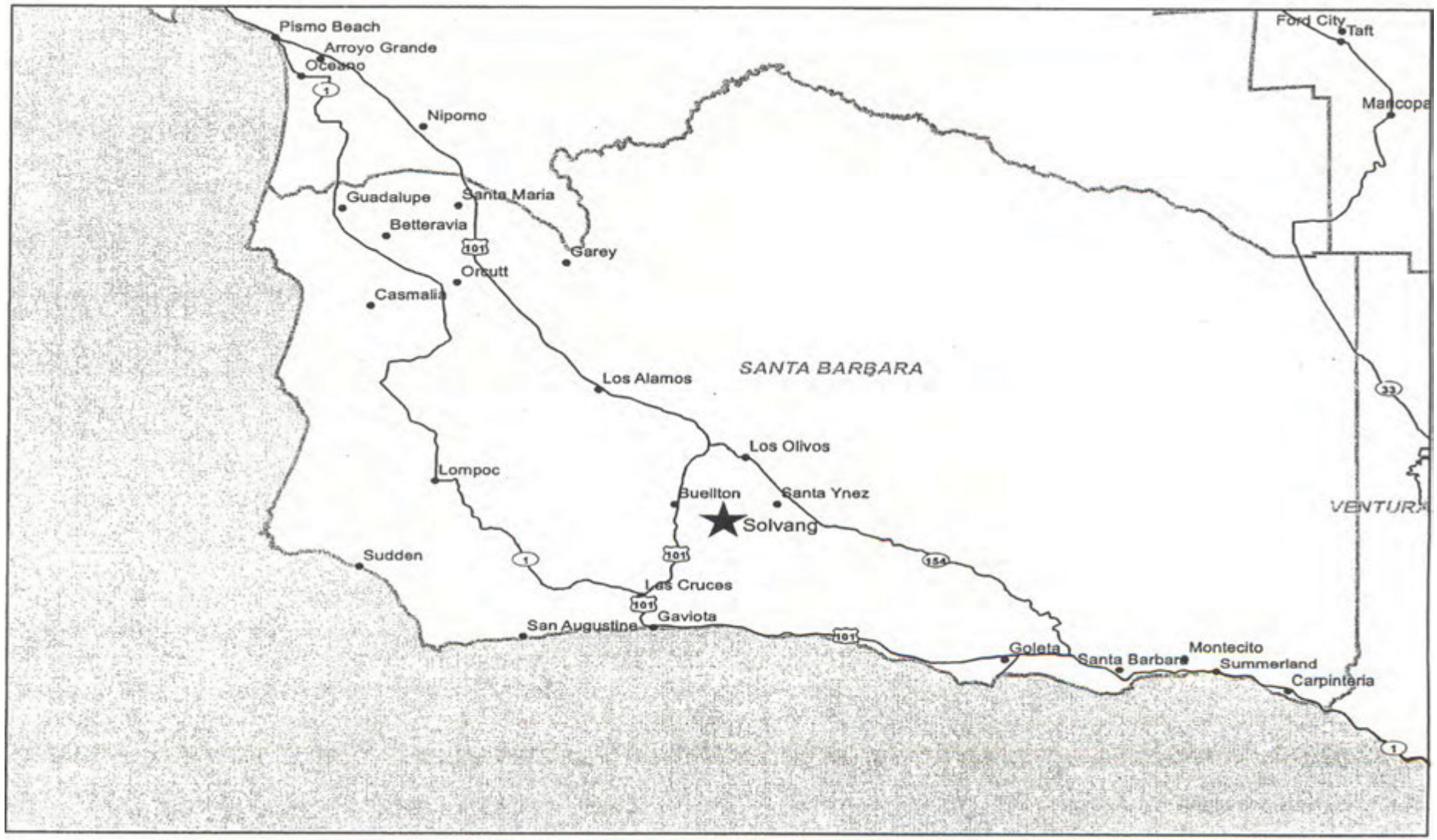

FIGURE **2.0-1**

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Regional Location Map

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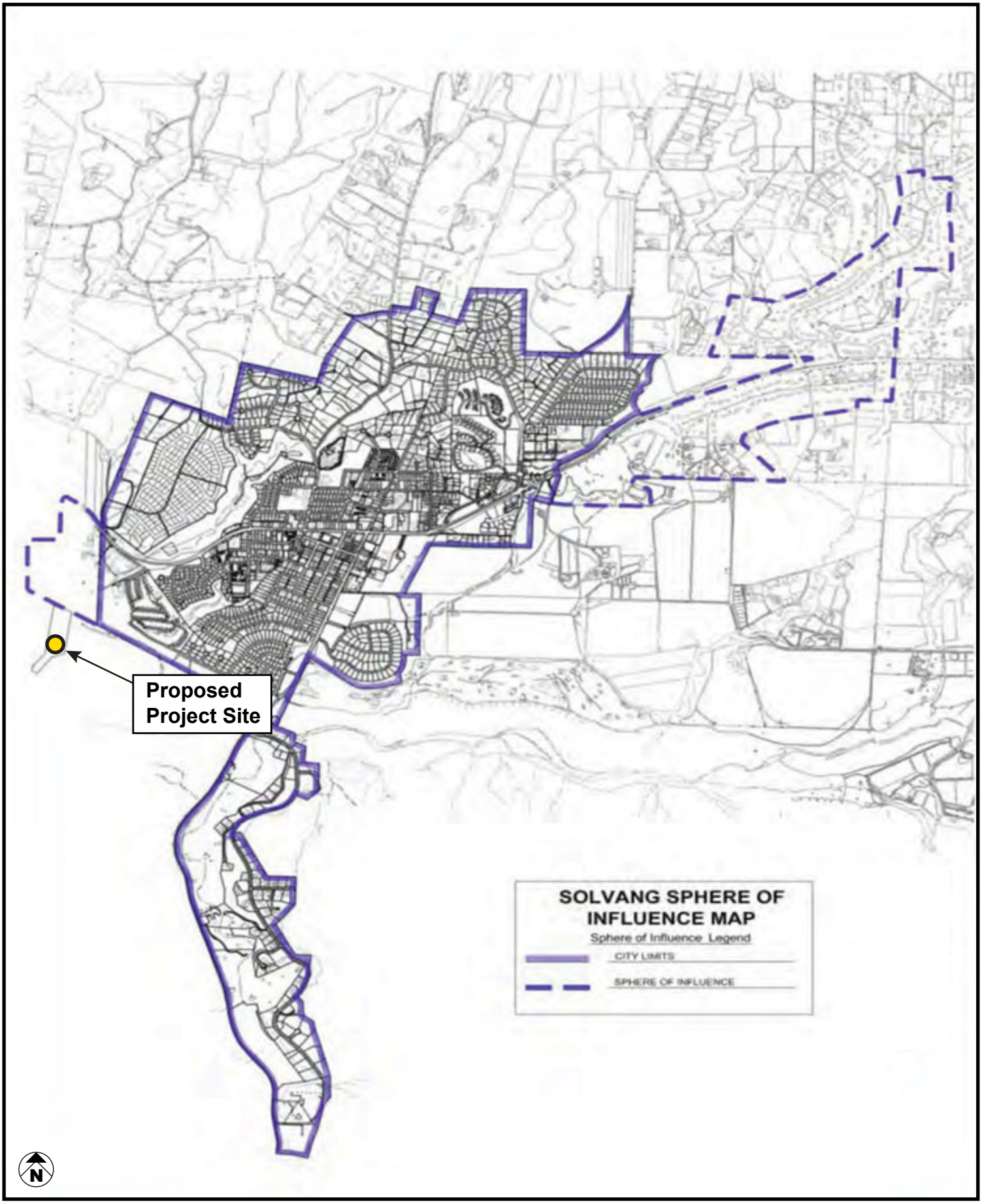

SOURCE: City of Solvang General Plan Land Use Element - June 2008

FIGURE **2.0-2**

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Project Site Vicinity

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SOURCE: PACE - 2020

FIGURE **2.0-3**

Meridian Consultants

Aerial of WWTP

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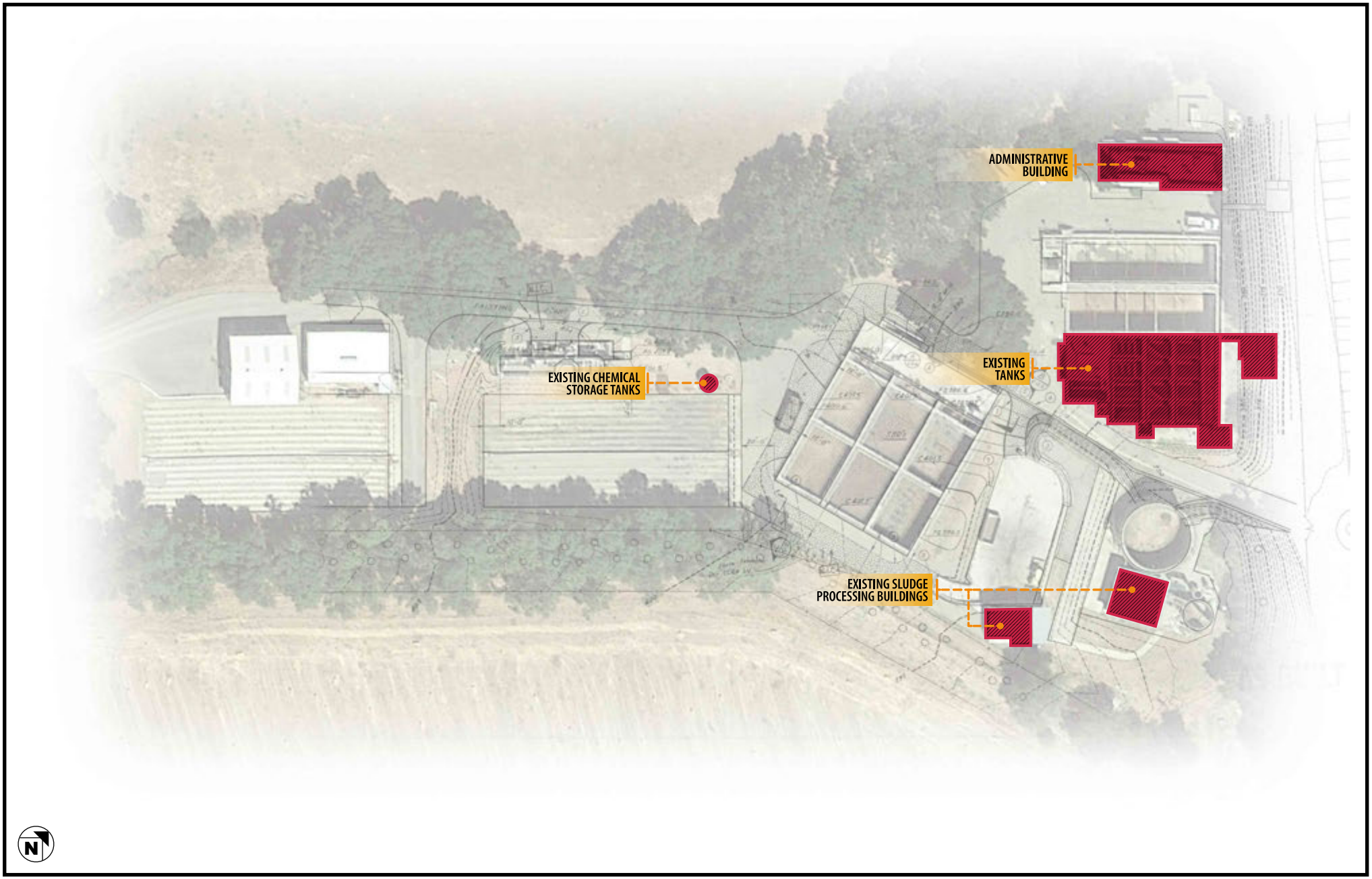

SOURCE: PACE - 2020

FIGURE **2.0-4**

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Demolition Plan

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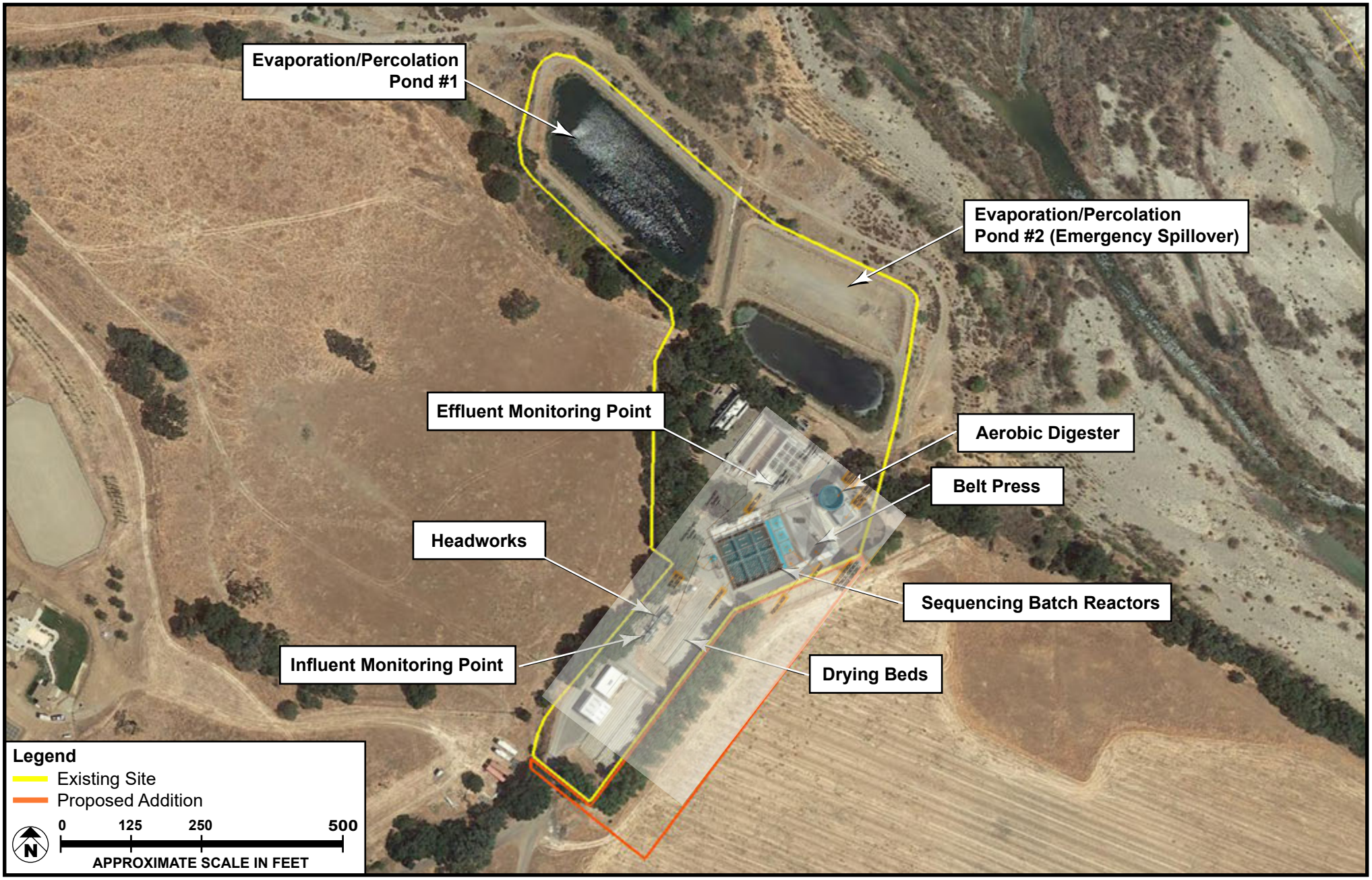

FIGURE **2.0-5**

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WWTP Components, Land Acquisition, and Maximum Disturbance

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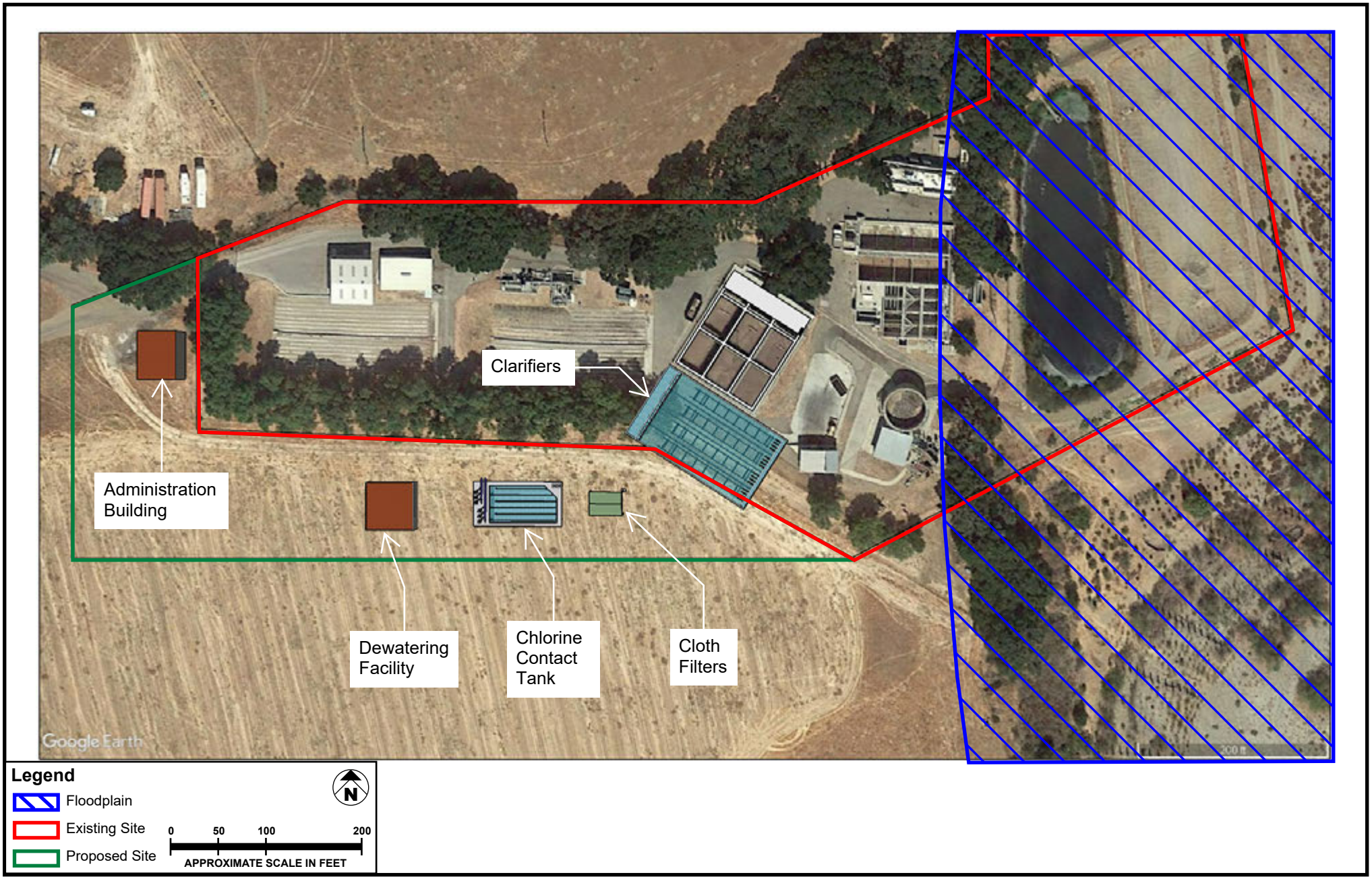


SOURCE: Solvang WWTP WQ Upgrade - 2022; Google Earth - 2022

FIGURE **2.0-6**

Meridian Consultants

Project Site Plan

001-006-22

New Sludge Building & Sump Pit Upgrades

A new sludge building would be constructed, possibly in place of the existing sedimentation tanks and the existing belt press may be relocated to this new building. The press may be replaced with a new unit depending on the condition. The existing belt press canopy structure would be demolished. The abandoned aeration basins (adjacent to the existing Admin/Lab building) may be demolished or renovated and used as sludge or recycled water holding basins. If repurposed, new basin covers would be installed to provide for odor control.

The existing sump pumps in the sump pit are not able to keep up with water from the belt press and need to be upgraded. New sump pit pumps would be selected and installed in front of the new sludge building. The existing control panel is currently located in the pit and would be relocated and replaced with a new control panel.

Aeration System Improvements

The existing aeration system was not working well due to aged equipment, lack of turn down on the equipment, and broken air piping. In particular, the existing blowers were poorly designed for the modified treatment process to nitrify and de-nitrify the wastewater as compared to fine bubble diffusers. The current blowers are also old and inefficient, as the current jet headers function as both aerators and mixers.

New more efficient blowers, a mixing system, and new piping have been installed to address current deficiencies, to improve oxygen transfer and promote nitrification, as well as save energy and operation costs while providing adequate airflow to achieve full nitrogen removal.

Roadway and Other Improvements

A new access road would be constructed on the eastern side of the proposed Project site, starting by the filters and surrounding the tertiary process housing structure for truck access, as shown in **Figure 2.0-3**.

To provide adequate truck entry, the existing access road would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road would be paved. The new looped access road would also improve security and emergency response.

Approximately 15 pepper trees and three (3) coast live oak trees would be removed to accommodate the improved access road. All removed trees would be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio with native drought-tolerant trees and watered with a temporary drip irrigation system until established.

Currently, the existing backup generator used during planned WWTP shutdowns, power outages, and emergencies has a capacity of 500 kilowatts (kW) and is 20 years old. However, the proposed facility loading requirement is determined to be approximately 800 kW. A new 800 kW generator would be installed to replace the old unit and would provide the necessary emergency/backup power supply for the WWTP.

Treatment Improvements

The feasibility study considered the following three treatment improvement alternatives for the proposed WWTP improvements:

- Alternative 1 would add an anoxic/equalization basin and utilize the existing SBRs for secondary treatment processes,
- Alternative 2 would modify the existing SBRs to create anoxic and aerobic zones, and add clarifiers for secondary treatment processes, and
- Alternative 3 would modify the existing SBRs to create anoxic and aerobic zones, and add membrane bioreactors (MBRs) for secondary treatment processes.

Each of these are discussed in detail below. Alternative 2 is considered the preferred alternative. However, the cost of Alternative 3 will be further evaluated during preliminary design, and based on cost considerations, variations of Alternatives 1 or 2 may be implemented. Alternatives 1 and 3 are discussed and analyzed in **Appendix A: CEQA-Plus Documentation**.

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 involves the continued use of SBRs for secondary treatment processes and would include an anoxic/equalization basin with equalization pumps that would connect to the existing influent pipeline; an existing waste activated sludge (WAS) pipeline to the new sludge building constructed in place of the existing sedimentation tanks; and the existing belt press relocated to this new building. **Figure 2.0-7: Alternative 1 Site Layout** illustrates the general location and configuration of WWTP improvements within the site. To prepare for future use, a new concrete shell for a 4th future SBR may be constructed next to a newly constructed surge basin and filters.

A new effluent pipeline would connect the filters to a chlorine contact/recycled water storage tank for tertiary treatment processing. A recycled water pump station would be constructed next to the tertiary process housing structure.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 involves converting the existing SBRs to a continuous flow process with secondary treatment trains that are 1/3 anoxic and 2/3 aerobic to improve denitrification, also known as step-feed activation. The existing SBR basins would be subdivided and modified with interior walls to create anoxic and aerobic basins. New submersible mixers would be added to the anoxic basins. Alternative 2 also includes construction of two new secondary clarifiers to allow for solids separation. The new clarifiers would be 80 feet in diameter, with 15-foot side walls, and 18 feet to the bottom at the center. **Figure 2.0-8: Alternative 2 Site Layout** illustrates the general location and configuration of WWTP improvements within the site.

A clarifier feed pump station would be provided to house feed pumps, return activated sludge (RAS)/WAS pumps, and automated valves. The pump station would receive secondary mixed liquor suspended solids (MLSS) from the aeration tanks and pump MLSS into the clarifiers as well as convey the clarifier underflow back into the anoxic tank for recycling. For recycled water, the clarifier effluent would be conveyed to new filters via gravity flows.

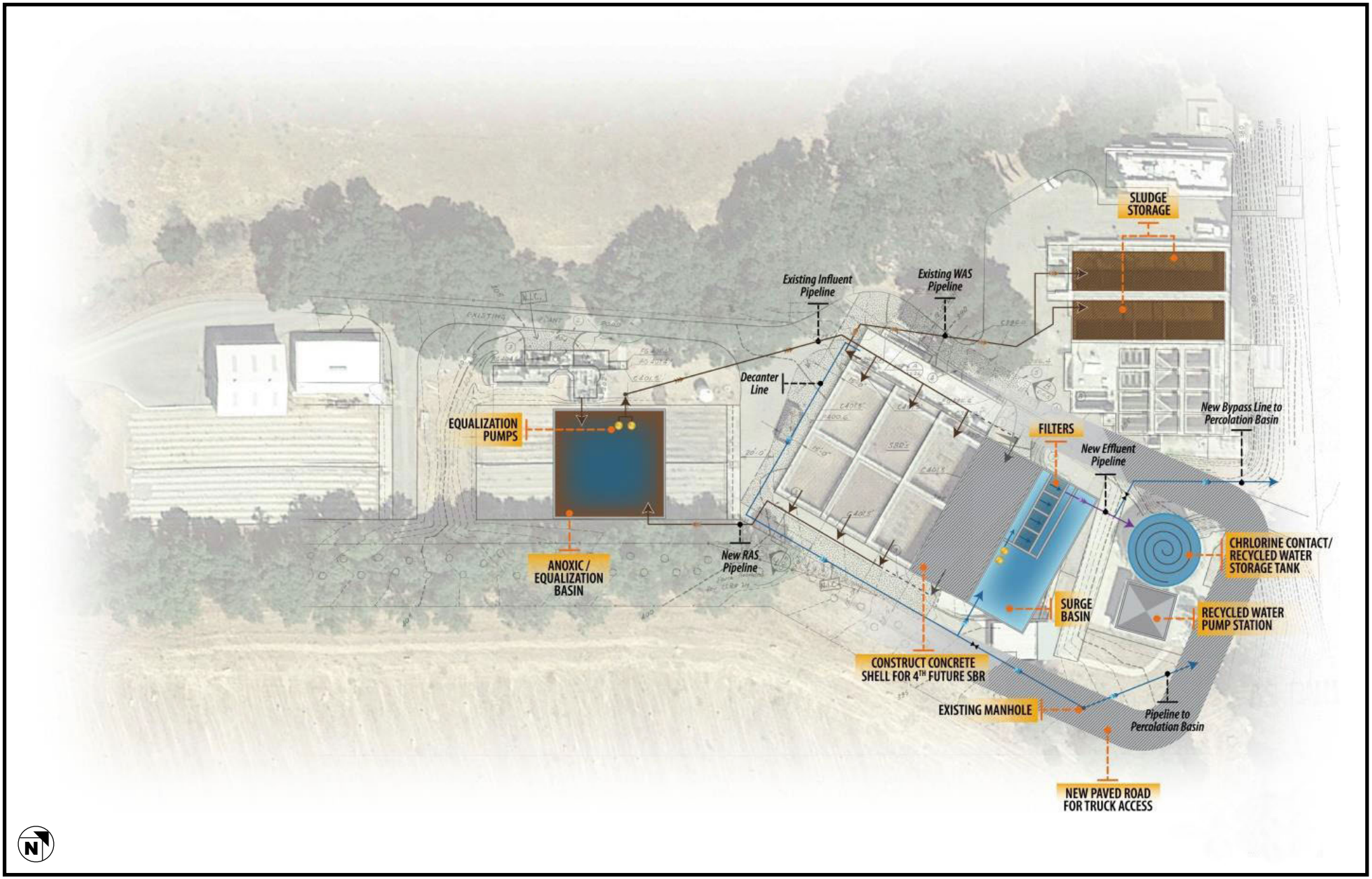
The approximately 2.5 acres of additional land would accommodate the two new clarifier basins, provide improved site access and maneuverability, and to provide space for recycled water storage and distribution facilities, as well as for a potential solar system. Alternative 2 includes approximately 5,500 cubic yards of excavation and 2,500 cubic yards of fill on site.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 involves converting the existing SBRs to a continuous flow process with secondary treatment trains that are 1/3 anoxic and 2/3 aerobic to improve denitrification. Two phased variations of Alternative 3 were also previously studied (identified as Alternatives 4 and 5 in the preliminary feasibility study). The existing SBR basins would be subdivided and modified with interior walls to create anoxic and aerobic basins. New submersible mixers would be added to the anoxic basins. In addition to converting the SBRs into secondary treatment trains Alternative 3 includes the installation of new membrane bioreactors (MBRs) in a new housing structure and a new equipment/chemical building to facilitate the MBR operations. The new MBR housing structure and the equipment/chemical building would be constructed on the lower side of the site using common-wall construction adjacent to the existing SBRs, requiring less concrete for construction. The new MBRs with their 2-millimeter fine screens would be installed next to the secondary process tank. **Figure 2.0-9: Alternative 3 Site Layout** illustrates the general location and configuration of WWTP improvements within the site.

For production of recycled water, Alternative 3 combines both secondary and tertiary treatment and eliminates the need for filtration by taking advantage of lower pathogen content in the MBR-treated water.

An on-site recycled water storage tank would be able to provide adequate chlorine contact time for the recycled water, as well as necessary storage. Alternative 3 includes approximately 1,000 cubic yards of excavation and 2,500 cubic yards of fill to occur on site.



SOURCE: PACE - 2020

FIGURE **2.0-7**

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Alternative 1 Site Layout

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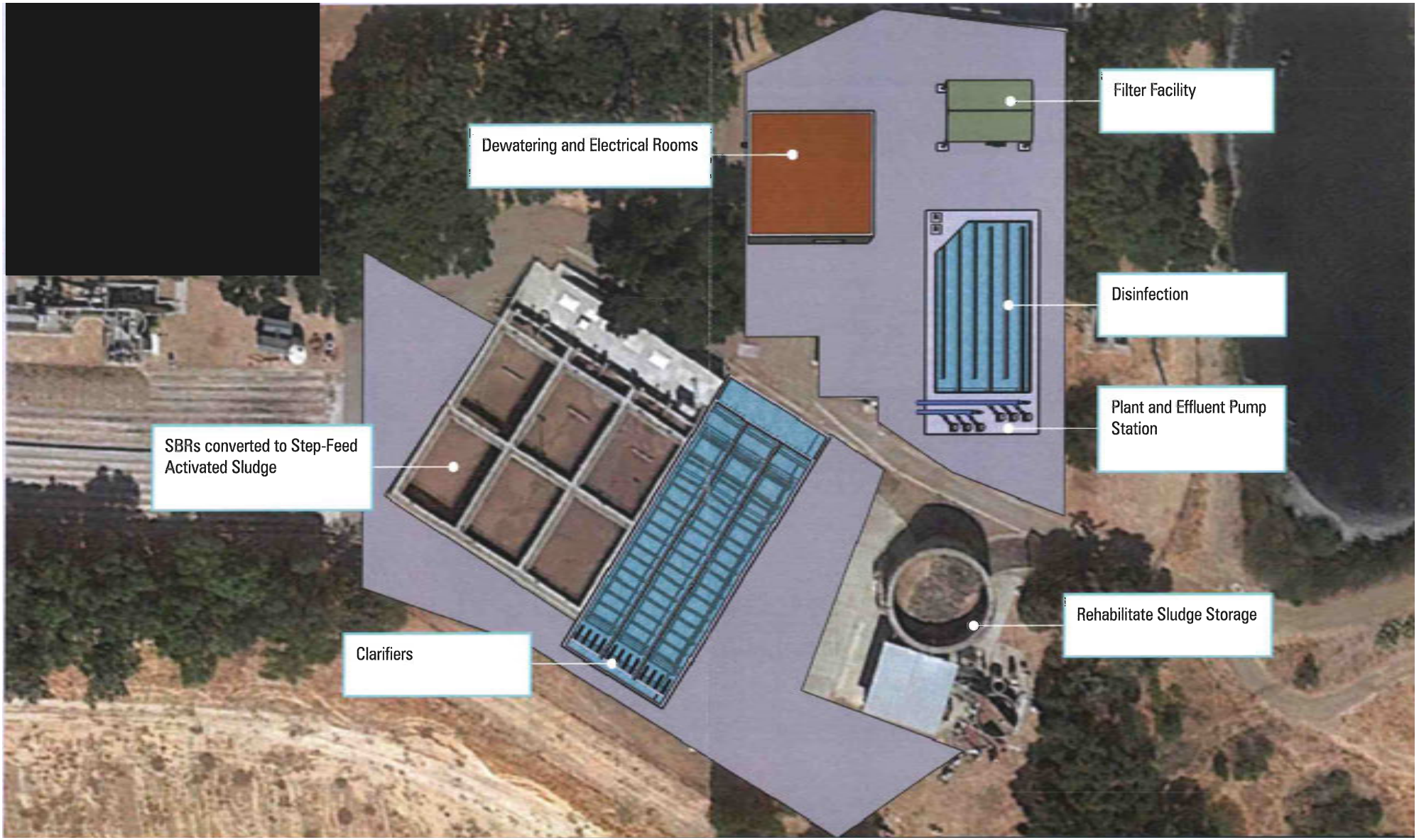


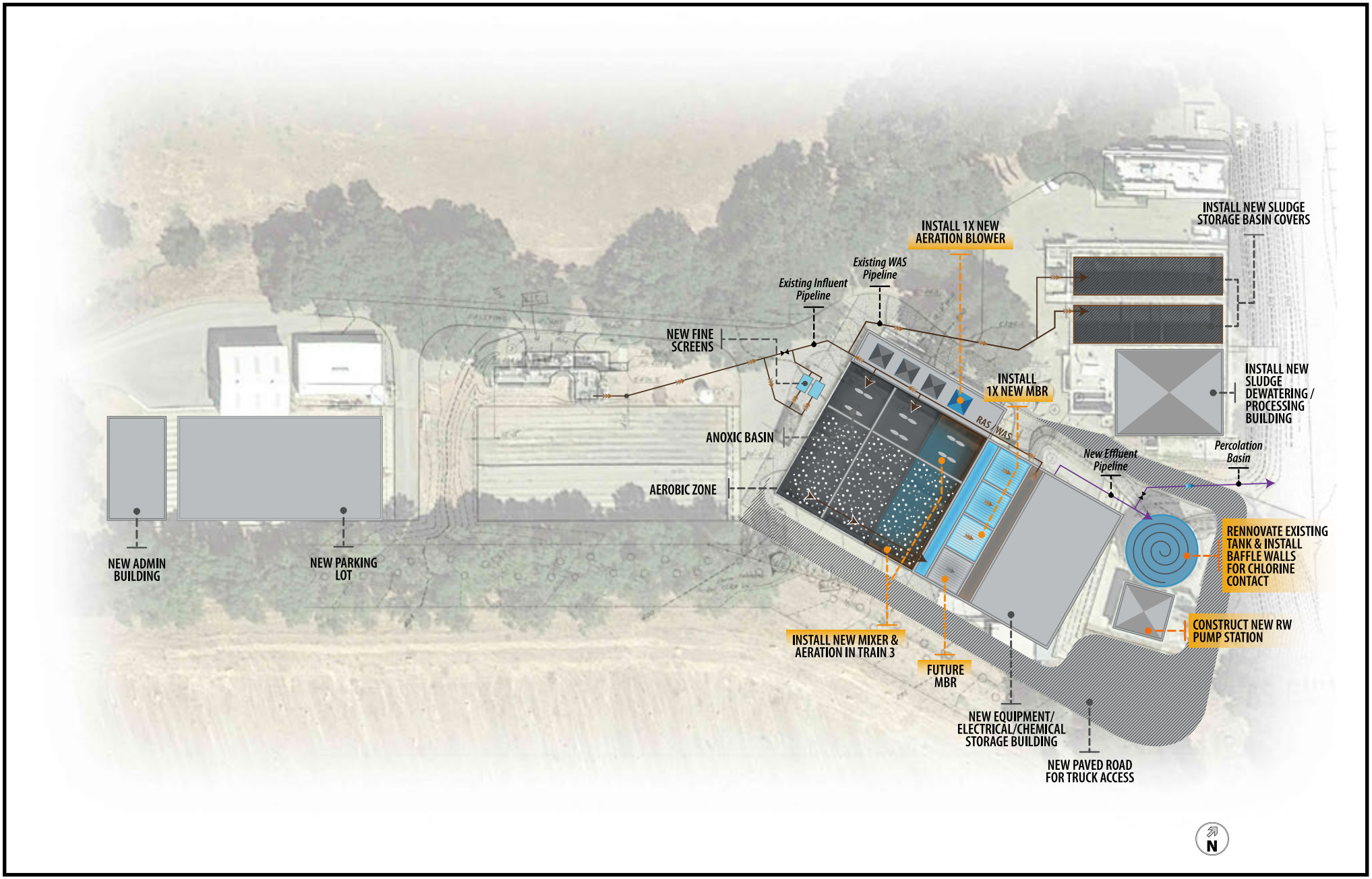
SOURCE: Carollo Engineers—2020

FIGURE **2.0-8**

Meridian Consultants

Alternative 2 Site Layout

001-004-19



SOURCE: PACE - 2020

FIGURE **2.0-9**

Meridian Consultants

Alternative 3 Site Layout

001-004-19

Recycled Water

The City desires to produce recycled water. Chlorine would be injected in the filtered tertiary effluent and stored in a recycled water storage tank. The existing 0.1 (million gallon) mg aerobic digester could possibly be renovated and repurposed as a recycled water storage tank and chlorine contact chamber, or a new recycled water storage tank would be constructed adjacent to the aerobic digester. The recycled water facilities would be constructed as part of the second phase of site improvements.

A new recycled water pump station would pump tertiary effluent from the storage tank to a new recycled water distribution system. The polishing pond would be emptied and converted into emergency storage for major storm events. Plant effluent would be discharged into the other two percolation ponds.

As part of the new recycled water distribution system, approximately 7,000 linear feet of recycled water pipeline is proposed for installation from the existing WWTP east across the adjacent Alisal Ranch property to Alisal Road, and then in Alisal Road to existing irrigation facilities in the vicinity. The estimated lengths of transmission and distribution pipeline are approximately 5,000 feet and 2,000 feet, respectively. Preliminary pipe sizes have been determined to be 16-inch and 12-inches in diameter, respectively. The design would include three metered user connections: 1) Alisal Ranch wheat/hay field east of the WWTP, 2) River Golf Course, and 3) Alisal Guest Ranch Golf Course. The two conceptual alignments are illustrated in **Figure 2.0-10: Conceptual Recycled Water Pipeline Alignments**. The recycled water lines would consist of a 16-inch and 12-inch diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipeline installed within a 2-foot-wide trench. The average trench depth would be approximately 5.5 feet below ground surface. Depending on the depth of adjacent utility lines, the trench depth would range from 3.5 feet to 10 feet below ground surface. An excavator would be used for trench excavation, laying pipe, backfilling the trench, and compaction. Dump trucks and pipe delivery trucks would travel along the surface adjacent to the trench to remove trench spoils, deliver sand bedding, and deliver new pipe to support the pipeline installation. Two conceptual alignments are proposed as part of the WWTP improvements.

Potential additional future uses of recycled water would be continually evaluated and considered and may include landscape irrigation.

Proposed Recycled Water Pipeline Alignment 1

Alignment 1 would begin at the existing WWTP and extend east through the northern portion of the agricultural field and then traverse southeast to cross the existing access road to the facility. The recycled water pipeline would then continue east to Alisal Road through an existing and maintained dirt road approximately 16 feet wide.

Proposed Recycled Water Pipeline Alignment 2

Alignment 2 would also begin at the existing WWTP and extend east through the northern portion of the agricultural field, then cross the existing access road to the facility. The recycled water pipeline would be horizontally drilled beneath the existing hill adjacent to the west side of Alisal Road.

Project Development and Construction

For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that proposed Project development and engineering is expected to begin in March 2023 and last approximately 16 months, and construction is estimated to last approximately 24 months. Construction of the proposed Project is expected to begin in October 2024 and would be completed by approximately October 2026.

2.4 OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY REQUIRED APPROVALS

The following approvals and actions are required:

- Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration by the City
- Waste Discharge Certification from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Water Recycling Permits from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Division of Drinking Water (DDW)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Communities Grant

SOURCE: PACE - 2020

FIGURE **2.0-10**

Meridian Consultants

Conceptual Recycled Water Pipeline Alignments

001-004-19

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Solvang (City) is located in the Santa Ynez Valley, in the central part of Santa Barbara County. Solvang is surrounded by the Purisima Hills to the north, the upper Santa Ynez Valley to the east, the Santa Ynez Mountains to the south, and the lower Santa Ynez Valley to the west. Solvang is situated primarily along an alluvial plain formed by the Santa Ynez River and on the southeastern edge of the Purisima Hills. The City is located almost equidistant between the communities of Buellton and Santa Ynez. SR 246 bisects Solvang and provides a key regional east–west link between US Highway 101 and SR 154.

An estimated 20,000 people live in the Santa Ynez Valley, of which 26 percent reside in the City. According to the California Department of Finance, population and housing estimates at the beginning of 2022 indicated there were 5,709 people residing in the City.[3] The majority of the City's land is used for housing its residents, and the bulk of the City's residential land is designated as Low Density and Medium Density Land Uses by the City's General Plan Land Use Map.

3.2 CURRENT WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

The City Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) collects, treats, and disposes of municipal wastewater generated by the City and by the community of Santa Ynez. The WWTP is located on 17.28-acre site and was constructed in 1981 and upgraded in 1993. Since the 1950's, the City has provided wastewater treatment facilities as a means of protecting receiving waters and compliance with State Waste Discharge Permit requirements. The City's treatment facilities have been improved and/or expanded three times to meet the needs of the growing community of Solvang, as well as the contracting community of Santa Ynez.

The system includes the sewer collection network, two lift stations (on Fjord Drive and Alisal Road), the WWTP, a discharge lined polishing pond, and two percolation ponds adjacent to the Santa Ynez River. The WWTP is on an unusual site that is challenging due to being long, linear, and highly sloped. The site slopes 35 feet from the headworks to the percolation basin discharge, which challenges the accessibility of tanks and equipment, increase the cost for new civil works, buildings, and roadways around the site, and challenges construction of thanks at the same elevation.

The City currently operates a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) type WWTP with a design and permitted capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). The WWTP operates under a Waste Discharge Permit (WDP) issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The WWTP currently receives and treats

3 State of California, Department of Finance "E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State — January 1, 2021 and 2022," accessed December 2022, https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates-e1/

wastewater from the City and the Santa Ynez Community Services District (SYCSD) which serves the town of Santa Ynez. The SYCSD owns 0.30 MGD capacity in the Solvang WWTP.

The WWTP currently discharges its treated effluent into a polishing pond and then to an evaporation/percolation pond. On high flow days or significant rain events, the large evaporation/percolation pond discharges into a small evaporation/percolation pond for additional storage.

Fjord Lift Station and Odor Control

Wastewater from SYCSD discharges to the Fjord Drive lift station, which combines at the site with the City wastewater flows. The combined flows are pumped through a force main to the WWTP headworks. Currently, there are individual flowmeters to monitor flow and bill accordingly from each agency.

The collection and transport of sewage result in the generation of harmful gases such as Hydrogen Sulfide (H_2S) due to anaerobic conditions in the collection system. The nuisance odor produced by the sewage is currently controlled by running the odorous gas through a carbon median scrubber. The old gas phase odor scrubber system was not functioning properly and was recently replaced. The new biological odor control system uses a two stage process with a biological stage to remove 99 percent of the hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), followed by an activated carbon polishing stage to remove residual H_2S and organic odors.

Headworks

The combined influent wastewater from the Fjord Lift Station is pumped via a 16-inch force main to the headworks concrete structure at the WWTP for 6 millimeter (mm) fine screening. The screen structure consists of two concrete channels, one equipped with an existing mechanical 6 mm fine screen, and the other channel equipped with a manual bar rack for redundant operation when needed. Once screened, flows enter the grit vortex to remove additional solids. The grit removed is pumped into a grit classifier and into a dumpster. Debris captured from both the screens and grit removal unit are stored in a trash bin that is disposed of at a landfill. Both headworks systems are design for 1.5 MGD at average daily flow (adf) and are operating properly. No repairs or replacement are necessary at the existing headworks. Some of the proposed improvements and upgrades may require additional and finer downstream screening.

Secondary Process – SBRs

From the headworks, the screened wastewater is diverted to the SBRs via a 24-inch pipeline for biological oxidation of organic matter and nutrients in the wastewater. The SBRs make up the secondary treatment process and provide the dissolved nutrient and organic treatment required for permit compliance, as well as secondary suspended solids removal. The SBRs were originally designed to remove more than 90

percent of the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and total suspended solids, using a cycled process of fill, aerobic treatment, anoxic treatment, settling of secondary solids, and decant of clarified and treated effluent. Generally, the SBR process is effective and achieves superior water quality to other processes, assuming there is relatively consistent flow and loading to the process. Solvang is primarily a bedroom community with tourism that produces high flows during the day and low flows at night, and also periodic increase in flow and loading on the weekends/Holidays, and during wet weather from infiltration and inflow. Thus, the process is subject to nonideal conditions due to no upstream equalization. Each of three SBRs has a volume of 0.367 million gallons and combining to a total of 1.1 million gallons. The SBRs are equipped with three 50 horsepower (hp) jet aeration and mixing pumps (one for each basin), three jet aerators (one for each basin), and four 60 hp positive displacement blowers (one for each basin and one redundant) for the aeration system. Each existing blower is capable of delivering approximately 1,100 SCFM (air flow rate). Regardless of the alternative selected, blowers and aerators will need to be replaced with new equipment. Since they are at the end of their useful life, they need to be replaced with more modern and efficient technology. The aerators are likely clogged or damaged, and jet aeration technology is inefficient. The aeration system needs to be replaced with a new aeration diffuser grid system at the bottom of each tank, which enables running the aeration blowers without operating the three, 50 hp jet mixing pumps at the same time as the aeration blowers.

Sludge Digestion, Thickening and Dewatering

The current sludge process consists of pumping the waste activated sludge (WAS) from the SBRs to the circular aerated sludge holding tank where it is partially aerobically digested. After digestion, sludge is dewatered by an existing Ashbrook belt press located outside. Biosolids cake accumulated in roll-off bins which are hauled away by an off-site composting contractor. Pressate water from the belt press is pumped back to the facility's headworks. The aerated sludge holding tank, the blower for the holding tank, and the dewatering press currently have no redundancy. The system is missing a sludge cake conveyor or pump system to properly load solids. The existing belt press operates about seven hours a day, three days per week.

Percolation Basins

Currently, decanted secondary effluent from the SBRs discharges into a lined polishing pond adjacent to the two percolation ponds. The polishing pond effluent discharges to two large percolation basins. The current and planned operation of the percolation basins is to annually rotate wetting and drying to allow for drying and scarifying of the surface for the next wetting cycle. During wet weather events, excess flows may need to discharge into both basins at once.

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐	Aesthetics	☐	Agriculture and Forestry	☐	Air Quality
☐	Biological Resources	☐	Cultural Resources	☐	Energy
☐	Geology/Soils	☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
☐	Hydrology/Water Quality	☐	Land Use/Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☐	Noise	☐	Population/Housing	☐	Public Services
☐	Recreation	☐	Transportation	☐	Tribal Cultural Resources
☐	Utilities/Service Systems	☐	Wildfire	☐	Mandatory Findings of Significance

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐	I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment and is eligible for a Categorical Exemption.
☐	I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
☒	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
☐	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
☐	I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
☐	I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.

Signature

12/19/22
Date

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This section provides an evaluation of the various topics considered for environmental review.

A brief explanation for the determination of significance is provided for all impact determinations except "No Impact" determinations that are adequately supported by the information sources the Lead Agency (City of Solvang) cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" determination is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the proposed Project (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" determination includes an explanation of its bases relative to project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

Explanations take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

Once the Lead Agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist indicates whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant.

"Mitigated Negative Declaration: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering of a program environmental impact report (EIR) or other California Environmental Quality Assessment (CEQA) process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where it is available for review.

b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used, or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

The explanation of each issue should identify:

a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

5.1 AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than Significant Impact.

Scenic vistas are typically views of features such as mountains, forests, the ocean, or urban skylines. The City of Solvang (City) is located within the Santa Ynez Valley, which is bordered between the Santa Ynez Mountains to the south and the Purisima Hills to the north. Views of these resources are identified in the City's General Plan as a scenic view to its residents and visitors.

The Project site contains the existing wastewater treatment plan (WWTP), which is located approximately 320 feet away from the Santa Ynez River. The City's Conservation and Open Space element designates the Santa Ynez River as an important open space area.[4] The upgrade of the existing WWTP would not impact views of the Santa Ynez River as the site improvements would be consistent with the existing height and dimensions of the infrastructure associated with the WWTP. Additionally, the Project site is mostly surrounded by trees, and the upgrades to the existing WWTP would be considered low lying and would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic resource such as the Santa Ynez Mountains or the Purisima Hills. Construction and operation of the recycled water pipeline would be trenched below ground

4 City of Solvang General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element (2016).

and would not be visible once construction is completed. Views of scenic vistas would remain similar to existing conditions. Impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?

No Impact.

The nearest State highway is California State Route (SR) 246, which bisects the City from east to west and is located approximately 0.42 miles to the north of the Project site.[5] The City's Conservation and Open Space Element identifies SR 154 as a State Designated Scenic Highway; however, SR 154 is located approximately 5.3 miles east of the Project site. The City's Circulation Element does not identify any Scenic Highways within the City or near the proposed Project site.[6] The nearest State scenic highway to the City is US Highway 101 (US 101) which is approximately 2 miles west of the Project site and is classified as an "Eligible Scenic Highway-Not Officially Designated."[7]

Upgrades to the proposed Project site would not be visible from SR 246, US 101, or SR 154 and would not impact trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a State scenic highway.[8] Thus, no impacts would occur within a State scenic highway.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project site is currently developed with the existing WWTP. As part of the proposed Project, portions of the existing WWTP would be demolished to provide better use of available space to accommodate

5 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Circulation Element" (2008).
6 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Circulation Element" (2008).
7 Caltrans, California State Scenic Highway System Map, https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa. Accessed December 2022.
8 Department of Transportation, Scenic Highway Program," https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways. Accessed February 2021.

necessary improvements to bring treatment capacity back to permitted levels, bring facilities up to code, improve access, and make room for new buildings and structures. The proposed buildings and structures associated with the improvements to the WWTP would be consistent in size, mass, and visual character as the existing buildings and structures on site.

The WWTP is on an unusual site that is long, linear, and highly sloped. The site slopes 35 feet from the headworks to the percolation basin discharge. The existing Admin/Lab building is not up to current building code and has recently experienced problems with its antiquated electrical equipment. The existing Admin/Lab building is not optimally located and sits at the bottom of the site, provides poor operational visibility, and does not adequately serve for emergency response at its current location. The new Admin/Lab building would be constructed at the southernmost portion of the site to improve access and overall WWTP operations. A new parking lot would be located adjacent to the new Admin/Lab building. Solar panels would also be included as part of the new Admin/Lab building and within some open areas.

To provide adequate truck entry, the existing access road would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road would be paved. The new looped access road would also improve security and emergency response.

The addition of a new pipeline would be trenched underneath agricultural land and would not impair any agricultural practices in that area. As such, the new pipeline would not result in significant impacts to the existing visual character and public views of this agricultural land.

The WWTP is located just outside the City and is primarily surrounded by trees. In order to accommodate the improved access road for the Project, approximately 15 pepper trees and three (3) coast live oak trees would be removed. As identified in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources**, implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-6** would require all removed trees to be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio with native drought-tolerant trees and watered with a temporary drip irrigation system until established. The Project would be required to secure a permit for oak tree removal in compliance with Article IX of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code. Thus, the removal of these trees would not result in a significant impact to the existing visual character.

Impacts to the existing visual character and quality of public views of the site and its surroundings would be less than significant with mitigation.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than Significant Impact.

Glare is generated during the day from reflective surfaces. Light pollution occurs when nighttime views of the stars and sky are diminished by an over-abundance of light coming from the ground. Existing nighttime lighting in the area emanates from streetlights and the single-family residences north of the Santa Ynez River. As mentioned previously, the Project site is located south of the Santa Ynez River adjacent to open space and agricultural areas. The solar panels would be located above ground and would generate new sources of potential glare. The WWTP site is surrounded by existing trees and vegetation to the north, west, south, and southwest. The existing trees and vegetation would reduce potential off-site glare from the solar panels. Nighttime lighting would be generated from power source lights at the WWTP security lighting inside the boundary. Pursuant to the City's Municipal Code, Section 11-12-18, the proposed Project nighttime lighting would be fully shielded (full cutoff), directed downwards and to the east, and equipped with motion detection sensors and/or timers to keep lights off when not needed at night.[9] Additionally, the recycled water pipeline would be trenched below ground and would not create an additional source of glare. Accordingly, nighttime lighting impacts and glare would remain similar to existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

9 City of Solvang Municipal Code, Title 11, Ch. 12, sec. 18.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to nonforest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to nonforest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?

Less than Significant.

The portion of the Project site where the existing WWTP is located is not currently used for agricultural operations. According to the California Department of Conservation "California Important Farmland Finder" map, this area is designated as "Urban and Built-Up Land" or as "Other Land."[10] The approximate 2.35 acres of land adjacent to the existing WWTP site and the area the proposed pipeline would be

10 California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, "California Important Farmland Finder" Accessed February 2021.

inserted, is designated as "Farmland of Local Importance" and "Grazing Land."[11] Although there would be an adverse loss of farmland, the City currently owns the parcel and would utilize the parcel for supporting infrastructure operations to offset future energy demands.

A recycled water pipeline would be constructed east through the northern portion of the agricultural field and then traverse southeast to cross the existing access road to the facility. Ultimately, the recycled water pipeline would connect to an existing water transmission pipeline in Alisal Road. The construction of the proposed recycled water pipeline would occur within the agricultural area. Specifically, a trench would be dug for the pipeline, the pipeline would be installed, and the trench re-covered, thereby not impacting any permanent future agricultural or grazing uses on the site. Accordingly, although the recycled water pipeline portion of the Project is designated as Farmland of Local Importance, the pipeline would not interfere or permanently affect operations of the agricultural field, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

Less than Significant Impact.

According to the Santa Barbara County Zoning Map, the Project site is zoned A-II-100, which is designated as "General Agricultural District." The AG designation allows for uses, buildings, and structures accessory and customarily incidental to the additional agricultural uses and not involving a commercial enterprise on the premises.[12] The additional approximate 2.35 acres of land adjacent to the existing WWTP site proposed for infrastructure improvements include a stand of trees along the eastern boundary of the WWTP, undeveloped land, and active agricultural activities. Approximately 1.25 acres would be considered active agricultural area. The active agricultural operation east of the WWTP consist of approximately 51.5 acres. Implementation of the proposed Project would potentially affect approximately 1.25 acres agricultural operations within the 51.5 acre area, or approximately 2.4 percent. The conversion of the 1.25 acres of agricultural land to support the development of the proposed Project is located at the western most end of the existing agricultural operation adjacent to the WWTP, is a small portion of the over 300 acre parcel and is currently owned by the City. Implementation of the proposed Project would not substantially affect the remaining agricultural operations east of the WWTP. Although the loss of the

11 California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, "California Important Farmland Finder," Accessed February 2021.

12 County of Santa Barbara, Planning and Development, "Santa Barbara County Zoning Ordinance No. 661," Section 27.1, https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/vcpi9sy7qrgo2q6cabeewc2hbhzbf4ja. Accessed February 2021.

agricultural land would result in an adverse effect, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning as the proposed uses would be consistent with the WWTP and prior permits. Impacts would be less than significant.

Construction of the recycled water pipeline within the agricultural area to the east would temporarily disturb agricultural operations. However, the pipeline would be placed underground, would not change the designation of the land, and would not interfere or permanently affect operations of the agricultural field. As such, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning and impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed Project site where the existing WWTP facility is located is not subject to a Williamson Act contract; however, the 2.35 acres adjacent to WWTP which was recently purchased by the City and the area east of the WWTP where the proposed pipeline would be located is under Williamson Act Contract for Santa Barbara County.[13] As previously discussed, the development of the proposed infrastructure improvements within the 2.35 acres of land adjacent to the existing WWTP would not adversely affect the agreement which provides for taxation according to agricultural land rather than market value of the land. Additionally, the recycled water pipeline would temporarily affect agricultural operations during construction. Upon completion of construction, the recycled water pipeline would be located below ground and would not impact future agricultural operations. Impacts to this resource would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact.

The existing WWTP location is zoned as AG-II-100, which aims to preserve land for long-term agricultural use.[14] The land uses surrounding the Project site include open space and agricultural uses. The Project site and surrounding area is not zoned for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Approximately 15 pepper trees and three (3) coast live oak trees would be removed to

13 Conservation Biology Institute, Agricultural Preserve (Williamson Act) for Santa Barbara County, https://databasin.org/maps/new/#datasets=293bb2006edc4c8986d6b564d4502527. Accessed February 2021.

14 County of Santa Barbara, Planning and Development, https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=fa3545a29dac49aeacc81669b956e3e5&extent=-120.9142,34.093,-118.9408,35.4355. Accessed December 2022.

accommodate the improved access road. All removed trees would be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio with native drought-tolerant trees and watered with a temporary drip irrigation system until established. As the proposed Project would not be located on land zoned for forestland or timberland, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to nonforest use?

No Impact.

As previously discussed, the existing WWTP and associated recycled water pipeline would not be located within a forest area. The construction of the recycled water pipeline on designated agricultural land would not convert any land to nonforest use. The proposed WWTP upgrades would not result in the loss of forestland or in the conversion of forestland to nonforest use. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to nonforest use?

Less than Significant Impact.

As previously noted, the WWTP is not designated as farmland or forest land and does not involve farming or forestry operations and while the recycled water pipeline area is designated as farmland, construction or operation of the Project would not temporarily or permanently interfere with farming or grazing activities. Furthermore, the WWTP has been in operation on the site since 1981. These uses on the site would essentially remain the same and would therefore not affect the surrounding agricultural lands and would not result in any conversions of farmland. Therefore, impacts to the surrounding lands would be considered less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.3 AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD) is the local agency that provides air quality guidance with jurisdiction over the entire County of Santa Barbara (County). The most recent adopted comprehensive plan applicable to the proposed Project is the 2019 Ozone Plan.[15] Regional growth projections are used by SBCAPCD to forecast future emission levels in the air basin. Typically, only large, regionally significant projects have the potential to affect the regional growth projections.

The SBCACPD relies on population projections to create an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). As noted in **Section 5.14: Population and Housing**, the proposed Project would not increase population either directly or indirectly. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the population projections identified within the SBCACPD Air Quality Management Plan.

Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

15 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, 2019 Ozone Plan, https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-12-19-Final-Plan.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction Emissions

The proposed Project site located in the SBCAPCD, which is designated as nonattainment for ozone and PM10 under the California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS).[16]

SBCAPCD Rule 202.D.16 states that if the combined emissions from all construction equipment used to construct a stationary source that requires an Authority to Construct permit have the potential to exceed 25 tons of any pollutant, except carbon monoxide (CO) in a 12-month period, the owner of the stationary source shall provide offsets under the provisions of SBCAPCD Rule 804 (Emission Offsets) and shall demonstrate that no ambient air quality standards will be violated.[17]

The California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) was used to model proposed Project emissions. The maximum daily emissions during proposed Project construction are presented in **Table 5.3-1: Maximum Construction Daily Emissions (tons/year)**. The analysis assumes that all construction equipment activity, including but not limited to, a backhoe, grader, and a truck, would occur continuously over each day. In reality, this would not occur because most equipment would operate only a fraction of each workday, and many of the activities would not overlap on a daily basis; therefore, **Table 5.3-1** represents a conservative scenario for construction activities. As identified in **Table 5.3-1**, construction of the proposed Project would not exceed the SBCAPCD maximum construction emissions thresholds for criteria pollutants.

Other applicable SBCAPCD rules to reduce the generation of air emissions applicable to the proposed Project include Rule 345[18] to control fugitive dust from construction activities and California Air Resources Board (CARB) Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles (Title 13 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 9, Section 2449 and 2485) to reduce diesel particulate and nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions. Specifically, the SBCAPCD rules require use of watering to minimize fugitive dust, reduce vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour, cover soil stockpiled for more than 2 days, minimize dust generation after WWTP infrastructure upgrades and pipeline construction activities, and monitor dust control to prevent dust off site. Furthermore, all portable diesel-powered construction equipment will be registered with the State's

16 California Air Resources Board, Ambient Air Quality Standards, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/aaqs2.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

17 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Rule 202(D)(16), "Exemptions to Rule 201," https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/rule202.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

18 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Rule 345, https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/Rule345.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

portable equipment registration program or will obtain an SBCAPCD permit. CARB requires diesel construction equipment to meet CARB Tier 2 or higher emission standards to the maximum extent feasible, limit idling time to five minutes during loading/unloading operations, and replace diesel powered equipment with electric equipment whenever feasible. These rules and regulations have been incorporated by reference to further reduce emissions already identified below the SBCAPCD thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 5.3-1
Maximum Construction Emissions (tons/year)

	ROG	NOx	CO*	SOx	PM10	PM2.5
Maximum Year	<1	2	2	<1	<1	<1
SBCAPCD Threshold	25	25	—	25	25	25
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**—**	**No**	**No**	**No**

*Source: Air Emissions Model Results are presented in **Appendix B**.*
Notes: Abbreviations: CO = carbon monoxide; NOx,= nitrogen oxides; PM10 = particulate matter less than 10 microns; PM2.5 = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; ROG = reactive organic gases; SOx = sulfur oxides.
** The SBCAPCD does not have a threshold for CO.*

Operational Emissions

Operational emissions would be generated by both stationary and mobile sources as a result of normal day-to-day activities at the proposed Project site after construction. Mobile emissions would be generated by motor vehicles traveling to and from the proposed Project site for routine maintenance activities. The analysis of daily operational emissions has been prepared using the data, methodologies, and current motor vehicle emission factors in the CalEEMod model. A total of 1 vehicle trip per day was assumed to be generated during operation of the proposed Project. **Table 5.3-2: Maximum Operational Emissions (pounds/day)**, provides the maximum daily operational emissions. As indicated in **Table 5.3-2**, the proposed Project would not exceed the SBCAPCD operational thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Table 5.3-2
Maximum Operational Emissions (pounds/day)

Source	ROG	NOx	CO*	SOx	PM10	PM2.5
Maximum	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
SBCAPCD Threshold	240	240	—	—	80	—
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	—	—	No	—
SBCAPCD Mobile Threshold	25	25	—	—	—	—
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**	**No**	—	—	—	—

*Source: Air Emissions Model Results are presented in **Appendix B**.*
Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NOx,= nitrogen oxides; PM10 = particulate matter less than 10 microns; PM2.5 = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; ROG = reactive organic gases; SOx = sulfur oxides.
** The SBCAPCD does not have a threshold for CO.*

c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact.

The SBCAPCD is in nonattainment for ozone and PM10. Projects that do not exceed the project-level threshold would not contribute to cumulatively significant air quality impacts. As shown in **Table 5.3-1**, all emissions associated with the proposed Project would not exceed the SBCAPCD-recommended thresholds and would, therefore, not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. As indicated in **Table 5.3-2**, none of the criteria air pollutants exceed the SBCAPCD operational thresholds. SBCAPCD Rule 202.D.7 states that a permit is not required for any new stationary source if the uncontrolled actual emissions of each individual-effected pollutant from the entire stationary source are below 1.00 ton per calendar year.[19] Additionally, a new 800 kW emergency generator would be required to replace the existing emergency generator. The City would be required to obtain a new permit in accordance with SBCAPCD Rule 202.[20] The proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in ozone or PM10. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

19 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Rule 202(D)(16), "Exemptions to Rule 201," https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/rule202.pdf. Accessed December 2022.
20 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Rule 202(D)(16), "Exemptions to Rule 201," https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/rule202.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than Significant Impact.

Sensitive receptors are defined as schools, residential homes, hospitals, resident care facilities, daycare centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality.

The closest sensitive receptor is approximately 850 feet to the west of the proposed Project site. The WWTP upgrades would not emit substantial amounts of any criteria pollutants, as indicated in **Tables 5.3-1** and **Table 5.3-2**.

A new sludge building would be constructed, as shown in **Figure 2.0-6**. The existing belt press canopy structure would be demolished. The abandoned aeration basins (adjacent to the existing Admin/Lab building) may be demolished or renovated and used as sludge holding basins. If repurposed, new basin covers would be installed to provide for odor control.

Additionally, the updates to the WWTP would ensure newer, industry-standard equipment that would further reduce any odors that would be emitted from the WWTP. Odors would be less than those under existing conditions. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, 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 California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Have a substantial adverse effect, 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 California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

Special-status species include those listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act, species otherwise given certain designations by the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and plant species listed as rare by the California Native Plant Society.

A biological assessment of the Project site and a 100–200-foot buffer[21] (collectively referred to as the "Study Area" or "SA") was conducted by PAX Environmental Inc., (included as **Appendix C: Biological Assessment**) to determine the presence or absence of any sensitive biological resources. Special-status species include those listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act, species otherwise given certain designations by the CDFW, and plant species listed as rare by the California Native Plant Society. The majority of the Project site is located on relatively flat terrain upland of the south bank of the Santa Ynez River. Two existing percolation ponds (one is typically always dry), are located on a lower terrace approximately 350 feet southeast of the Santa Ynez River main channel. The vegetation community surrounding the percolations ponds are best described as a California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica)*- California Buckwheat Scrub (*Eriognum fasciculatum*). Coast Live Oak Woodland (*Quercus agrifolia*) borders an ephemeral drainage that runs southwest to northeast into the Santa Ynez River. The woodland also borders the transition between the lower terrace where the percolation ponds are located and the upland habitat where the rest of the facility lies. Additional vegetation communities include annual grassland dominated by nonnative species, an agricultural field of Common Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), landscaped tree stands, and developed or disturbed land on the existing facility.

The portion of the Project site that includes the proposed recycled water pipeline (to the east within the agricultural field) contains flat terrain that changes where the pipeline would cross the access road to the existing WWTP, and eastward on the existing dirt road. The agricultural-common wheat field accounts for the vegetation community within the potential disturbance footprint of the recycled water pipeline. The remainder of the proposed Project is within Annual Brome Grassland (*Bromus* [*diandrus*, *hordeaceus*] - *Brachypodium distachyon* Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance, Sawyer et al. 2009) and Coyote Brush Scrub (*Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance).

The initial survey for the Project site was during the appropriate bloom period for the majority of special-status plant species in the region, and no rare plants were determined to have suitable habitat within the existing facility.

21 The size of the buffer was dependent on private lands accessibility. The biological assessment did not include portions of the main stem Santa Ynez River because no improvements are proposed to the existing Solvang WWTP facilities within 200 feet of the river.

Special Status Plants

Within the SA, approximately seventy (70) plant species were identified, 36 (approximately 51 percent) of which were nonnative. No California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) records for rare plants were identified within the 9 quadrangle search that includes the City and the surrounding areas (See **Appendix C.1**) and no special-status plant species were observed during the survey. No special-status plants species were determined to have a potential to occur within the Project site and additional land based on the quality of habitat and types observed.

Additionally, approximately fifty (50) plant species were identified within the area for the proposed recycled water pipeline, 20 (approximately 40 percent) of which were nonnative. One special-status plant species was determined to have a likely potential to occur, the late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus fimbriatus*). Detailed discussion of this special status plant is provided below. No CNDDB records of rare plants were identified within the 9 quadrangles that were searched (See **Appendix C.1**).

The initial survey for the Project site was during the appropriate bloom period for the majority of special-status plant species in the region, and no rare plants were determined to have suitable habitat within the existing facility.

Late-Flowered Mariposa Lily

The late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus fimbriatus*) has a California Rare Plant Ran of 1B.3. This rank categorizes the plant as rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere, but is considered not very threatened. They can be found in dry, open coastal woodland, chaparral habitats at elevations less than 3,000 feet. The bloom period for this species is July through August. The seed casings of this genus are very distinct. During the biological survey,[22] numerous lily seed casings were observed in the Annual Grassland along the Coast Live Oak Woodland in the eastern portion of the SA. The casings were empty; the seeds had dropped and could not identify the lily to the species level. A large number were found on a north facing slope just south of the existing and maintained dirt road, and numerous individuals were observed along this dirt road where Alignment 1 approaches Alisal Road. Accordingly, construction related impacts associated with the recycled water pipeline would have a potential impact on late-flowered mariposa lily. **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-1** would require a focused botanical survey to be conducted in late summer and identification of the plant prior to construction to avoid impacts to the species. With implementation of **MM BIO-1**, potential impacts on the late-flowered mariposa lily would be reduced to less than significant.

22 The biological survey was performed in November 2019 and updated in April 2021.

Special Status Wildlife

Active small mammal burrows were observed within the grassland habitat and disturbed areas of the SA. Suitable nesting bird habitat exists throughout the SA. Three special-status species were observed in the SA including a soaring golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos;* CDFW Fully Protected (FP) and Watch List (WL)), yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*; CDRW Species of Species Concern (SSC) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC), and oak titmouse (BCC). Additionally, a pair of red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) were observed within the woodland. This species is listed as a USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) when nesting. Detailed discussion of each special-status species either observed during the survey or determined to have a likely potential to occur within the SA are listed below.

Golden Eagle

Golden Eagle is a CDFW FP and WL. Golden eagles are found breeding in California typically on cliffs or in trees, and rarely on the ground. The nesting habitat is typically open and semi open habitats, such as grasslands, woodland-shrublands, farmlands, and riparian habitats. In central California, this species is observed primarily in open grasslands and oak savannahs.[23] Foraging habitat is essentially the same as nesting habitat with small to medium sized mammals for food supply. CNDDB records exist (See **Appendix C.2**) as well as multiple eBird records (See **Appendix C.2**) for observation of this species along Alisal Creek just east of the Project in recent years. One juvenile golden eagle was observed soaring over the farmland and tracked south over the mountain ridge away from the Project. This species is likely to be foraging within the SA. The agricultural field is abundant with California ground squirrels, which are likely a main source of prey for golden eagles in the area. Rabbits in the nearby grassland and woodland areas may also provide a food source. A feather was observed on the ground at the edge of the Coast Live Oak Woodland and annual grassland. Where the feather was found, the eagle was likely using the oak tree for perching and additional feathers were observed on the largest/lowest branch of the tree. Due to the observance of this species, the proposed Project would have the potential to indirectly effect during construction activities. No direct impacts to this species are expected, however, **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-2** would require a preconstruction survey that would ensure avoidance of any impacts to the Golden Eagle. Additionally, **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-3** would require that all construction workers on-site be trained to identify special status specifies to further help avoid any impacts during construction. With implementation of **MM BIO-2** and **MM BIO-3**, potential impacts on Golden Eagles would be reduced to less than significant.

23 See Appendix C.

Yellow Warbler

Yellow warbler is a CDFW SSC. Yellow warblers are found nesting in most commonly wet thickets, dominated by willows, in disturbed and early successional habitats. Spring and fall migration are typically in the same habitats they use for nesting, along riparian woodlands, forest edge, and shrub habitats (**Appendix C**). CNDDB records exist for the species within the 9 quadrangles search (See **Appendix C.1**). Multiple eBird records also exist for observation of the species at multiple locations in the City.(See **Appendix C.1**). The survey found that this species was observed foraging near the percolation pond for food, then carried the food into the Coast Live Oak Woodland near the drainage. It is expected yellow warblers would likely be foraging within the riparian corridor along the Santa Ynez River, north of the proposed recycled water pipeline. Only one individual was observed and could not be confirmed nesting within the SA. It is not expected that this species would be nesting within the SA, since the habitat is more suitable to the north within the Santa Ynez River corridor. Due to the presence of the individual, construction related activities would have the potential to indirectly effect any known or unknown yellow warblers. **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-4** would require a preconstruction survey that would ensure avoidance of any impacts to the Yellow Warbler. Additionally, **MM BIO-3** would require that all construction workers on-site be trained to identify special status specifies to further help avoid any impacts during construction. With implementation of **MM BIO-3** and **MM BIO-4**, potential impacts on yellow warbler would be reduced to less than significant.

Oak Titmouse

Oak titmouse is a USFWS BCC. Oak titmouse is found typically in open oak woodland or shrubland vegetation communities where they forage on invertebrates or seeds, and nest in cavities in the trees. No CNDDB records exist within the 9-quadrangle search (See **Appendix C.1**). eBird records exist for observation of this species in three areas across the City (See **Appendix C.2**). The survey found that multiple individuals were observed within the SA foraging and calling in the Coast Live Oak Woodlands. Oak titmouse was also observed at several locations along the drainage within the Coast Live Oak Woodlands and there is a high likelihood of active nesting. Numerous areas were observed at several locations and cavities for potential nesting sites were observed in many of the trees throughout the woodland. **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-5** would require preconstruction survey that would ensure avoidance of any impacts to the Oak Titmouse. Additionally, **MM BIO-3** would require that all construction workers on-site be trained to identify special status specifies to further help avoid any impacts during construction. With implementation of **MM BIO-3** and **MM BIO-5**, potential impacts on Oak Titmouse would be reduced to less than significant.

Northern Harrier

Northern Harrier has a status of CDFW SSC. This species is found nesting and foraging in a variety of grassland habitats including salt and freshwater marsh, riparian scrub, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and more. They typically nest on the ground in shrubby vegetation or in grass. No CNDDB records No CNDDB records exist within the 9-quadrangle search or eBird records exist for sightings of the species in the studied areas. The breeding range for this species is typically throughout coastal California and in the Sierra Mountain range. Solvang is inland of its currently known breeding range and is identified by Cornell Lab of Ornithology as nonbreeding territory. A female was observed soaring through the grassland in the SA west of Alisal Road. No suitable breeding habitat is located within the Project site, and as such, any direct impacts to Northern Harrier during construction related activities would be less than significant. Construction related activities would have the potential to indirect effect the Northern Harrier. Accordingly, implementation of **MM BIO-2** and **MM BIO-3** would reduce potential impacts to Northern Harrier to less than significant.

California Red-Legged Frog

California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) is a Federally Threatened (FT) and CDFW SSC. California red-legged frogs occupy habitat with specific water and upland components. Preferred breeding habitat includes deep ponds and slow-moving streams where emergent vegetation is found on the bank edges. Although primarily aquatic, this species has been recorded in damp terrestrial places and using small mammal burrows and moist leaf litter as refugia during dry periods. CNDDB records exist that show the species has been seen in areas surrounding the Project site (See **Appendix C.1**). Suitable breeding habitat potentially exists in the western most percolation pond that is undisturbed. No frogs were observed during the survey; however, tadpoles were seen in the shallow banks of the pond. Due to the suitable breeding habitat around the Project site, construction related activities would have the potential to effect California Red-Legged Frog. Accordingly, implementation of **MM BIO-4** would require surveys for the California Red-Legged Frog prior to construction, to ensure that potential direct impacts on California Red-Legged Frog would remain less than significant. Additionally, **MM BIO-3** would require that all construction workers on-site be trained to identify special status specifies to further help avoid any impacts during construction. Accordingly, implementation of **MM BIO-3** and **MM BIO-4** would reduce potential impacts to California Red-Legged Frog to less than significant.

Special Status Herpetofauna

Although not observed on the Project site during the survey, there is a strong potential for some special status herpetofauna to occur on the site, such as the western pond turtle and the two-striped garter snake. CNDDB records exist for both of these species across the 9 quadrangles. **MM BIO-5** would require

that a survey for special status herpetofauna be conducted prior to construction, in order to ensure that impacts would remain less than significant. Additionally, implementation of **MM BIO-3** would require that all construction workers on-site be trained to identify special status specifies to further help avoid any impacts during construction. Accordingly, implementation of **MM BIO-3** and **MM BIO-5** would reduce potential impacts to herpetofauna to less than significant.

Indirect Effects

Construction noise and vibration may disturb bird breeding activities, potentially resulting in nest abandonment or reduced productivity. Noise can raise the level of stress hormones, interfering with sleep and other activities. Chronic vehicle noise can also affect birds by masking calls, affecting behaviors such as mate attraction and territory defense. Mammals may generally avoid noisy areas due to increased stress and associated human activities. Vibration may also directly disturb terrestrial species that occupy burrows, dens, and depressions, including reptiles and some amphibians, or cause collapse of burrow systems and dens of fossorial (burrowing) species in areas with highly friable soils.

Noise has the potential to disrupt wildlife during the breeding season, which can result in nest abandonment. As discussed in **Section 5.13: Noise**, daytime Project construction activities could produce maximum noise levels of 82 A-weighted decibels (dBA) to 87 dBA at up to 25 feet from the noise source. With regulatory compliance which requires optimal muffler systems for all equipment, the construction noise levels would be reduced by approximately 10 dBA.[24] The upper end of this range would be associated with short-term, intermittent activity, with multiple pieces of equipment operating at the same time. Existing ambient noise levels within the WWTP site during the daytime are from 44.9 to 62.1 dBA.

Construction noise levels would drop off 72 to 77 dBA with regulatory compliance measures at 25 feet from the noise source. Construction noise levels would drop off 66 to 71 dBA at a distance of 50 feet and 60 to 65 dBA at 200 feet from the construction noise source, which would be comparable to the upper-range noise levels that currently occur on the Project area.

Operational noise impacts from WWTP operations would be attenuated by appurtenances such as sound baffles along the roof line or would be enclosed within new buildings. Additionally, newer equipment would run more efficiently which would also reduce noise levels during treatment operations.

Given the short range of increased noise from the Project site and the ambient noise levels up to 62 dBA, there is the opportunity for wildlife to move into adjacent open space areas to the north and south during

24 FHWA, Special Report—Measurement, Prediction, and Mitigation, updated June 2017, https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/Environment/noise/construction_noise/special_report/hcn04.cfm. Accessed December 2022.

construction activities. As such, noise impacts on wildlife species, including special-status species, located within the Project area would be less than significant.

Construction activities would potentially disturb birds nesting in trees within the Project area. Implementation of **MM BIO-2** would require surveys to be conducted for nesting birds if construction activities take place during the breeding season. If nesting birds occur within the disturbance area, a suitable buffer would be implemented based on the particular location of the nest (typically 300 feet for most birds and 500 feet for raptors), and the nest would be monitored by a biologist to ensure activities do not result in nest failure. In general, buffers should be located so that construction activities would result in noise less than 60 dB at the nest for songbirds (within 300 feet of construction). Noise at raptor nests should be less because the nest locations are typically elevated above the direct noise sources. With implementation of **MM BIO-2**, construction noise would not result in significant impacts to nesting birds.

As discussed in **Section 2.0: Project Description**, the proposed Project would restore lost wastewater treatment capacity by approximately 0.6 million gallons per day (mgd) that would result in higher quality wastewater effluent that would be discharged into the polishing/evaporation ponds adjacent to the Santa Ynez River. The increase in wastewater effluent, as well as the quality of the effluent, would contribute additional flow to the Santa Ynez River downstream of the Project site. The increased discharge that would ultimately enter the Santa Ynez River would meet pre-2017 discharge flows. The additional flow would not result in adverse effects to downstream habitat and of the species dependent on that habitat. Accordingly, indirect impacts on sensitive habitat and wildlife species within the Santa Ynez River would be less than significant.

Summary

In summary, several special status species or habitat for special status species, were located on-site that may be impacted from Project implementation. However, impacts to each of these species would be mitigated by implementation of **Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-5.**

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measures have been identified to reduce impacts to biological resources to a less than significant level.

Late-Flowered Mariposa Lily

MM BIO-1: Prior to any construction related activities associated with the recycled water pipeline component, a focused botanical survey of the eastern most portion of the recycled water pipeline alignment west of Alisal Road approximately 800 feet to the existing access road (a minimum of one survey and up to three surveys) shall be completed in late summer (July-August) by a qualified botanist to clearly determine and to mark off the exact

locations and umbers of plants on site in the recycled water pipeline development footprint, as well as those to be preserved. If focused surveys determine that no special status plant species are present in the development impact area, then no future measures are necessary.

If the plant is observed to be the late-flowered mariposa lily, or any other species of rare lily, all project activities within that vicinity shall avoid the species and remain within the existing dirt road which traverses the hillside west of Alisal Road. In the event that late-flowered mariposa lily cannot be avoided during construction, all bulbs and seeds of populations within the grading area shall be salvaged, translocated, and planted in undisturbed areas.

Bulb Translocation: Each impacted Calochortus bulb shall be clearly delineated with pin flags for collection by a qualified bulb collector. Bulbs shall be collected after the flowering period when the plants are dormant. If necessary, the bulbs could be lifted when the shoots are just breaking the soil surface; however, care should be taken not to damage the bulb itself, as well as the root mass. Any lifted bulbs with shoots would require immediate planting since they are actively growing (since they are not dormant). Where high lily concentrations exist on site, the first ten inches of topsoil shall be moved in large blocks to the selected revegetation site. The salvaged bulbs or bulb-containing topsoil shall be translocated to an appropriate site(s) within the preserved portions of the Project site.

Seed Collection and Propagation: A seasonal survey shall be conducted in suitable habitat after the flowering season to collect seeds. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified botanist familiar with the flora of the Santa Ynez Valley. Seeds shall be collected when ripe, cleaned, stored by a qualified nursery or institution with appropriate storage facilities, and transferred to a native plant nursery experienced with propagating Calochortus species and grown out to 1-gallon container size. The best time to sow seed is in the fall in conjunction with the onset of rain. These plants shall be planted in suitable preserved habitat on site at a ratio of 10 plants for every 1 plant impacted by the project. The propagated plants shall be maintained and monitored for a period of five (5) years after initial planting, with annual reports submitted to the City. A site analysis plan must be conducted to determine potential planting areas and to identify the most appropriate mitigation site(s) acceptable to the City, which should be conducted prior to bulb collection. A detailed mitigation plan shall be prepared and submitted to the appropriate

agency(ies) for review prior to implementation. The plan must be prepared by a qualified botanist as determined by the City.

Prepare Detailed Mitigation Plan. Following seed and bulb collection, the Calochortus shall be relocated into a suitable mitigation site in the undeveloped portion of the Project site, or in an adjacent undeveloped acreage that shall be preserved in perpetuity. A qualified botanist shall be selected by the City to prepare and implement a detailed mitigation plan, which shall include the following requirements:

- Following collection, seeds and bulbs shall be stored by a qualified nursery, or by an institution with appropriate storage facilities. Then, the upper 12 inches of topsoil from the Calochortus locations shall be scraped, stockpiled, and re-spread at the selected mitigation site(s).
  - The mitigation site(s) shall be located in dedicated open space on the Project site, or at an appropriate off-site location acceptable to the City. The site shall be selected based on the species habitat requirements and to promote growth of the individual plantings and the population as a whole.
- The mitigation site(s) shall be prepared for seeding and bulb planting as described in a detailed restoration plan.
  - The topsoil shall be re-spread in the selected location as approved by the project biologist. Approximately sixty percent of the seeds and bulbs shall be planted in the site during the fall, following soil preparation. Forty percent of the seeds and bulbs shall be kept in storage by a qualified nursery for subsequent seeding, if necessary.
- A detailed maintenance and monitoring plan for the mitigation site shall be developed by a qualified botanist prior to grading activities. The plan shall include descriptions of maintenance activities appropriate for the site, monitoring requirements, and annual reporting requirements. The project botanist shall have the full authority to suspend any operation on the Project site that is directly impacting Calochortus plants outside the approved development footprint, and to suspend any activity related to the Calochortus plants that is not consistent with the restoration plan. Any dispute regarding the consistency of an action with the restoration plan shall be resolved by the City.
  - The performance criteria developed in the maintenance and monitoring plan shall include requirements for a minimum of 60 percent germination of the amount of plant material collected and transferred to the mitigation site. This assumes that there will be a 40percent mortality of the bulbs and seed plantings. The performance criteria should also include percent cover created by the established plants, density, and seed production requirements, and shall be

developed by the project botanist following habitat analysis of an existing high-quality lily habitat. Performance monitoring shall be conducted by a qualified botanist.

- If the seed germination and bulb sprouting goal of 60 percent is not achieved following the first season, remediation measures shall be implemented prior to planting with the remaining 40 percent of collected seeds and bulbs. Remedial measures shall include at a minimum: soil testing and amendments, control of invasive species, and physical disturbance of the planted areas by raking (or similar actions) to provide scarification of the seed.
  - Potential seed sources from donor sites shall also be identified in case it becomes necessary to collect additional seeds for use on the site, following performance of remedial measures.
- The site shall be maintained for five years to ensure that the Calochortus populations are self-sustaining.

Nesting Birds

MM BIO-2: Preconstruction Surveys for Nesting Raptors and Birds. Removal of vegetation within suitable nesting bird habitats will be scheduled to avoid the nesting season and occur between September and January. For activities that cannot avoid the nesting season (February 15 to August 31), not more than one week prior to initiation of construction activities (e.g., mobilization and staging), a qualified biologist shall conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting raptors and other native nesting birds. The survey for the presence of nesting raptors shall cover all areas within the disturbance footprint plus a 500-foot buffer where access can be secured. If active nests (nests with eggs or chicks) are located, the qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate avoidance buffer depending on the species and sensitivity of the nesting birds. All buffers shall be marked using high-visibility flagging, fencing, and/or signage. No construction activities shall be allowed within the buffers until the young have fledged from the nest or the nest fails, unless approved by the qualified biologist. The qualified biologist shall confirm that breeding/nesting is completed and young have fledged the nest prior to removal of the buffer. Encroachment into the buffer shall be conducted at the discretion of the qualified biologist. Monitoring reports summarizing nest avoidance measures are recommended while nest buffers are in place, or while activities are occurring within the specified buffer of an inactive nest of a fully protected species for documentation.

Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP)

MM BIO-3: Prior to initiation of construction activities (including staging and mobilization), all personnel associated with Project construction shall attend a WEAP training, conducted by a qualified biologist, to aid workers in recognizing special-status resources that may occur in the Project area. The specifics of this program shall include identification of the sensitive species and habitats, a description of the regulatory status and general ecological characteristics of sensitive resources, and review of the limits of construction and mitigation measures required to reduce impacts to biological resources within the work area. A fact sheet conveying this information shall also be prepared for distribution to all contractors, their employers, and other personnel involved with construction of the Project. All employees shall sign a form documenting that they have attended the WEAP and understand the information presented to them. The form shall be submitted to the City Department of Public Works to document compliance prior to initiation of construction.

California-Red Legged Frog

MM BIO-4: Prior to initiation of ground disturbance, a focused survey for California red-legged frog shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine their presence/absence in the percolation ponds within the SA. Up to 6 surveys shall be conducted over a minimum of 6 weeks during the breeding season, consisting of 4 night and 2 day surveys. Based on the Project location, it is recommended to begin surveys February 25th to April 30th. If California red-legged frogs are determined to be present, the surveys will discontinue immediately, and the USFWS will be notified and consulted for how to proceed and avoid impacts.

Herpetofauna

MM BIO-5: Pre- Construction Survey for Special- Status Herpetofauna. Within 30 days prior to initiation of ground disturbance, a focused survey for special-status herpetofauna that were determined to have a potential to occur within the Project site, including western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*) and two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), shall be performed by a qualified biologist. A survey report summarizing results of the survey shall be submitted to the City within one week of completing the survey. A qualified biologist shall monitor initial vegetation clearing and ground disturbance to salvage and relocate individuals if any special-status species are observed during the preconstruction survey. Any sightings of special-status species shall be documented and reported to the City and required entities such as the CDFW.

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of **Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-5**.

b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

Riparian habitats line the banks of rivers, streams, creeks, and ponds and consist of a variety of vegetation types.[25] These habitats preserve water quality by filtering sediment and some pollutants from runoff before it enters the water body, protect stream banks from erosion, provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife, and preserve open space and aesthetic values.

Elevation within the SA ranges from 355 feet to 512 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Soils within the SA are a defined on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) soils map as Corducci-Typic Xerfluvents, Ballard fine sandy loam, Sorrento loam, Linne clay loam, and Los Osos-San Benito clay loams. There is an ephemeral drainage that flows from west to east through the middle of the percolation ponds on the western border of the existing WWTP facility and into the Santa Ynez River. This drainage is a blue-line stream according to United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic mapping and is a potentially jurisdictional drainage. The USFWS National Wetland Inventory (NWI) defines the drainage as an intermittent riverine streambed that is seasonally flooded. The NWI also describes the percolations ponds as excavated wetland basins with unconsolidated bottom and/or shore that are temporary flooded or semi-permanently flooded.

There are also ephemeral drainages that flow from south to north into the Santa Ynez River. These drainages were observed outside of the SA to the north, within the oak woodland, and are not represented as blue-line streams according to USGS topographic mapping. The USFWS NWI also does not recognize these drainages in their existing mapping, indicating they may potentially be more of an erosional feature.

The disturbance footprint of the proposed Project would occur outside of the known potential jurisdictional water features, ephemeral drainages, or any associated riparian habitat. Accordingly, the

25 County of Santa Barbara, Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan (2009), https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/eey2anomja8jxirj5ajhfagre3fv1ksn. Accessed December 2022.

proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts on potential jurisdictional water features, ephemeral drainages, or any associated riparian habitat during construction related activities.

As discussed above, the vegetation communities within the SA are California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica)*- California Buckwheat Scrub (*Eriognum fasciculatum*), Coast Live Oak Woodland (*Quercus agrifolia*), annual grassland dominated by nonnative species, an agricultural field of Common Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), landscaped tree stands, and developed or disturbed land on the existing facility.

For the portion of the Project site that includes the proposed recycled water pipeline (to the east within the agricultural field), the agricultural common wheat field accounts for the majority of the vegetation designated as Annual Brome Grassland (*Bromus* [*diandrus*, *hordeaceus*] - *Brachypodium distachyon* Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance) and Coyote Brush Scrub (*Baccharis pilularis* Shrubland Alliance).

Proposed project construction related activities would potentially disturb approximately 0.1 acres of the landscaped tree stand in the eastern portion of the Project site. Proposed project construction related activities would potentially disturb approximately 0.15 acres of the Coast Live Oak Woodland in the northeast corner of the Project site. Potential impacts to the Landscaped Tree Sand and Coast Live Oak Woodland would be mitigated with implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-6** which would ensure that impacts to any trees would be minimized, and in the event that trees would need to be removed, would be replaced.

Additionally, the proposed Project would not significantly alter operations at the WWTP in a way that would cause runoff to occur off site.

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measure has been identified to reduce impacts to biological resources to a less than significant level.

Tree Protection and Replacement Plan

MM BIO-6: To minimize impacts to native trees and offset removals, a tree protection and replacement plan shall be prepared prior to initiation of construction and implemented throughout construction consistent with the requirements identified in the Santa Barbara County Tree Preservation Ordinance. At a minimum, the tree protection and replacement plan shall include the following elements:

1. The location and extent of driplines for all protected and native trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh), within 25 feet of grading limits, shall be identified. Construction envelopes shall be designated outside the driplines of all oak trees. All ground disturbances shall be prohibited outside construction envelopes.

- All protected and native trees within proposed ground disturbance areas, if approved by the required entity, shall be removed with a permit and mitigated for on site. Replacement for nonprotected trees shall be 1:1 with success criteria and an adaptive management strategy. For protected trees, re-planting shall be designated by the Santa Barbara County Tree Preservation Ordinance or designated regulation. On site mitigation planting sites shall be recommended by a qualified biologist.

2. During construction, washing of concrete, paint or equipment shall occur only in areas where polluted water and materials can be contained for later removal from the site. Washing shall not be allowed near sensitive biological resources. An area designated for washing functions shall be identified on plans and clearly marked on the Project site during construction.

    - No permanent irrigation shall occur within the dripline of any existing oak tree.

3. No fill soil, rocks, or construction materials shall be stored or placed within the dripline of protected or native trees.

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of **MM BIO-6**.

c. Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less than Significant.

Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act authorizes the State of California to certify that federal permits and licenses do not violate the State's water quality standards.

The National Wetlands Mapper shows that the Santa Ynez River, and a steam running along the western side of the Project site are considered riverine. Additionally, the percolation ponds located on site are considered freshwater ponds classified as nontidal wetlands that have been previously modified.[26] The portions of the Project site that would involve construction do not contain wetland areas. Additionally, standard best management practices as required under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit would require covering of exposed material to minimize potential impacts from runoff. Implementation of the proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on State or

26 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory, https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory/wetlands-mapper. Accessed December 2022.

federally protected wetlands, as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. 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?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

The Proposed WWTP is relatively small in size, and a majority of the site is already developed with WWTP uses.

As discussed in Impact 5.4a, construction activities may have the potential to impact some migratory nesting bird species. Implementation of **MM BIO-2, MM BIO-3,** and **BIO-6** would reduce potential impacts to nesting bird species to less than significant. Furthermore, operation of the proposed Project would restore lost treatment capacity, as well as treat the effluent discharged into the ponds to higher treatment standards. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not substantially interfere 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.

The proposed recycled water pipeline would be approximately 5,000 feet long, located below ground, with portions of the alignment within an existing dirt roadway. Accordingly, construction of this component of the proposed Project would not substantially interfere 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.

Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Implementation of **Mitigation Measures MM BIO-2**, **MM BIO-3**, and **MM BIO-6** would reduce potentially significant impacts.

Impacts would be less than significant with **Mitigation Measures MM BIO-2**, **MM BIO-3**, and **MM BIO-6**.

e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

One coast live oak, nine California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and 35 Peruvian pepper (*Schinus mole*) are located within the Project site. Construction of the proposed Project would have the potential to impact approximately 0.1 acres of the Landscaped Tree Stand vegetation community.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in the potential removal of approximately 15 pepper trees and three (3) coast live oak trees. The City Municipal Code does not contain ordinances protecting trees; however, it states that any species of wildlife, nests, and eggs should not be killed or molested without proper documentation or permit. The County of Santa Barbara Municipal Code contains requirements about the removal of Oak Trees. In accordance with County requirements, the City would be required to secure a permit for any oak tree removal.

Accordingly, potential impacts to protected trees would be mitigated with implementation of **MM BIO-6**. All removed protected trees would be replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio with native drought-tolerant trees and watered with a temporary drip irrigation system, until established. All protected and native trees proposed within ground disturbance areas would be removed in accordance with City and County regulations and mitigated for on site. Replacement for nonprotected trees would be replaced at 1:1.

Compliance with Santa Barbara Municipal Code would result in less than significant impacts on protected oak trees.

Mitigation Measures: Implementation of **MM BIO-6** would reduce potentially significant impacts.

Impacts would be less than significant with **MM BIO-6**.

f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?

No Impact.

There are no habitat conservation plans[27] or natural community conservation plans[28] near the Project area. As a result, implementation of the proposed Project would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community's conservation plan (NCCP). No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

27 United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Conservation Online System, Habitat Conservation Plans, https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/conservation-plans-region-summary?region=8&type=HCP. Accessed December 2022.

28 California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP), California Regional Conservation Plans Map, https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=68626&inline. Accessed December 2022.

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

PaleoWest Archaeology was retained to perform a cultural resources assessment of the proposed Project (see **Appendix D: Cultural Resources Report**).

A "historical resource" under CEQA, as defined by California Public Resources Code (PRC) Part 5020.1(j) is any object, building, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that is historically or archaeologically significant, or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California. CEQA further define a "historical resource" as any resource listed in or determined eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), included in a local register of historical resources, or determined to be historically significant by the Lead Agency. Additionally, a resource would be automatically listed in the CRHR if it is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or formally determined eligible by an agency for listing in the NRHP. Generally, a cultural resource is considered "historically significant" if it meets the requirements for listing on the CRHR under any one of the following criteria:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage (Criterion A)
    a. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past (Criterion B)
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values (Criterion C)
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory (Criterion D)

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) refers to the geographic area within which a project has the potential to—directly or indirectly—cause alterations to historic properties. The APE for the Project was defined to include the existing WWTP facility, the 2.3 acres of land proposed to be added to the facility, the maximum potential disturbance areas that may be used for equipment staging and laydown areas, and the proposed recycled pipeline alignments. No work is proposed beyond the proposed APE. The APE for the Project encompasses approximately 17.3 acres. Ground disturbance is not expected to exceed 25-feet below ground level.

A cultural resource records search and literature review was conducted on June 17, 2019, by the Central Coastal Information Center (CCIC) of the California Historic Resource Information System housed at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Additional sources consulted during the cultural resource literature review and records search included the National Register of Historic Places, the Office of Historic Preservation Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility, and the Office of Historic Preservation Directory of Properties in the Historic Property Data File. The records search indicated that four studies have been conducted that include portions of the Project site. In addition, 31 cultural resources have been previously recorded within one mile of the Project APE. These resources include eleven prehistoric archaeological sites, four historic-period archaeological site, four multicomponent archaeological sites, one historic-period district, and eight prehistoric isolated finds.

The cultural resource records search and pedestrian survey identified one archaeological resource within the Project APE. This prehistoric archaeological site is a potentially significant Chumash ceremonial site and has been identified as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) and is registered with the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as a Sacred/Power area and Worship/Ritual site. While the TCP would be within the Project APE and near work efforts associated with Project, the cultural resources assessment determined it is not believed the Project would have a direct or indirect impact on this resource.[29] There are no additional historic properties, historical resources, or historic landmarks recorded within one mile of the Project APE.

However, because of the close proximity of the proposed work to the TCP, there is potential for encountering this resource and other cultural resources below the disturbance on the ground surface. This possibility increases for proposed work within the agricultural field as only surficial plowing/tilling appears to have been conducted in the past allowing for shallow disturbances. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure MM CUL-1**, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

29 See Appendix D.

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measure would reduce archaeological impacts to less than significant.

MM CUL-1 Prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities associated with upgrade activities at the WWTP, Native American representatives from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (Tribe) shall be notified of the pending activities. A qualified archaeologist shall coordinate with Tribal representatives to be present on-site during all ground disturbing activities. During ground disturbing activities, if there is any evidence of Native American resources (significant or otherwise), the Tribe shall be notified and construction activities modified until the resource has been properly removed, catalogued, and preserved.

In the event that potentially significant cultural or archaeological materials are encountered during Project-related ground-disturbing activities, all work should be halted in the vicinity of the archaeological discovery until a qualified archaeologist can visit the site of discovery and assess the significance of the archaeological resource.

Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of **MM CUL-1.**

b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to section 15064.5?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

The proposed recycled water pipeline would be 16- and 12-inches in diameter that would be installed within a 24-inch-wide trench. The trench depth would be approximately 6 feet below ground surface. Depending on depth of other utility lines that must be crossed, the trench may be as shallow as 3.5 feet deep or as much as 10 feet deep in a few locations.

As mentioned previously, a cultural resources assessment of the proposed Project (see **Appendix D**) was prepared. The records search conducted as part of the cultural resources assessment indicated that four studies have been conducted that include portions of the Project site. A total of 31 cultural resources were previously recorded within 1 mile of the APE. These resources include eleven prehistoric archaeological sites, four historic-period archaeological site, four multicomponent archaeological sites, one historic-period district, and eight prehistoric isolated finds. One archaeological resource, a potentially significant Chumash ceremonial site, was identified within the Project APE.

While the cultural resources assessment determined the Project would not be expected to have a direct or indirect impact on this resource, because of the close proximity of the proposed work to the TCP, there is potential for encountering archaeological resources below the disturbance on the ground surface. This

possibility increases for proposed work within the agricultural field as only surficial plowing/tilling appears to have been conducted in the past allowing for shallow disturbances. With the implementation of **MM CUL-1**, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Implementation of **MM CUL-1** would reduce potential impacts on archeological resources to less than significant**.**

c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project site is located within a potentially sensitive archaeological area. In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code and the Public Resources Code, should human remains be discovered during excavation activities, excavation activities would immediately stop, and the County Coroner would be contacted.[30] The Coroner would have 2 working days to examine human remains after being notified by the responsible person. If the remains were found to be Native American, the Coroner would have 24 hours to notify the NAHC. The NAHC would immediately notify the person it believes to be the most likely descendent of the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent would have 48 hours to make recommendations to the owner, or representative, for the treatment or disposition, with proper dignity, of the human remains and grave goods. Should the descendent not make recommendations within 48 hours, the owner would reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from further disturbance; or should the owner not accept the descendant's recommendations, the owner or the descendent may request mediation by the NAHC. Therefore, potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

30 California Health and Safety Code, sec. 7050.5 and 5097.98.

5.6 ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less than Significant Impact.

Electricity

The availability of electricity depends on adequate general capacity of the grid and sufficient fuel supplies. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) estimates that electricity consumption within the PG&E planning area will be approximately 115,716 GWh per year by 2026 based on the California Energy Demand (CED) 20221 Baseline Forecast.[31] PG&E expects to have adequate electricity supply and transmission capability to meet the needs of its customers well beyond 2026.

The proposed Project is forecasted to consume approximately 0.2 GWh per year of electricity,[32] which is a negligible consumption amount of the 2026 forecasted demand. The proposed Project would include newer and more energy efficient equipment to meet the higher effluent treatment standards. Because the proposed Project would result in a lower percentage of electricity consumption when compared to existing conditions, operation of the proposed Project would not require the expansion of existing facilities or the construction of new electricity-generating or transmission facilities. Further, the proposed Project would include the installation of solar panels which would also generate additional electricity that would be fed back into PG&E's electrical system. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant and

31 California Energy Commission, "California Energy Demand 2021-2035," https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2021-integrated-energy-policy-report/2021-1. Accessed December 2022.

32 See Annual Output in **Appendix B**.

the proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Natural Gas

The 2020 California Gas Report indicates that sufficient capacity exists in the utility network to meet future demand in PG&E's planning area. The total gas supply available in 2026 is estimated to be 2,457 million cubic feet per day; PG&E anticipates it will have sufficient capability to meet future needs.[33]

The proposed Project is forecast to consume approximately 0.5 million cubic feet per day per year of natural gas,[34] which would result in a negligible percent of the 2026 forecasted demand. Given that the Project would result in a negligible consumption of natural gas, PG&E anticipates it will have sufficient capability to meet future needs. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant, and the proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed infrastructure improvements would meet the current (2022) California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), and for this reason, would not conflict or obstruct State or local plans for energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant. Further, the proposed Project would include the installation of solar panels which would also generate additional electricity that would be fed back into PG&E's electrical system.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

33 SoCalGas, 2020 California Gas Report, Table 10,d https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2020-10/2020_California_Gas_Report_Joint_Utility_Biennial_Comprehensive_Filing.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

34 See Annual Output in **Appendix B**.

5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?

No Impact.

Fault rupture is the surface displacement that occurs along the surface of a fault during an earthquake. The California Geological Survey designates faults as active, potentially active, or inactive. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act establishes standards regulating development adjacent to active faults and areas designated as Earthquake Fault Zones.

The proposed Project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Rupture Zone, as delineated by the California Geological Survey.[35] A number of active and potentially active faults affect the Solvang area. The Santa Ynez River Fault, which bisects the City's Plan Area, and the Santa Ynez Fault are both considered potentially active and capable of producing damaging earthquakes.[36] No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact.

As mentioned previously, a number of active and potentially active faults affect the Solvang area. The Santa Ynez River Fault, which bisects the City's Plan Area, and the Santa Ynez Fault are both considered potentially active and capable of producing damaging earthquakes.[37] Because the WWTP location is in a seismically active area, occasional seismic ground shaking is likely to occur within the lifetime of the proposed Project. The State regulates development in California through a variety of tools that reduce hazards from earthquakes and other geologic hazards. The latest Greenbook for Public Works Construction and/or the latest *California Building Code* (CBC) contain provisions to safeguard against major structural failures or loss of life caused by earthquakes or other geologic hazards. The proposed Project would be required to adhere to the provisions of the latest Greenbook and/or CBC. Compliance

35 California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, CGS Information Warehouse: Regulatory Maps, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/. Accessed December 2022.

36 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element" (2016).

37 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element" (2016).

with the requirements of the latest Greenbook and/or CBC for structural safety during a seismic event would reduce hazards from strong seismic ground shaking. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact.

Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand or gravel deposits that lose their load-supporting capability when subjected to intense shaking. According to the City's General Plan, the greatest potential for liquefaction is found along the Santa Ynez River and tributary stream courses. Therefore, the proposed Project site is located within areas of potential liquefaction.[38] The proposed Project would be required to adhere to the latest Greenbook and/or CBC, which contains provisions for soil preparation to minimize hazards from liquefaction and other seismic-related ground failures. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

iv. Landslides?

Less than Significant Impact.

Landslides are the downslope movement of geologic materials. The risks associated with landslides occur when buildings or structures are placed on slopes. The WWTP is on a site that slopes 35 feet from the headworks to the percolation basin discharge, or an average slope of approximately 10 percent, which is just above the Santa Ynez river. However, according to the City's General Plan, the proposed Project is not within or near an area susceptible to landslides.[39] As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Erosion is the movement of rock fragments and soil from one place to another. Precipitation, running water, waves, and wind are all agents of erosion. Significant erosion typically occurs on steep slopes where storm water and high winds can carry topsoil down hillsides.

38 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element" (2016).
39 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element" (2016).

Construction of the proposed Project would result in the removal of soils for excavation activities. Any topsoil removed from the WWTP would be stockpiled on site and replaced after the improvements are implemented, consistent with standard best management practices as required under the NPDES. Compliance with standard regulatory requirements under the NPDES permit would require covering of exposed material to minimize erosion impacts. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Subsidence is the sudden sinking or gradual downward settling of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal movement. Subsidence is caused by a variety of activities, which include but are not limited to withdrawal of groundwater; pumping of oil and gas from underground; the collapse of underground mines; liquefaction; and hydro compaction. Lateral spreading is the horizontal movement or spreading of soil toward an open face. The potential for failure from subsidence and lateral spreading is highest in areas where the groundwater table is high, and where relatively soft and recent alluvial deposits exist. Lateral spreading hazards may also be present in areas with liquefaction risks.

Soils within the Project area are characterized as Corducci-Typic Xerofluvents and Ballard fine sandy loams.[40] These soil types in the Project area are classified as Type C, which is the least stable type of soil. Implementation of the Project could result in subsistence or lateral spreading; however, the design and construction of the proposed Project would be required to comply with latest Greenbook and/or CBC requirements to minimize potential damage from geologic hazards related to these areas. Compliance with these requirements would minimize impacts associated with lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse. As such, Project impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Less Than Significant Impact.

40 USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey (WSS), https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx. Accessed December 2022.

Expansive soils contain significant amounts of clay particles that have the ability to give up water (shrink) or take on water (swell). When these soils swell, the change in volume can exert pressures that are placed on them, and structural distress and damage to buildings could occur. Given the relatively minor amount of clay present in soils in the City, expansive soils are not considered a significant hazard for the proposed Project.[41] Additionally, the Project is not located in an area of potential expansive soil.[42] Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

No Impact.

The Project site area is currently developed with a WWTP. The proposed Project involves developing upgrades to the current WWTP in order to provide a more efficient and updated wastewater treatment facility and installing a recycled water pipeline so that the facility can become a provider of recycled water. Given that the Project site is already developed with a WWTP, the Project would not require the installation of a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system. As such, no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?

Less than Significant Impact.

There are no known areas in or around the City that have a significant potential for paleontological resources.[43] In addition, extensive excavation activities for buildings and infrastructure have taken place in the City and no unique paleontological or geologic resources have been encountered. Therefore, the potential to affect a unique paleontological resource or geologic feature would be low. The impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

41 City of Solvang, General Plan (2016), Safety Element.
42 City of Solvang, General Plan (2016), Safety Element Figure 6.
43 City of Solvang, Solvang General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element (1988), 28.

5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would result in short-term emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) during construction. Site-specific or project-specific data were used in the CalEEMod model where available. Although GHGs are generated during construction and are accordingly considered one-time emissions, it is important to include construction related GHG emissions when assessing all of the long-term GHG emissions associated with a project. Therefore, current practice is to annualize construction related GHG emissions over a project's lifetime to include these emissions as part of a project's annualized lifetime total emissions so that GHG reduction measures will address construction GHG emissions as part of the operational GHG reduction strategies. A project lifetime has generally been defined as 30 years. In accordance with this methodology, the proposed Project's estimated construction GHG emissions have been annualized over a 30-year period and are included in the annualized operational GHG emissions.

Operational emissions would be generated by vehicle trips because of normal day-to-day activities and indirect GHG emissions due to electricity demand. Electricity consumption was based on default data found in CalEEMod for an industrial land use type.

The annual GHG emissions associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Project are provided in **Table 5.7-1: Operational Unmitigated Greenhouse Gas Emissions**. The sum of the direct and indirect emissions associated with the proposed Project is compared with the SBCAPCD threshold of significance for stationary sources, which is 10,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e)

per year for stationary source projects. As shown, the proposed Project would generate approximately 66 MTCO2e annually and would not exceed the 10,000 MTCO2e threshold.

Table 5.7-1
Operational Unmitigated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHG Emissions Source	Emissions (MTCO2e/year)
Construction (amortized)	9
Operational (mobile) sources	1
Area sources	<1
Energy	43
Waste	12
Water	2
Annual Total	**66**

*Source: Air Emissions Model Results are presented in **Appendix B**.*

Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less than Significant Impact.

Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California.[44] GHGs, as defined under AB 32, include carbon dioxide (CO2), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. In December 2008, the CARB adopted the *Climate Change Scoping Plan*, which details strategies to meet that goal. The *Climate Change Scoping Plan* also recommends energy-efficiency measures in buildings such as maximizing the use of energy-efficient appliances and solar water heating.[45] The *Climate Change Scoping Plan* also indicates green building standards would result in decreased energy consumption compared to Title 24 building codes.[46] In addition, the *Climate Change Scoping Plan* encourages the use of solar photovoltaic panels

44 California Air Resources Board (CARB), "Assembly Bill 32: Global Warming Solutions Act," https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/fact-sheets/ab-32-global-warming-solutions-act-2006. Accessed December 2022.

45 CARB, 2017's Climate Change Scoping Plan, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic//cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017_es.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

46 California Building Standards Commission, California Green Building Standards Code, https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/GCGBSCNR2019/guide-to-the-2019-california-green-building-standards-code-includes-verification-guidelines-nonresidential. Access December 2022.

and other renewable sources of energy to provide clean energy and reduce fossil fuel-based energy. In 2014, the CARB updated the Scoping Plan, which details strategies to meet that goal. On September 8, 2016, Governor Brown enacted SB 32 that extends AB 32 another ten years to 2030 and expands upon the State's objectives. SB 32 calls on Statewide reductions in GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In addition, AB 197 requires CARB to approve a Statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to the Statewide GHG emission level in 1990 to be achieved by 2030. SB 32 requires ARB to prepare and approve a scoping plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective reductions in GHG emissions.

Section 15064.4 of the CEQA Guidelines Amendments serves to assist lead agencies in determining the significance of the impacts of GHGs. Because the City does not have an adopted quantitative threshold of significance for a project's generation of GHG emissions, the following analysis is based on a combination of the requirements outlined in the *CEQA Guidelines*. As required in Section 15604.4 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this analysis includes an impact determination based on the following: (1) an estimate of the amount of GHG emissions resulting from the proposed Project; (2) a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards; (3) a quantification of the extent to which the proposed Project increases GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting; and (4) the extent to which the proposed Project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a Statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

It can be reasonably assumed that the proposed Project would also not conflict with AB 32 if it does not exceed the SBCAPCD threshold. This is a reasonable assumption because Santa Barbara as a whole generates fewer emissions than the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB); thus, GHG emissions from Santa Barbara County contribute less to the Statewide inventory as compared to the SFBAAB. The proposed Project would provide additional local wastewater resources to the City upon operation of the upgraded WWTP. The upgraded WWTP would run more efficiently than the current system which would result in lower operational energy requirements when compared to local supplies. This feature would be consistent with existing recommendations to reduce GHG emissions. Further, the proposed Project would include the installation of solar panels which would also generate additional electricity that would be fed back into PG&E's electrical system. The Project as proposed is considered consistent with the goals of AB 32. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to *Government Code* Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Construction of the proposed Project may involve the use of hazardous materials. Such materials may include fuels, lubricants, coatings, and grease related to construction equipment and activities. However, the materials used would not be in large quantities or stored in such a manner as to pose a significant

safety hazard. These activities would also be short-term or one time in nature and would cease upon project completion.

The use, transport, storage, and disposal of construction-related hazardous materials would be required to conform to existing laws and regulations. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur. For example, all spills or leakage of petroleum products during the pipeline construction activities are required to be immediately contained, the hazardous material identified, and the material remediated in compliance with applicable State and local regulations regarding the cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. All contaminated waste encountered would be required to be collected and disposed of at an appropriately licensed disposal or treatment facility. Strict adherence to all emergency response plan requirements set forth by the City, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD), and Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBCFD) would be required through the duration of the proposed Project construction. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

On-site uses during the operation of the WWTP would continue to utilize materials that may be categorized as hazardous consistent with existing operations to ensure that effluent discharged into the finishing ponds meet the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) discharge requirements. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials by maintenance staff would be required to comply with existing regulations of several agencies, including the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), SBCPHD, and SBCFD. Compliance with these existing regulations would ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than Significant Impact.

All hazardous materials would be properly handled and stored per manufacturer instructions and subject to applicable health and safety requirements. Compliance with existing laws, regulations, plans, and programs would reduce the potential for foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment during construction to less than significant. Additionally,

potentially hazardous materials used during construction would not be in large quantities and would be stored in such a manner as to pose a significant safety hazard. These activities would also be short-term or one time in nature and would cease upon project completion. Therefore, impacts during construction would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed Project would result in the transport, use, and storage of chemicals needed to treat wastewater effluent prior to discharge into the finishing ponds. These chemicals would have the potential to be unintentionally released into the environment during transport, unloading, or transfer into the treatment system. Given the proximity of residences, approximately 850 feet west of the Project site, an accidental spill may have the potential to result in adverse health effects to the public or environment. However, uses that result in point source discharges of hazardous substances, such as chlorine, containing effluents are regulated by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), which ensures that discharge from the Project site will not pose significant adverse effects to nontarget organisms. Additionally, operations would be required to comply with all federal, State, and local laws, which would minimize any potential for accidental release or upset of hazardous materials. Therefore, no aspect of the treatment system would involve the use of hazardous materials and would not create a hazard related to exposure to hazardous materials.

As part of the disinfection process for recycled water quality effluent, the recycled water pipeline would carry chlorinated water. However, the concentration of chlorine in the recycled water line would not be at a level considered hazardous; therefore, no aspect of the recycled water system would involve the use of hazardous materials and the proposed Project would not create a hazard related to exposure to hazardous materials. In the event of a release of water from a burst pipeline resulting from a seismic event, concentrations of chlorine within the system would not be high enough to be considered hazardous. Therefore, impacts related to hazardous materials being released into the environment from the rupture of a well or pipeline component would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact.

The WWTP is not located within one-quarter mile of any existing school. The nearest school to the Project site is the Solvang Elementary School, located at 565 Atterdag Road, approximately 1-mile northeast of the WWTP. Therefore, there would be no impact from hazards emitted within a quarter mile of a school.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact.

A geographical search for hazardous materials sites, as defined in Government Code Section 65962.5, utilizing the online environmental database GeoTracker was performed.[47] The Project site is not located directly in an area with current hazardous materials sites and therefore would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact.

The closest airport to the WWTP is the Santa Ynez Airport located approximately 4.8 miles to the east of the Project site. Therefore, the WWTP is outside of an airport land use plan and not within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. No safety hazard impacts would occur to people residing or working in the area of the proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than Significant Impact.

The WWTP is not located along an adopted emergency evacuation route.[48] During construction, the proposed Project would not interfere with any of the daily operations of the City's Emergency Plans or

47 State Water Resources Control Board, GeoTracker Map, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=solvang. Accessed December 2022

48 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element," Exhibit 4, Emergency Evacuation Routes and Shelters.

the SBCFD. The proposed Project would provide necessary on- and off-site access and circulation for emergency vehicles and services during the construction and operation phases.

Project development would not require road closures or otherwise impact the functionality of the surrounding roads as public safety access routes.[49] Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

Less than Significant.

The proposed Project is within the Santa Ynez Valley and therefore susceptible to wildland fires. Areas with more vegetation also tend to be more susceptible to wildland fires.

The Project is located in an area designated as a Moderate to High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.[50] Further, the area is adjacent to an area designated as Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

The proposed Project would be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with applicable standards associated with vehicular access, ensuring that adequate emergency access and evacuation would be provided. Currently, the administrative building is located at the bottom of the slope, closest to the river. The proposed Project would relocate this building and add an access road, so that the employees and structures on site would be in a safer position if an emergency situation ensues. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

49 City of Solvang General Plan, Safety Element, Figure 2 Evacuation Routes and Shelter Areas.

50 CalFire, Santa Barbara County, State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/qmgcewgv/fhsz_county_sra_e_2022_santabarbara_ada.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

The Project site generally slopes north towards the Santa Ynez River. The upgrade of the existing WWTP would result in minimal amounts of soil stockpiling and would provide best management practices (BMPs), such as the placement of hay bales to control the direction of stormwater runoff. The proposed Project also includes the approximate 2.35 acres of adjacent land to accommodate proposed and future equipment and facilities, provide improved site access and maneuverability, provide for recycled water storage and distribution facilities, and solar panels.

As part of the new recycled water distribution system, approximately 7,000 linear feet of recycled water pipeline is proposed for installation from the existing WWTP east across the adjacent Alisal Ranch property to Alisal Road to connect to existing water distribution facilities. There is the potential for soil erosion during and after rainfall events, stormwater runoff could result in short-term sheet erosion within areas of exposed or stockpiled soils. Additionally, the compaction of soils by heavy equipment may reduce the infiltration capacity of soils and increase runoff and erosion potential. Given the above, pollutants such as soil, sediments, and other substances associated with the construction activities (e.g., oil, gasoline, grease, and surface litter) could directly filter into the local groundwater or enter the Santa Ynez River. Any topsoil removed from the WWTP would be stockpiled on site and replaced after the improvements are implemented. Additionally, standard best management practices, as required under a NPDES permit would require covering of exposed material to minimize erosion impacts. For construction activities that are regulated by the NPDES permit, coverage under and compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit would ensure that the impacts would be less than significant.

The Central Coast RWQCB implements State and federal water quality laws within the Central Coast Region, including Santa Barbara County. The Central Coast RWQCB regulates point discharges and stormwater discharge from construction sites. The Central Coast RWQCB adopted Resolution R3-2019-0089 which is a general waiver for specific types of discharges.[51]

51 California Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region, Order No. R3-2019-0089, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2019/general_wdr_order_r3-2019-0089attachments.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

Therefore, the proposed Project would not discharge groundwater into a nearby body of water. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The proposed Project would restore the lost capacity of the WWTP from 0.9 to 1.5 mgd and produce recycled water, as well as expand the existing 17.28-acre WWTP site by up to approximately 2.5 acres. Plant effluent would be treated and would be discharged into two percolation ponds, which would recharge the groundwater basins. A new recycled water pump station would pump tertiary effluent from the storage tank to a new recycled water distribution system. The polishing pond would be emptied and converted into emergency storage for major storm events. The WWTP would be required to treat the discharge to the standard under the WDP from the RWQCB. The City's current WDP Order No. R3-2007-0069 was issued by the Central Coast RWQCB in 2007, and in accordance with the WDP, the City initiated the WDP renewal process in May 2017. The City's WDP includes effluent discharge limits on the average daily flow and the concentrations of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) (the amount of dissolved oxygen needed [i.e., demanded] by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material), total suspended solids, total dissolved solids (TDS), pH, settable solids, sodium, and chloride within the effluent of the WWTP.

In August 2016, the RWQCB informally notified City staff that as part of a WDP renewal process, discharge limits for nitrogen and ammonia will be required. The RWQCB also requested that the City's Wastewater Division staff experiment with adjusting the treatment process to begin to de-nitrify the wastewater to allow the nitrogen to be released to the atmosphere in gaseous form and not reach the WWTP percolation ponds. New Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) programming was undertaken to enable significant modification of the treatment process to achieve de-nitrification. After the programming was completed, staff began testing the new reactor sequencing aimed to achieve de-nitrification. This experimentation took several months and required some additional SCADA programming adjustments. In April 2017, the treatment process was fine-tuned sufficiently to achieve consistent nitrification and de-nitrification of the wastewater to ensure that nitrogen is released into the atmosphere and not reach the percolation ponds.

The amount of runoff from the site would not substantially change from existing conditions. A majority of the site would not change the amount of impervious surfaces except for the new Admin/Lab Building and associated parking lot which would cover approximately 15,000 square feet of the approximately 19.5 acre Project site. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No Impact.

The proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the amount of impervious surface. Minimal amounts of impervious surfaces would be developed to upgrade the WWTP. The proposed Project would restore the lost capacity of the WWTP from 0.9 to 1.5 mgd. Plant effluent would be discharged into two percolation ponds, which would recharge the groundwater basins. Therefore, groundwater recharge would be greater than what currently exists, and the proposed Project would not interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. There would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would include an upgrade to the existing WWTP and an associated recycled water pipeline infrastructure. The WWTP would be designed to allow the existing drainage pattern of the site to continue and would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site.

Construction of the Project site would include removal of soils from Project area. Since the Project site has been previously disturbed by grading and excavation activities within the WWTP and agricultural area to the east, loss of topsoil or soil erosion would not be significant. Substantial erosion or siltation would not occur because proper drainage would be provided to convey all runoff to the wastewater treatment plant. The Project would incorporate all BMPs as necessary to prevent erosion and to control construction-related pollutants from discharging from the site for all permanent drainage and erosion control systems. Additionally, standard BMPs as required under the NPDES permit would require covering of exposed material to minimize erosion impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. As previously discussed, construction activities would include BMPs including straw waddles and silt fencing to minimize erosion and surface water runoff from the site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Santa Ynez River directly abates the percolation ponds of the WWTP. Since the Project site does not include the river itself, and no work is proposed near the percolation ponds, the proposed Project would not alter the course of a stream or river. Additionally, as previously mentioned, a majority of the site would not change the amount of impervious surfaces except for the new Admin/Lab Building and associated parking lot which would cover approximately 15,000 square feet of the approximately 19.5 acre Project site. Construction activities would be required to comply with the General Construction Storm Water Permit and would ensure that activities would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. BMPs would be implemented prior to a storm event, including waste management (e.g., stockpile management, sanitary management, spill prevention and control) to prevent prohibited discharges and to minimize the amount of surface water runoff off site. As such, the proposed Project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alternation of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less than Significant Impact.

Large areas of impervious surfaces would not be created as a result of the proposed Project. Construction activities such as earth moving, maintenance of construction equipment, handling of construction materials, and dewatering can contribute to pollutant loading in stormwater runoff. However, as previously discussed, the City would include BMPs to reduce runoff water off site, including but not be limited to: erosion control, sediment control, non-stormwater management, and materials management BMPs.

Construction would be temporary and implementation of BMPs during a rain event would minimize the amount of runoff entering the existing public storm drain system. With the incorporation of BMPs into the Project, the Project would not be an additional source of polluted runoff.

As previously discussed, the Project includes on-site water conveyance systems to ensure that postconstruction water runoff during a storm event would be similar to existing conditions. Thus, water runoff entering the wastewater treatment system would not affect the existing capacity of the system. Accordingly, impacts during operation would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than Significant.

The Project would not involve the construction of any housing, or habitable structures. As such, it would not expose people or habitable structures to flooding.

The Project site is not located within the boundaries of the 100-year or 500-year flood hazard areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).[52] All new construction will take place outside of the floodplain, as shown **in Figure 2.0-6**. The Project site also does not intersect with any streams or rivers. Furthermore, the Project site is currently developed with the existing WWTP, and all new additions and modifications would be designed in accordance with the latest CBC and/or Greenbook regulations regarding building safety.

The new structures will be located on the southwest end of the project site. The slope of the project site would cause stormwater to flow into the Santa Ynez River. Therefore, the proposed Project would not impede or redirect flood flows and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would be located outside the boundaries of the floodplains designated by FEMA.[53]

The Project site is currently developed with the existing WWTP, and all new additions and modifications would be designed in accordance with the latest CBC and/or Greenbook regulations regarding building

52 Santa Barbara County, Maps, FEMA 100- and 500-Year Flood Risk Map Santa Barbara, https://sbcoem.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5acbb13b4f7f4e75af8431c78e95d695. Accessed December 2022.

53 Santa Barbara County, Maps, FEMA 100- and 500-Year Flood Risk Map Santa Barbara, https://sbcoem.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5acbb13b4f7f4e75af8431c78e95d695. Accessed December 2022.

safety. Although the Project site is located adjacent to the Santa Ynez River, the new structures, as illustrated in **Figure 2.0-6** will be located on the most elevated point of the site where the threat a flood hazard upon the proposed Project would be minimized. Accordingly, the proposed Project's potential risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation would be less than significant.

A tsunami is a series of ocean waves caused by a sudden displacement of the ocean floor, most often due to earthquakes. The proposed Project site is approximately 8 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. Impacts from a tsunami are highly unlikely and, as such, no significant impacts would occur.

A seiche is a surface wave created when an inland water body is shaken, usually by an earthquake. Seiches are potentially hazardous when the wave action created in lakes or bays is strong enough to threaten human beings and structures near the body of water. As previously discussed, the proposed Project would be designed in accordance with the latest CBC and/or Greenbook regulations regarding building safety. As such, the proposed Project's potential for risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less than Significant.

The Central Coast RWQCB has jurisdiction over a 300-mile-long by 40-mile-wide section of the State's central coast. The Central Coast RWQCB has adopted a Water Quality Control Plan[54] (Basin Plan) in accordance with criteria contained in the CWA, California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and other pertinent State and federal rules and regulations. The intent of the Basin Plan is to provide definitive guidelines and give direction to the scope of Central Coast RWQCB activities that will optimize the beneficial uses of the State waters within the Central Coastal Basin by preserving and protecting the quality of these waters. The intended beneficial use of water determines the water quality objectives. For example, drinking water must be of higher quality than the water used to irrigate pastures. Both of these are beneficial water uses, but the quality requirements for irrigation water are different from those for drinking water. As previously mentioned, the WWTP currently operates under a WDP issued by the Central Coast RWQCB. The Central Coast RWQCB issues permits with regulations and guidelines that adhere to their adopted Basin Plan. The City's current WDP Order No. R3-2007-0069 was issued by the Central Coast RWQCB in 2007, and in accordance with the WDP, the City initiated the WDP renewal process in May

54 Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (2019). https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/docs/2019_basin_plan_r3_complete_webaccess.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

2017. The City's WDP includes effluent discharge limits on the average daily flow and the concentrations of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) (the amount of dissolved oxygen needed [i.e., demanded] by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material), total suspended solids, TDS, pH, settable solids, sodium, and chloride within the effluent of the WWTP. In order to comply with the RWQCB's recent WDP renewal process, the proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, achieve required consistent removal of nitrogen, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. The improvements would meet the latest requirements identified in the WDP renewal process. Accordingly, the proposed Project would be designed and operated consistent with the requirements of the latest WDP. Therefore, the proposed Project would be consistent with the Basin Plan and impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed Project is located within the Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin (Basin). There are three Management Areas in the Basin, the Western Management Area (WMA), Central Management Area (CMA), and Eastern Management Area (EMA). Each Management Area is governed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) with input from a GSA Committee. The Project is located in the EMA and is managed under the GSP for the Eastern Management Area of the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin which was adopted January 6, 2022.[55] Implementation of the proposed Project would provide additional high-quality effluent which would either be discharged through percolation ponds into the Santa Ynez River or a portion of utilized as recycled water . Accordingly, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the GSP for the EMA and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

55 Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency, "Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin – Eastern Management Area Groundwater Sustainability Plan," January 2022, https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:2c8a0221-8681-3253-bc1c-9bcab16dffa9

5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Physically divide an established community?

No Impact.

The proposed Project would reconstruct the existing WWTP as well as develop new buildings on the Project site and add a recycled water pipeline. The Project site is located in an unincorporated part of the County, removed from other developed areas. The proposed Project development would not divide any established residential or other communities, as the development would be on-site. The recycled water pipeline would extend east through the northern portion of the agricultural field, traverse southwest across the existing access road to the facility then continue east to Alisal Road through an existing and maintained access road. The proposed pipeline would be trenched below ground and would be re-covered and would not divide any areas. No new roadways or infrastructure that would bisect or transect any established community would be required. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Less than Significant Impact.

According to the Santa Barbara County Zoning Ordinance, the Project site is zoned AG-11-100, which is designated as "General Agricultural District." The AG designation allows for uses, buildings, and structures accessory and customarily incidental to the additional agricultural uses and not involving a commercial

enterprise on the premises.[56] The Project would comply with the goals and policies of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive plan, specifically the Agricultural Element Goal III states that, "where it is necessary for agricultural lands to be converted to other uses, this use shall not interfere with remaining agricultural operations."[57] The Project would be consistent with this goal as it would not interfere with agricultural land aside from the previously disturbed Project area and the 2.35 acres of acquired land. Additionally, a trench would be dug for the recycled water pipeline, the pipeline would be inserted, and re-covered, and would not impact any permanent future agricultural uses on the site. The pipeline would be installed either just before, or following harvest of the field, as to not temporarily interrupt any agricultural operations. Additionally, the proposed Project would not be changing the nature of the current WWTP, but rather including various improvements to the site in order to increase capacity for future use. The proposed Project would not conflict with the County of Santa Barbara land use designations or zoning. As such, the proposed Project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

56 County of Santa Barbara, Planning and Development, "Santa Barbara County Zoning Ordinance No. 661," https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/vcpi9sy7qrgo2q6cabeewc2hbhzbf4ja. Accessed December 2022.

57 County of Santa Barbara, Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Element, Goals and Policies (Republished 2009). https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/rdbaorkvulbjkxmo1jufgwoxh1qaoxu9. Accessed December 2022.

5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region and the residents of the State?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region and the residents of the State?

No Impact.

According to the City's General Plan, sand and gravel resources are located along the Santa Ynez River.[58] The WWTP is located adjacent and to the south of the Santa Ynez River. Although the WWTP is located in an area with potential sand and gravel resources, its Project site is currently developed with wastewater treatment infrastructure. Additionally, the proposed recycled water pipeline would cross existing agricultural land. The proposed Project would upgrade the existing WWTP and provide additional water recycling infrastructure to meet existing effluent treatment requirements identified by the RWQCB. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources that would be of future value to the region and the residents of the State. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No Impact.

As previously discussed, the WWTP is located along the Santa Ynez River which is an area with potential sand and gravel resources. The Project site is currently developed with the existing wastewater treatment

58 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Conservation and Open Space Element," Mineral Resources (2016).

infrastructure associated with the WWTP, as well as active agricultural land to the east. The proposed Project would redevelop portions of the existing WWTP with new treatment infrastructure, as well as construct a recycled water pipeline which would ultimately connect with the City's existing distribution infrastructure along Alisal Road. As such, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of locally important mineral resources. Furthermore, although there are known diatomite deposits within the City, there are no diatomite mining activities currently underway in the Solvang area and the diatomite has been identified to have little or no commercial value within City limits.[59] The nearest oil extraction field is the Zaca Oil Field located approximately 9.6 miles to the north of the Project site. Due to the distance of this oil resource from the existing WWTP location, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resource recover sites delineated on the City's local General Plan. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

59 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Conservation and Open Space Element," Mineral Resources (2016).

5.13 NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than Significant.

Construction

The City's *General Plan Noise Element*[60] includes guidelines to evaluate ambient noise and land use compatibility. For the average community, outdoor noise levels up to 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA) and indoor noise levels up to 40 dBA are considered acceptable. **Table 5.13-1: Existing Ambient Daytime Noise Levels in the Project Vicinity** shows the existing short-term (15-minute) ambient noise levels adjacent to the WWTP and proposed recycled water pipeline. The noise site locations are shown in **Figure 5.13-1: Noise Monitor Locations.**

As shown in **Table 5.13-1,** on-site and off-site noise measurement levels ranged from 44.9 dBA to 62.1 dBA.

60 City of Solvang, General Plan, Noise Element (2013).

The Solvang Municipal Code Section 11-12-21[61] establishes allowable timeframes for construction and limits such to 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM on weekdays. No construction shall be allowed on Saturday, Sunday, State or national holidays except as approved in writing by the public works director, or his/her designee, or in the case of an emergency for the immediate preservation of life, health, or property.

61 Solvang Municipal Code, Title 11, Ch. 12 Supplemental Regulations, sec. 11-12-21, Hours of Construction.

SOURCE: Google Earth - 2019

FIGURE **5.13-1**

Meridian Consultants

Noise Monitor Locations

001-004-19

Table 5.13-1
Existing Ambient Daytime Noise Levels in the Project Vicinity

Site	Location	Primary Noise Source	*Leq (15-minute)
Site 1	Closest corner of the percolation ponds to residential uses across river	No traffic, sound coming from existing WWTP and birds in pond	44.9
Site 2	Near Admin/Lab building, in between loudest equipment and closest sensitive receptor	Water delivery truck drove by and a WWTP truck	62.1
Site 3	East end of agricultural field	One WWTP truck drove by	45.9
Site 4	Entryway from Alisal Road	Many cars driving by along Alisal Road	59.2
Site 5	End of Paseo Del Rio Roadway	Couple cars drove by, lawn mower going	58.2

Measurements were taken on Thursday, November 14, 2019, from 12:05 PM through 1:39 PM.
**Leq is describes the average equivalent continuous noise level.*

Unincorporated Santa Barbara County includes, and surrounds, the proposed Project site to the west, south, and east. According to the Santa Barbara County *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual*, noise from grading and construction activity proposed within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors would be affected by noise levels over 65 dBA.[62] A couple of residences are located within 1,600 feet; one to the west approximately 850 feet and several north of the riverbed approximately 1,200 feet.

Estimated noise levels associated with the WWTP upgrade and pipeline construction phases are presented in **Table 5.13-2: Typical Maximum Noise Levels for Construction Equipment**.

Table 5.13-2
Typical Maximum Noise Levels for Construction Equipment

	Approximate Leq dBA			
Equipment	25 Feet	50 Feet	100 Feet	200 Feet
Grader	87	81	75	69
Dump Truck	90	84	78	72
Backhoe	82	76	70	64

Source: US Department of Transportation, Construction Noise Handbook, Chapter 9.0, August 2006.
Note: Leq = equivalent sound level.

62 County of Santa Barbara, Planning and Development, Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (Amended January 2021), sec. 12, Noise Thresholds, https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:bff95f01-3074-37e2-9e86-2a16d085bb6c. Accessed December 2022.

Equipment estimates for the WWTP upgrade, trenching, and pipeline construction activity noise levels are representative of "worse-case" conditions since they assumed several pieces of equipment operating simultaneously.

Construction of the proposed Project would require various lengths of time depending on the level of activity. For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that construction of the proposed Project is expected to begin in October 2024 and would be completed by approximately October 2026. Consistent with the City's Municipal Code, WWTP upgrades and pipeline trenching activities would occur within the established construction hours of 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM on weekdays.

Sound generated by the construction noise source typically diminishes at a rate of 6 dBA over hard surfaces, such as asphalt, and 7.5 dBA over soft surfaces, such as vegetation, for each doubling of distance. When sound is blocked by line of sight, sound levels decrease up to 5 dBA.

The area surrounding this site is heavily vegetated to the north, east, and south. The closest sensitive receptor is approximately 850 feet to the west of the proposed Project site. When extrapolated from **Table 5.13-2**, noise levels would be approximately 60 dBA at 800 feet from a dump truck. Accordingly, construction noise levels at the residence to the west of the proposed Project site would result in similar noise levels. Construction activities would occur within the required time periods identified in the City's Municipal Code between 7:30 AM and 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. Further, construction noise levels at nearby residences would fall below the County's threshold of 65 dBA. Therefore, construction noise impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. This includes installation of new blowers, aerators, mixers, generator, sludge sump pumps, integration for the new equipment controls and communication systems, construction of the new Admin/Lab building, parking lot, sludge processing building, and new access roads. The existing aeration system is not working well as a result of poor design with oversized blowers and undersized motors. In particular, the existing blowers are poorly designed for the modified treatment process to de-nitrify the wastewater as compared to fine bubble diffusers. The current blowers are also old and inefficient, as the current jet headers function as both aerators and mixers.

As identified in **Table 5.13-1**, existing noise levels associated with WWTP activities range from 62.1 dBA near the southern end of the Project site near the Admin/Lab building and sequencing batch reactors to 44.9 dBA near the northern portion of the Project site adjacent to the Santa Ynez River. New more efficient

blowers are proposed to address current deficiencies, to improve oxygen transfer and promote nitrification, as well as save energy and operation costs while providing adequate airflow to achieve full nitrogen removal. Installation of newer equipment would lower the noise levels on-site due to more efficient operation of the equipment and new materials, such as damping foam and acoustic absorbers, which help to reduce on-site noise levels during operation. Furthermore, a new sludge building would be constructed and newer building codes provide more efficient sound absorption, thereby reducing noise levels traveling from the new sludge building. Based on the new facility improvements within the WWTP, the noise levels generated from wastewater treatment activities during operation of the proposed Project would be similar to, if not reduced, when compared to existing noise levels measured at the Project site. As such, operational noise impacts generated by the new infrastructure improvements would be less than significant.

The recycled water pipeline component of the proposed Project would be located beneath ground upon completion of construction. Accordingly, no new sources of noise would be generated by the recycled water pipeline and operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in **Section 5.17: Transportation**, the proposed Project would generate the same number of trips as those that occur under the existing conditions. This would not result in any increase in ambient roadway noise conditions. Overall traffic noise would remain similar to existing conditions. Roadway noise impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction activities could generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures, construction equipment used, and proximity to vibration-sensitive uses. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. Ground vibrations from construction activities rarely reach levels that could damage structures but can achieve the perceptible ranges in buildings close to a construction site.

The closest sensitive receptor to the Project site is a single-family residence located approximately 850 feet west of the WWTP. Loaded trucks would create the greatest amount of vibration for equipment to be used during construction and are capable of producing approximately 92 vibration decibels (VdB) at 15 feet. Vibration levels attenuate (decrease) 6 decibels every doubling of distance. It is forecast that

vibration levels at the nearest sensitive receptor would be approximately 56 VdB. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) threshold for architectural damage to nonengineered timber and masonry buildings is approximately 94 VdB (vibration decibels). Therefore, vibration levels would decrease as the distance from the WWTP and pipeline trenching activities increases and would not be detectable at approximately 850 feet away, and the Project would be well below FTA vibration threshold. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the WWTP does not involve excessive groundborne vibration activities, such as pile driving. The proposed Project would include improvements to upgrade the treatment capacity and treatment level of the wastewater effluent generated by uses within the City. The proposed Project would continue activities associated with wastewater treatment similar to the existing activities on site. Therefore, the proposed Project would not generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact.

The closest airport to the WWTP is the Santa Ynez Airport located approximately 4.8 miles to the east of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not expose people residing or working on the Project site to excessive noise levels. There would be no impact to an airport or airport land use plan.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Less than Significant Impact.

According to the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) Regional Growth Forecast 2050, the population of the City in 2020 was 5,800 and the population in 2025 is estimated to be 6,000.[63] The proposed Project does not include the development of new homes or businesses. As such, the proposed Project would not directly induce substantial unplanned population growth within the City and surrounding area.

The proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity to the permitted capacity of 1.5 mgd, achieve required consistent removal of nitrogen, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. The improvements to restore lost capacity would also modify the treatment process to allow for production of recycled water. The future additional recycled water uses would be continually evaluated and considered. Potential use includes but is not limited to, landscape irrigation, which would offset the City's demand of potable water demand for irrigation during high summer months. With implementation of the proposed Project, the City would be able to meet the increased wastewater treatment standards issued by the RWQCB, meet the wastewater

63 Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Regional Growth Forecast 2050 Santa Barbara County (2019), https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:9b08550a-e3f4-3bd0-852f-2a860b659091. Accessed December 2022.

generation that is anticipated with the projected growth, and to reduce reliance on groundwater and/or State project water to meet potable water demands.

As such, the proposed Project would not result in unplanned population growth either directly or indirectly and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact.

The proposed Project would upgrade existing wastewater treatment facilities within and adjacent to the Project site. The proposed Project would not displace any existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
PUBLIC SERVICES				
Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a. Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Fire protection?

No Impact.

Fire protection and emergency medical services in the City are provided by the SBCFD Station 30. The fire station in the City is at 1644 Oak Street in the heart of the City, 0.93 miles northeast of the WWTP.[64]

During the WWTP upgrades, the proposed Project would not interfere with any of the daily operations of the City's Emergency Plans, nor would it require additional staff from the SBCFD. All construction activities, including staging, would occur on site and would be required to be performed per SBCFD's and the City's standards and regulations. The proposed Project is not expected to result in an increase in calls for emergency fire and medical services. Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

64 City of Solvang General Plan, Safety Element (2016).

c. Police protection?

No Impact.

Police protection services in the City are provided by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department, which operates out of its police facility at 1745 Mission Drive, approximately 1.3 miles northeast of the Project site.[65]

Operation of the proposed Project would not result in an increase in calls for police services, as it would not generate additional population. Project development and operation would not require the construction of new or expanded police facilities. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Schools?

No Impact.

The proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost wastewater treatment capacity, achieve required consistent removal of nitrogen, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life. Development of the proposed Project would not generate additional people nor require the construction of a new school. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. Parks?

No Impact.

Demand for parks and recreational facilities in an area are usually determined by the area's population. The proposed Project would not construct any dwelling units nor would it generate additional population, as discussed in **Section 5.14**. Demand for recreational services would remain the same as this proposed Project would not directly or indirectly induce population to the City. Therefore, the proposed Project would not require construction of new or expanded parks or recreational facilities. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

65 City of Solvang General Plan, Safety Element (2016).

f. Other public facilities?

No Impact.

The Solvang branch of the Santa Barbara Library is at 1745 Mission Drive, approximately 1.3 miles northeast of the WWTP.[66] Project development would not increase the number of people in the City. Demand for library services would remain similar to existing conditions. Proposed development of the Project would not require the construction of new or expanded library facilities. Therefore, the proposed Project would not require construction of new or expanded libraries. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

66 City of Solvang General Plan, Parks and Recreation (2009).

5.16 RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
RECREATION – Would the project:				
a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No Impact.

Demand for parks and recreational facilities in an area are usually determined by the area's population. The proposed Project would not construct any dwelling units, nor would it generate additional population, as discussed in **Section 5.14**. Accordingly, there would be no increase to population either directly or indirectly and the demand for recreational services would be similar to existing conditions. As such, the proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that deterioration to recreational facilities would not occur nor would it be accelerated. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact.

The proposed Project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. As such, no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.17 TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Less than Significant Impact.

Three major roadways bisect and connect the City to the surrounding area including U.S. Highway 101, SR 246, and SR 154. SR 246 (Mission Drive) is a regional route that provides the primary connection between U.S. Highway 101 and SR 154 through the Santa Ynez Valley. Access to the Project site is currently provided by Alisal Road, which is located southeast from the Project site, and then by an access road that traverses east/west that is south of an existing agricultural field. The private access road contains a gate that is accessed by City employees and/or the adjacent land owner(s).

Construction

Short-term increases to traffic would occur during construction of the proposed Project. It is anticipated that workers during the construction phase would arrive and leave the construction site during off-peak hours, thus minimizing any traffic increases for the City's residents. Residential streets would generally be avoided to not obstruct residential street traffic flow, which would reduce impacts to pedestrians and bikers in nearby neighborhoods. As such, construction of the proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The existing WWTP would be redeveloped with various improvements by providing a modern facility that meets current RWQCB standards. The proposed Project would not increase the population or increase visitors to the City. As the development of the Project would not increase residents to the City and access to the Project site is via a private access road, forecast trips to the Project site would remain similar to existing conditions.

To provide adequate truck entry within the WWTP site, the existing access road would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road, at the northeast corner of the WWTP site would be paved. The new looped access road would also improve security and emergency response. The Project does not anticipate any change in ridership for buses or other forms of public transportation, because the Project site is closed to the general public. Additionally, there are no bus lines that go directly to the Project site. Therefore, no impact to existing bus service is anticipated. The Project does not plan to construct any additional bike or pedestrian facilities. Likewise, the Project would not remove or obstruct any bicycle or pedestrian facilities.

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments adopted an updated Congestion Management Plan (CMP) in 2016 to address changes in State law and address other plans.[67] The document also aims to align the CMP with SBCAG's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan-Sustainable Communities Strategy.[68] The nearest CMP-designated roadway is SR 246, approximately 0.42 miles north of the proposed Project site and U.S. Highway 101 which is approximately 2.0 miles west of the Project site. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not conflict with the City Circulation Plan,[69] ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

67 Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), Congestion Management Plan (2016). http://www.sbcag.org/uploads/2/4/5/4/24540302/2016_congestion_management_program_doc_final.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

68 SBCAG, 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (2013). http://www.sbcag.org/uploads/2/4/5/4/24540302/final2040rtpscs-chapters.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

69 City of Solvang General Plan, Circulation Element (2008).

b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than Significant Impact.

Section 15064.3 in CEQA, subdivision (b) states that evaluating a project's vehicles miles traveled (VMT) is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts.

As stated above, the proposed Project would involve upgrades to the existing WWTP. Operation of the proposed Project is forecast to generate similar levels of trips to the Project site when compared to existing conditions. In addition, the proposed Project would not increase the existing City population. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a change in total VMT when compared to existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would result in infrastructure improvements to the existing WWTP. Portions of the existing WWTP would be demolished to provide better use of available space to accommodate necessary improvements, bring facilities up to code, clean up the site, improve access, and make room for new buildings and housing structures. Additionally, approximately 2.35 acres of additional land has been acquired to accommodate proposed and future equipment and facilities and provide improved site access. To provide adequate truck entry, the existing access road within the WWTP would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road, at the northeast corner of the WWTP site would be paved. The new looped access road would also improve security and emergency response. Access to the WWTP would remain the same from Alisal Road. No changes are proposed to the surrounding road system.

The proposed Project would provide improved site access and maneuverability. The Project site is located on the outskirts of the City. Land uses surrounding the Project site consist of the Santa Ynez River, open space, and existing agricultural operations. Construction equipment would be stored on site. Construction workers would utilize the existing private access road when accessing the WWTP. Use of the access road would not substantially increase hazards associated with existing farm equipment. Additionally, the

proposed Project would be not substantively change when compared to existing conditions. Operation of the proposed Project would generate similar levels of trips to the Project site when compared to existing conditions. Therefore, the proposed Project would be compatible with surrounding land uses. As such, the proposed Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would be required to incorporate all applicable design and safety requirements as set forth in the most current adopted fire codes, building codes, and safety standards set forth by the City and SBCFD. Existing emergency access to properties along the surrounding roadways would not be altered or disrupted under construction and operational phases and no changes to the off-site roadway system would be necessary. Project-related construction activities, specifically the construction of the proposed recycled water pipeline would require closure of the existing access road to the facility as the pipeline is proposed to cross this access road. Thus, construction of the Project could temporarily impact emergency access within the existing access road. However, this closure would be temporary and comply with standards set forth by the City and SBCFD. As mentioned previously, to provide adequate truck entry, the existing access road within the WWTP would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road, at the northeast corner of the WWTP site would be paved. The new looped access road would also improve security and emergency response. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5.18 TRIBAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

The following section summarizes and incorporates by reference information from the Cultural Resources Report for the proposed Project. The Cultural Resources Report is included as **Appendix D** to this Initial Study. This section also provides information gathered through the AB 52 Consultation process.

a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

Less than Significant with Mitigation.

AB 52, signed into law in 2014, established a formal consultation process for California Native American Tribes to identify potential significant impacts to tribal cultural resources (TCRs) as defined in Section 21074 of the PRC. As specified in AB 52, lead agencies must provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if the tribe has submitted a written request to be notified.

The NAHC recommended the Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians be contacted for further information. Additionally, the NAHC recommended that five other Native American tribal groups be contacted to find out if they have additional information about the Project area.

In October 2019, the City mailed notices to these tribes known to be affiliated with the Project area informing them of the Project (refer to **Appendix D** of this Initial Study). The City was contacted in early October 2019 by Freddie Romero, Cultural Resources Coordinator, for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Elders Council. City staff arranged and provided Mr. Romero an extensive site visit and tour of the proposed Project area on October 8, 2019. He had no concerns with the proposed WWTP upgrades. Mr. Romero did indicate that the City should meet with the Elders Council regarding their preference for alignment of the proposed recycled waterline near the Napamu Shrine site.

Consistent with consultation with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, the cultural resource records search and pedestrian survey identified one archaeological resource within the Project APE. This prehistoric archaeological site is a potentially significant Chumash ceremonial site and has been identified as a TCP and is registered with the NAHC as a Sacred/Power area and Worship/Ritual site. The cultural resources assessment determined it is not believed the Project would have a direct or indirect impact on this resource.[70] However, as previously stated during consultation, the City would need to consult with the Elders Council upon final recycled water pipeline alignment. Additionally, implementation of **MM CUL-1** would ensure that an archaeological monitor and a Tribal monitor are on site during all ground disturbing activities and therefore, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce potential impacts to tribal cultural resources to less than significant.

70 See Appendix D.

MM TCR-1: Prior to final design of the recycled water pipeline alignment, the City shall consult with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Elders Council to identify the preferred pipeline alignment for the proposed recycled water pipeline near the Napamu Shrine site. A qualified archaeologist shall coordinate with Tribal representatives to be present on-site during all ground disturbing activities.

Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of **Mitigation Measure TCR-1** and **MM CUL-1**.

ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

Less than Significant with Mitigation.

As discussed in **Section 5.5: Cultural Resources**, the Project site includes the existing WWTP site, additional approximate 2.35 acres of agricultural land adjacent to the existing WWTP site, and the proposed recycled water pipeline within the agricultural area.

The cultural resources assessment did not identify any historic-period archaeological sites located on the surface of the Project APE. However, a potentially significant Chumash ceremonial site was identified within the Project APE. While the cultural resources assessment determined it is not believed the Project would have a direct or indirect impact on this resource,[71] there is potential for encountering archaeological resources below the disturbance on the ground surface. Additionally, the City would be required to meet with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Elders Council to identify the preferred recycled water pipeline alignment. With the implementation of **MM TCR-1** and **MM CUL-1**, impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: **Mitigation Measures MM TCR-1** and **MM CUL-1** shall be implemented.

Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of **MM TCR-1** and **MM CUL-1.**

71 See Appendix D.

5.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:				
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would not result in direct or indirect population growth and would therefore not require any new or increased demand for water or wastewater facilities, stormwater drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities.

Water Facilities

The proposed Project would not generate additional demand for water and, as such, would not directly require new or expanded water facilities. However, the proposed Project includes improvements that would also modify the treatment process to allow for the production of recycled water. A new effluent pipeline would connect the filters to a chlorine contact/recycled water storage tank for tertiary treatment processing. A recycled water pump station would be constructed next to the tertiary process housing structure.

As part of the new recycled water distribution system, approximately 7,000 linear feet of recycled water pipeline is proposed for installation from the existing WWTP east across the adjacent Alisal Ranch property to Alisal Road, and then in Alisal Road to existing irrigation facilities in the vicinity. The construction analysis for expanding water infrastructure on-site is included throughout the Initial Study (i.e., **Section 5.3: Air Quality** and **Section 5.13: Noise**). Overall, when considering impacts resulting from the installation of any required water infrastructure off-site, all impacts are of a relatively short-term duration (i.e., months) and would cease to occur once the installation is complete. Although on-site water infrastructure expansion is proposed, the construction of this infrastructure does not cause significant environmental effects. Thus, proposed Project construction related impacts would be less than significant.

Wastewater Facilities

The proposed Project would upgrade the existing WWTP in order to restore lost treatment capacity, meet more stringent wastewater treatment standards, and replace aging infrastructure at the end of its useful life. The construction analysis for expanding wastewater infrastructure on-site is included throughout the Initial Study (i.e., **Section 5.3** and **Section 5.13**). Overall, when considering impacts resulting from the installation of any required wastewater infrastructure, all impacts are of a relatively short-term duration (i.e., months) and would cease to occur once the installation is complete. Although on-site wastewater infrastructure expansion is proposed, the construction of this infrastructure does not cause significant environmental effects. Thus, proposed Project construction related impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage

As discussed in **Section 5.10: Hydrology and Water Quality**, upgrades to the existing WWTP would result in minimal amounts of soil stockpiling and BMPs would be implemented such as the placement of hay bales to control the direction of stormwater runoff. The proposed Project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including the alternation of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Thus, the proposed Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded storm water drainage and construction related impacts would be less than significant.

Electricity

Construction and operation of the Project would not necessitate the construction of off-site facilities or off-site infrastructure improvements that would have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. Further, the proposed Project would include the installation of solar panels which would also generate additional electricity that would be fed back into PG&E's electrical system. A new 800 kW emergency generator would also be required to replace the existing emergency generator to meet the increased treatment capacity in the event of power outage. The construction analysis for the electrical infrastructure on-site is included throughout the Initial Study (i.e., **Section 5.3** and **Section 5.13**). Overall, when considering impacts resulting from the installation of any required electrical infrastructure, all impacts are of a relatively short-term duration (i.e., months) and would cease to occur once the installation is complete. Although on-site electrical infrastructure is proposed, the construction of this infrastructure does not cause significant environmental effects. Thus, proposed Project construction related impacts would be less than significant.

Natural Gas

Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not require the expansion of existing natural gas facilities or the construction of new natural gas facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Telecommunications

Construction and operation of the Project would not necessitate the construction of off-site telecommunication facilities that would have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

Less than Significant Impact.

As mentioned before, the proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life.

It is likely that construction of the proposed Project would require water for dust control and other similar construction activities. However, the amount of water used would be minimal due to the relatively small

size of the Project site and the temporary nature of the construction period. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

The proposed Project would not result in direct or indirect population growth that would require potable water. The operation of the proposed Project would also not substantially increase the number of employees working at the Project site. Accordingly, the proposed Project would not require new water supplies and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would involve increasing the available wastewater treatment capacity of the existing WWTP in order to restore lost treatment capacity back to the City's permitted treatment amount of 1.5 mgd. The Project itself would not result in a need to increase capacity at the WWTP. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would not result in direct or indirect population growth that would result in new solid waste generation. It is proposed that certain existing structures and buildings be demolished including the abandoned sedimentation basins (tanks) connected to the abandoned aeration basins, existing sludge processing structures, and existing Admin/Lab Building. Construction of the Project would result in the generation of solid waste such as soils and demolished building materials. Per CALGreen, 65 percent of construction and demolition waste must be diverted from landfills. As such, at least 65 percent of all construction and demolition debris from the site would be diverted. Additionally, CALGreen requires 100 percent of trees, stumps, rocks, and associated vegetation and soils resulting primarily from land clearing to be reused or recycled. The remaining 35 percent of construction and demolition materials that

are not required to be recycled would either be disposed of or voluntarily recycled at a solid waste facility with available capacity. The location of the nearest recycling facility is at 97 Commerce Drive in the City of Buellton, approximately 2.9 miles from the Project site. Construction waste is typically disposed of at inert landfills, which are facilities that accept materials such as soil, concrete, asphalt, and other construction and demolition debris. According to the City website, solid waste collection for the City is provided by Waste Management/Health Sanitation Services. The nearest landfill is the Tajiguas Landfill,[72] approximately 16.3 miles southeast from the Project site. The Tajiguas Landfill is owned and operated by the County of Santa Barbara and serves the South Coast, Santa Ynez, and New Cuyama Valleys. This landfill has a maximum daily capacity of receiving 1,500 tons of solid waste, with an estimated maximum capacity of 23,300,000 cubic yards.[73] The current landfill capacity is at 10,650,000 tons. As such, any construction and demolition debris requiring disposal at an inert landfill would be sufficiently accommodated by the Tajiguas Landfill.

The number of employees operating the wastewater treatment plant would remain similar to existing conditions. As such, operation of the Project would generate similar amounts of solid waste when compared to existing conditions. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e. Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction and operation of the proposed Project would comply with federal, State, and local statues and regulations related to solid waste. Solid waste generated by the proposed Project would follow CALGreen standards by providing clearly marked, source-sorted receptacles to facilitate recycling. Any hazardous wastes that are generated during demolition and construction activities would be managed and disposed of in compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws. Therefore, Project construction would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals (e.g., CALGreen standards). As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

72 Santa Barbara County Department of Public Works, Resources Recovery and Waste Management, Facilities, https://www.countyofsb.org/pwd/facilities.sbc. Accessed March 2021.

73 Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Permit to Operate and Part 70 Operating Permit, https://www.ourair.org/wp-content/uploads/Draft-Part-70-PTO-9788-R4-4-16-2018.pdf. Accessed March 2021.

5.20 WILDFIRES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard zones, would the Project:				
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, postfire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than Significant Impact.

While most of California is subject to some degree of fire hazard, there are specific features that make some areas more hazardous.

There are three specific land classifications to identify the agency with the financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing wildfire:

- Local Responsibility Area (LRA) is primarily the responsibility of the local jurisdiction, i.e. local fire departments.
- State Responsibility Area (SRA) is primarily the responsibility of the state, or CAL FIRE.
- Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) is primarily the responsibility of a federal government agency, such as the US Forest Service (USFS) or the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is required by law to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. These designations,

referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), mandate how people construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires.

The Project is located in an area designated as a Moderate to High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.[74] Further, the area is adjacent to an area designated as Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

As discussed in **Section 5.9: Hazards and Hazardous Materials,** the proposed Project would be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with applicable standards associated with vehicular access, ensuring that adequate emergency access and evacuation would be provided to the Project site in the event of an emergency. Furthermore, the WWTP is not located along an adopted emergency evacuation route.[75]

Additionally, the WWTP upgrades and construction activities would occur on site and in accordance with SBCFD standards and regulations. During construction, the proposed Project would not interfere with any of the daily operations of the City's Emergency Plans or the SBCFD. Therefore, impacts would be considered less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures*:** No mitigation measures are required.

b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Less than Significant Impact.

As previously mentioned, the WWTP is on a site that slopes 35 feet from the headworks to the percolation basin discharge. The SBCFD sets requirements for proper fire control measures within buildings. The proposed Project would be designed to meet the SBCFD requirements, including the provision for adequate fire water pressure and installation of fire sprinklers and the design of the building for emergency access. Thus, the proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose proposed Project employees to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or an uncontrolled spread of wildfire nor result in the temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. proposed Project impacts would be less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures*:** No mitigation measures are required.

74 CalFire, Santa Barbara County, State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/qmgcewgv/fhsz_county_sra_e_2022_santabarbara_ada.pdf. Accessed December 2022.

75 City of Solvang General Plan, Safety Element Exhibit 4, Emergency Evacuation Routes and Shelters.

c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would involve the construction of a new access road along the eastern side of the existing WWTP site. To provide adequate truck entry, the existing access road would be extended and looped to enhance access for truck traffic and equipment maintenance, and to facilitate collection and transport of solids from the new sludge dewatering building. The new portion of the looped access road, at the northeast corner of the WWTP site would be paved and would also improve security and emergency response. As such, impacts related to infrastructure modifications would not exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, postfire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Less than Significant Impact.

According to the City's General Plan, the proposed Project is not within or near an area susceptible to landslides.[76] Furthermore, the proposed Project would be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with applicable standards to minimize potential wildfire related effects. Thus, the proposed Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, postfire slope instability, or drainage changes. proposed Project impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

76 City of Solvang, General Plan, "Safety Element" (2016).

5.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Project Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE – Does the project:				
a. Have the potential to 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. 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.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a. Have the potential to 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than Significant with Project Mitigation.

As discussed in **Section 5.4**, implementation of the proposed Project has the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Natural communities and populations of rare or threatened plant or animal species have the potential to exist on or near the Project site and would therefore, have the potential to be affected by implementation of the proposed Project. Furthermore, as discussed in **Section 5.5: Cultural Resources** and **5.18: Mandatory**

Findings of Significance, the proposed Project would have the potential to effect evidence of California's history or prehistory.

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measures will reduce impacts to wildlife species and cultural resources to a less than significant level.

Biological Resources

The proposed Project construction related activities shall abide by **Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6** as identified in **Section 5.4.**

Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Cultural Resources

The proposed Project construction related activities shall abide by **MM CUL-1** as identified in **Section 5.5.**

Tribal Cultural Resources

The proposed Project construction related activities shall abide by **MM TCR-1** as identified in **Section 5.5**

As discussed in each respective section, the proposed Project would mitigate any potential impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, and tribal cultural resources to less than significant with implementation of mitigation.

b. 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.)

Less than Significant Impact.

As discussed in **Section 2.0**, the WWTP has a design and permitted capacity of 1.5 mgd. The WWTP operates under a Waste Discharge Permit (WDP) issued by the RWQCB. As a result of the process adjustments required to de-nitrify, all three SBR basins must now be utilized to achieve de-nitrification. Therefore, a significant portion of the City's available treatment capacity has been lost, and the WWTP now has an estimated capacity of 0.9 mgd, or a 0.6 mgd reduction in capacity. Part of the reduced capacity is due to higher waste concentration in the wastewater resulting from water conservation. The WWTP currently discharges its treated effluent into a polishing pond and then to an evaporation/percolation pond. On high flow days or significant rain events, the large evaporation/percolation pond discharges into

a small evaporation/percolation pond for additional storage. The proposed Project includes improvements to restore lost treatment capacity, address existing WWTP deficiencies, and replace old facilities that have reached the end of their useful life.

The threshold of significance for cumulatively considerable contribution to an air quality impact is the same as the threshold of significance for a project impact. In accordance with SBCAPCD, the proposed Project would not exceed construction or operation related air quality emissions thresholds. Therefore, given that the proposed Project would not exceed these thresholds it would have neither a project-specific significant impact nor the potential to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant air quality impact.

As discussed previously, the proposed Project would restore lost wastewater treatment capacity by approximately 0.6 mgd that would result in higher quality wastewater effluent that would be discharged into the polishing/evaporation ponds adjacent to the Santa Ynez River. The increase in wastewater effluent, as well as the quality of the effluent, would contribute additional flow to the Santa Ynez River downstream of the Project site. The additional flow would not result in adverse effects to downstream habitat and of the species dependent on that habitat. As with the proposed Project, during construction and operation, other future development projects would be expected to incorporate design features, comply with applicable regulations, including the County's Tree Preservation Ordinance, and incorporate mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce potential impacts on biological species. Therefore, the proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to biological species would not be cumulatively considerable and, thus, would be less than significant.

Additionally, all related projects, including the proposed Project, would be required to demonstrate compliance with LID standards related to on-site water runoff. Compliance with the City's LID standards would reduce the amount of surface water runoff leaving the site compared to the current conditions and, thus, would not result in significant water quality impacts. Therefore, the proposed Project does not have the potential to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant water quality impact.

Noise impacts are localized in nature and decrease with distance. Cumulative construction noise impacts have the potential to occur when multiple construction projects in the local area generate noise within the same time frame and contribute to the local ambient noise environment. As mentioned previously, Solvang Municipal Code Section 11-12-21 exempts construction activity so as long as construction activities are limited between 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Consistent with City requirements, construction activities associated with the proposed Project and related projects would occur during these hours.

Therefore, combined construction noise impact of the related projects and the Project's contribution would not cause a significant cumulative impact.

The proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to any impact. The proposed Project would be consistent with the *General Plan* and zoning designations of the site. Therefore, the proposed Project would not weigh short-term goals above long-term environmental goals of the City.

There are no unusual circumstances relating to the proposed Project, nor are there any successive projects of the same type in the same place that would render any impacts as significant or cumulatively considerable. No significant cumulatively considerable impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed Project and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project's potential impacts to air quality, GHG emissions, noise, transportation, and other environmental issues have been reviewed. Furthermore, the restored treatment capacity would be available to treat the anticipated wastewater generated by growth within the City. The wastewater effluent would also be a higher quality in order to meet current RWQCB standards for wastewater effluent. The increased discharge that would ultimately enter the Santa Ynez River would meet pre-2017 discharge flows, but with higher quality effluent. The additional discharge would contribute to flows within the river that would provide opportunity for downstream users to utilize water in accordance with each users' water right permit.

The analysis found that development and operation of the proposed Project would result in less than significant adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Mitigation Measures: No Mitigation measures are required.

Impacts would be less than significant.

6.0 REFERENCES

The following documents and information were used in the preparation of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration:

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California Public Resources Code, Title 14, sec. 5020-5029.5, California Register of Historical Resources.

California Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD), 2012.

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City, *General Plan,* Noise Element (2013).

City, *General Plan,* Parks and Recreation Element (2009).

City, *General Plan,* Safety Element (2016).

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Santa Barbara County Airport Land Use Commission, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Santa Barbara County Airport Land Use Plan (SBCALUP), "Santa Ynez Airport" https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:38b296e1-7a1e-3e63-96e5-52522ac47103. Adopted 2022.

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7.0 ACRONYMS

AAQS	ambient air quality standards
AB	assembly bill
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effects
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
Basin	Santa Ynez River Groundwater Basin
BOD	Biological Oxygen Demand
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCIC	Central Coastal Information Center
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CED	California Energy Demand
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CMA	Central Management Area
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO	carbon monoxide
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EMA	Eastern Management Area
EIR	environmental impact report
FT	federally threatened
GHG	greenhouse gas
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plans
HCP	habitat conservation plan
Mgd	million gallons per day
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	natural community's conservation plan
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NOx	nitrogen oxide
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric
PM2.5	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns
PM10	particulate matter less than 10 microns
PRC	Public Resources Board
ROG	reactive organic gas
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SBCAG	Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
SBCAPCD	Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District
SBCFD	Santa Barbara County Fire Department
SBCPHD	Santa Barbara County Public Health Department

SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SFBAAB	San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin
SOx	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SSC	Species of Species Concern
TCP	Traditional Cultural Property
TDS	total dissolved solids
US	United States
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
USFW	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VMT	vehicles miles traveled
WEAP	Worker Environmental Awareness Program
WL	Watch List
WMA	Western Management Area
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant

8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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