California Environmental Quality Act

INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Diamond Ranch High School Solar Farm Project

Pomona & Diamond Bar, CA

October 2025

Lead Agency:

Pomona Unified School District
800 S. Garey Avenue
Pomona, CA 91766

Contact: Ronald Gonzales-Lawrence
Director, Governmental Relations
ronald.lawrence@pomona.k12.ca.us
(909) 397-4800, ext. 23885

Prepared by:

Michael Baker International
3536 Concours Street, Suite 100
Ontario, CA 91764

Contact: Melissa J. Whittemore
Sr. Environmental Project Manager
Melissa.Whittemore@mbakerintl.com
(858) 614-5000

JN 205694

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BMP.....best management practice

CBC.....California Building Standards Code

CCR.....California Code of Regulations

CDFW.....California Department of Fish and Wildlife

CEQA.....California Environmental Quality Act

DC.....direct current

DRHS.....Diamond Ranch High School

EIR.....Environmental Impact Report

GHG.....greenhouse gas

IS.....Initial Study

kV.....kilovolt

LHMP.....Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

MBTA.....Migratory Bird Treaty Act

MND.....Mitigated Negative Declaration

MW.....megawatt

ND.....Negative Declaration

NPDES.....National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

SCAQMD.....South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCE.....Southern California Edison

SR.....State Route

SWPPP.....Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

SWRCB.....State Water Resources Control Board

USFWS.....United States Fish and Wildlife Service

VHFHSZ.....Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

VMT.....vehicle miles traveled

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Document Overview

This Initial Study (IS) has been prepared by the Pomona Unified School District (District), as Lead Agency, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to assess whether there may be significant environmental impacts from construction and operation of the proposed Diamond Ranch High School Solar Farm Project (project). Based on the responses to the IS checklist questions, the Lead Agency finds that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is the appropriate level of CEQA documentation. This MND concludes that there is no substantial evidence that there may be significant environmental impacts; in the case of a potentially significant impact, feasible mitigation measures have been identified that would avoid or mitigate the potential impacts to a less than significant level.

The Pomona Unified School District is the Lead Agency for the proposed project pursuant to CEQA and implementing regulations.[1] The Lead Agency has the principal responsibility for implementing and approving a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. The Lead Agency is responsible for preparing environmental documentation in accordance with CEQA to determine if approval of the project and subsequent construction and operation would have a significant impact on the environment. As defined by Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, an IS is prepared primarily to provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Negative Declaration (ND), or MND would be appropriate as the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for the proposed project.

The purpose of an IS under Section 15063(c) of the CEQA Guidelines is to:

- Provide the Lead Agency with information necessary to decide if an EIR, ND, or MND should be prepared.
- Enable a Lead Agency to modify a project to mitigate adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for an ND or MND.
- Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if required, by focusing the EIR on adverse effects determined to be significant, identifying the adverse effects determined not to be significant, explaining the reasons for determining that potentially significant adverse effects would not be significant, and identifying whether a program EIR, or other process, can be used to analyze adverse environmental effects of the project.
- Facilitate an environmental assessment early during project design.
- Provide documentation in the ND or MND that a project would not have a significant effect on the environment.
- Eliminate unnecessary EIRs.
- Determine if a previously prepared EIR could be used for the project.

[1] Public Resources Code Sections 21000–21177 and California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3.

In cases where no potentially significant impacts are identified, the Lead Agency may issue an ND, and no mitigation measures would be needed. Where potentially significant impacts are identified, the Lead Agency may determine that mitigation measures would adequately reduce these impacts to less than significant levels. The Lead Agency would then prepare an MND for the proposed project. If the Lead Agency determines that individual or cumulative effects of the proposed project would cause a significant adverse environmental effect that cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels, the Lead Agency would require preparation of an EIR to further analyze these impacts.

1.2 Contents

CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(d) identifies the following specific contents of an IS:

- A description and the location of the project.
- An identification of the environmental setting.
- An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries. The brief explanation may be either through a narrative or a reference to another information source such as an attached map, photographs, or an earlier EIR, ND, or MND. A reference to another document should include, where appropriate, a citation to the page or pages where the information is found.
- A discussion of measures to mitigate significant adverse environmental effects, if any.
- An examination of existing zoning, plans, and other land use controls that apply to the project.
- The names of persons that participated in the document preparation.

1.3 Organization of Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

This IS/MND is organized to satisfy CEQA requirements. The IS/MND includes the following sections:

- Section 1.0, Introduction, identifies the purpose and scope of the IS/MND.
- Section 2.0, Project Information, describes the existing environmental conditions of the project area and surroundings, and the proposed project activities.
- Section 3.0, Environmental Checklist, presents checklist responses for each resource topic to identify and assess impacts associated with the proposed project, and proposes mitigation measures, where needed, to render potential environmental impacts less than significant, where feasible.
- Section 4.0, List of Preparers, identifies the persons who contributed to preparation of the IS/MND.

1.4 Findings from the Initial Study

No Impact or Impacts Considered Less Than Significant

Based on the IS findings, the project would have no impact or a less than significant impact on the following environmental categories listed from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire

Impacts Considered Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures

Based on the IS findings, the project would have a less than significant impact on the following environmental categories listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines when proposed mitigation measures are implemented:

- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Noise
- Public Services
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

2.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

1.	**Project Title:**	Diamond Ranch High School Solar Farm Project
2.	**Lead Agency Name and Address:**	Pomona Unified School District 800 South Garey Avenue Pomona, California 91764
3.	**Contact Person and Phone Number:**	Ronald Gonzales-Lawrence 909-397-4800, Ext. 23885
4.	**Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**	Southland Industries 16835 West Bernardino Drive, Suite 210 San Diego, California 92127
5.	**Project Location:**	The project is proposed on approximately 11.5 acres of vacant land within Los Angeles County Assessor's Parcel Nos. 8701-022-907 and -908, on a portion of the Diamond Ranch High School (DRHS) campus at 100 Diamond Ranch Drive. The majority of the project site (9.5 acres), including access to the project site, is located in the City of Pomona. The southwestern portion of the project site (2 acres) is in the City of Diamond Bar. Surrounding jurisdictions include the City of Chino Hills to the southeast. Regional access is via State Route (SR) 60 at the Phillips Ranch Road interchange, located approximately 150 feet east of the project site. Phillips Ranch Road turns into Chino Hills Parkway, south of Diamond Ranch Drive. **Figure 1, Regional Location**, and **Figure 2, Project Site**, show the project site from regional and local perspectives, respectively.

6. **General Plan Designation:** The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan. The portion of the project site in the City of Diamond Bar has a General Plan Land Use designation of School.[2]

7. **Zoning:** The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a zoning designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Open Space (OS). The portion of the project site in the City of Diamond Bar has a zoning designation of Agricultural District (AG).[3]

8. **Description of Project:**

The project consists of the installation and operation of a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) power generating system, supporting structures, inverter modules, pad-mounted transformers, access roads and fencing, and on-site switchgear. **Figure 3, Conceptual Site Plan,** shows the proposed improvements.

A 2.8-megawatt direct current (MW DC) solar power system and a 480-volt switchgear station would be constructed in the main development footprint, located north of the DRHS campus, of the project site. A total of 4,284 PV panels would be installed on ground-mounted racks. As shown in **Figure 4, Cross Section of Array**, the panels would have a maximum length of 13 feet, 9 inches and be tilted at a 20-degree angle. They would have a maximum height of 6 feet, 7 inches above the final grade. The panels would be mounted on a racking system supported by piles and positioned to face south, toward the DRHS campus. Piles, which would support the racks, would have a maximum depth of 8 feet. A prefabricated, compact switchgear station would be installed south of the arrays. The switchgear would be 12.5 feet by 6.5 feet in area and 8 feet in height. It would control, protect, and isolate the electrical systems and be made up of circuit breakers, fuses, and switches that are mounted in a metal enclosure.

An underground 12-kilovolt (kV) circuit would be installed from the switchgear station to a new 20-foot by 22-foot meter station proposed near Diamond Ranch Road. From the meter station, underground interconnect cables would be installed to existing Southern California Edison (SCE) electrical utility vaults on the south side of Diamond Ranch Road,

[2] Pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094 et seq., the governing board of a school district may render city or county zoning ordinances and general plan requirements inapplicable. It is anticipated that the District's Board of Education will exempt the proposed Project and campus from any zoning ordinances or regulations of the City of Pomona and City of Diamond Bar, including, without limitation, the Cities' Municipal Codes, General Plans, and related ordinances and regulations that otherwise would be applicable.

[3] See previous note.

located generally across an existing driveway apron, which would be expanded as a result of the project.

The project site would include 26-foot-wide service roads to provide vehicle access to maintain the panels. A main east-west road would be constructed on the south side of the solar farm, and three north-south "finger" roads would be installed between the solar panels. The service roads would be accessed from the driveway apron on Diamond Ranch Road, east of the existing tennis courts. Parking would be available along the east-west internal road and near the driveway apron. Perimeter fencing would be installed around the solar farm; gated access would be from the driveway apron.

The renewable energy generated by the project would be distributed to the existing SCE 12-kV distribution line located beneath Diamond Ranch Road and exported to SCE's grid to offset electricity use at 20 District-owned properties. Project implementation would not require additional improvements at any off-site District properties or impact student enrollment at DRHS or other schools.

The proposed improvements would require intermittent maintenance and cleaning, including washing, of the panels. Maintenance activities would occur two to three times per year and be scheduled to avoid potential conflict with school activities and operations. Maintenance would include washing panels with water and a biodegradable detergent; trimming and/or removing vegetation to prevent shading of the panels and potential damage of the system; and removing trash from the site.

The entire project site would be graded. Approximately 38,000 cubic yards of soil would be cut and approximately 10,100 cubic yards of soil would fill the low-lying areas. The site would be designed with a 1 percent slope toward the southwest corner of the site to direct stormwater runoff to an existing concrete channel, located immediately off-site. Once the proposed arrays are installed, a 0.75-inch layer of crushed gravel would be placed over the entire project site. It is anticipated import and export trips would entail a twenty mile round trip.

Construction would begin in the first quarter of 2026 and last 12 months. Construction staging and laydown would occur with the development footprint, including in the dirt area at the project site entrance near Diamond Ranch Road. Construction activities would be scheduled to minimize disruptions to campus programs.

9. **Project Setting and Surrounding Land Uses:**

The project site is located on the campus of DRHS and is generally level. The area where the solar panels would be installed has an average elevation of 995 feet above mean sea level. It was rough-graded during construction of DRHS in the mid-1990s and has since remained undeveloped except for an existing maintenance road used to access the project site.

Elevations on the DRHS campus generally increase from north to south, with the lowest elevations at the project site at the northern portion. Elevations range from approximately 1,138 feet above mean sea level at the southernmost athletic field on the southern portion

of the campus, to approximately 1,083 feet above mean sea level at the baseball field immediately south of the project site.

As shown in Figure 2, the project site contains ruderal vegetation, including grasses, shrubs, and trees; an unpaved pathway that separates the project site from the school's baseball fields and outdoor basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts; a flat dirt area near the unpaved pathway on-site; a driveway apron east of the tennis courts from Diamond Ranch Road; a portion of Diamond Ranch Road; and electrical infrastructure south of Diamond Ranch Road. Vegetation on the project site is regularly maintained to reduce dense vegetation growth near the school facilities.

The project site is in a suburban area. It is bounded by SR 60 to the north. Residential communities in the City of Pomona are located north of the freeway. DRHS and the project site are separated by a terraced slope. Immediately south of the slope are DRHS outdoor recreational facilities. The remainder of the school facilities, including buildings, a parking lot, and the track and field stadium, are farther south. Tres Hermanos Ranch is a 2,445-acre natural open space located immediately west of the project site, as well as south and west of DRHS. East of the project site is undeveloped land, beyond which are Phillips Ranch Road and a residential community.

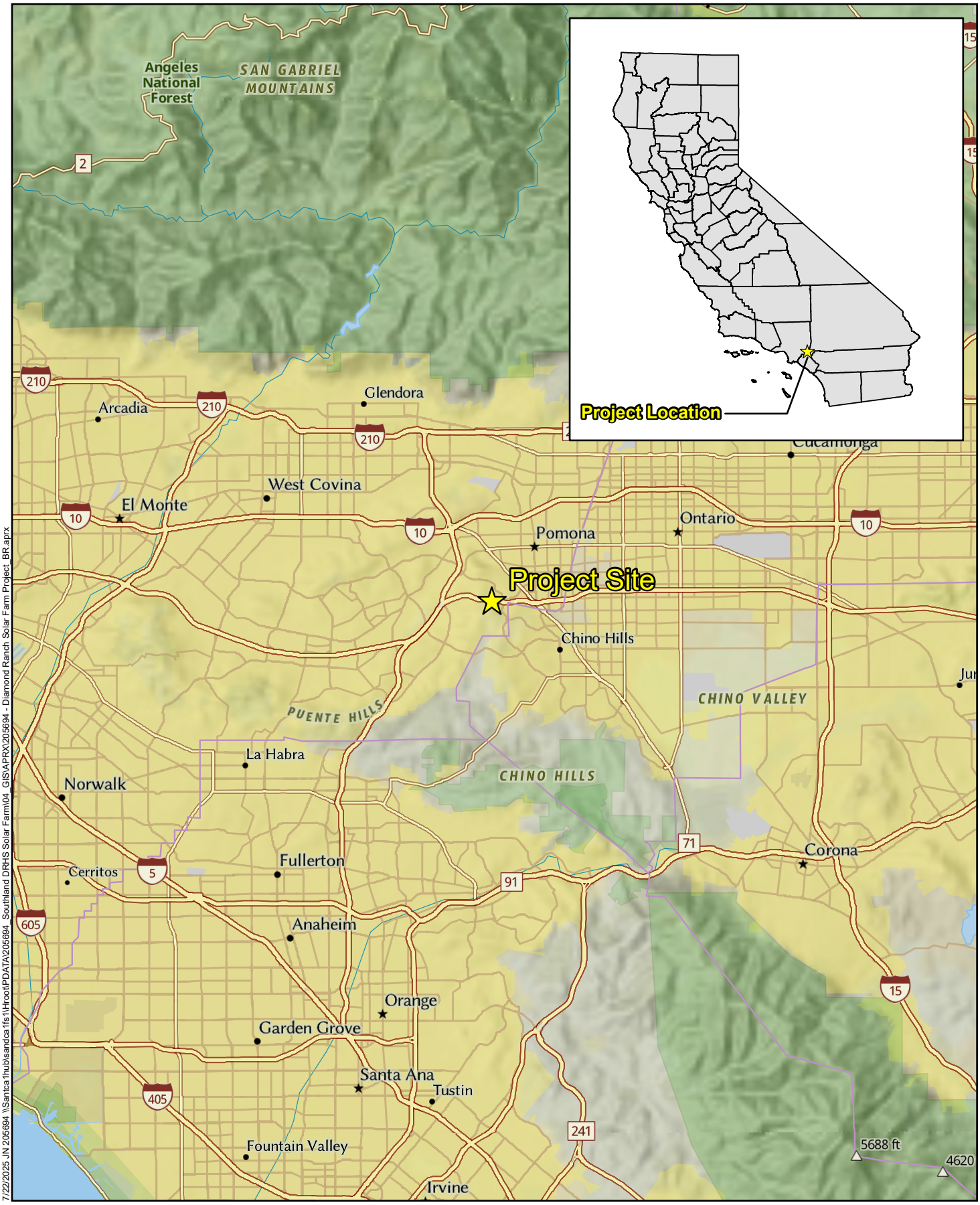
10. **Agency Approvals:**

Agency	Discretionary Action
Lead Agency	
Pomona Unified School District	Adoption of the Final IS/MND and approval of the project
Responsible Agency	
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Issuance of an Incidental Take Permit for species protected by the federal Endangered Species Act
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	Issuance of an Incidental Take Permit for species protected by the state Endangered Species Act
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	Issuance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit General Construction Permit and approval of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
Reviewing Agency	
Division of the State Architect	Review of project compliance with the California Building Standards Code for fire and life safety
Los Angeles County Fire Department	Review of project site access roads, ingress and egress, and fire-fighting water volume and pressure
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)	Review for adherence of SCAQMD CEQA Thresholds of Significance for Climate Impacts

11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**[4]

No, the District has not received requests for consultation from California Native American tribes, pursuant to California Assembly Bill (AB) 52.

[4] NOTE: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify, and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.



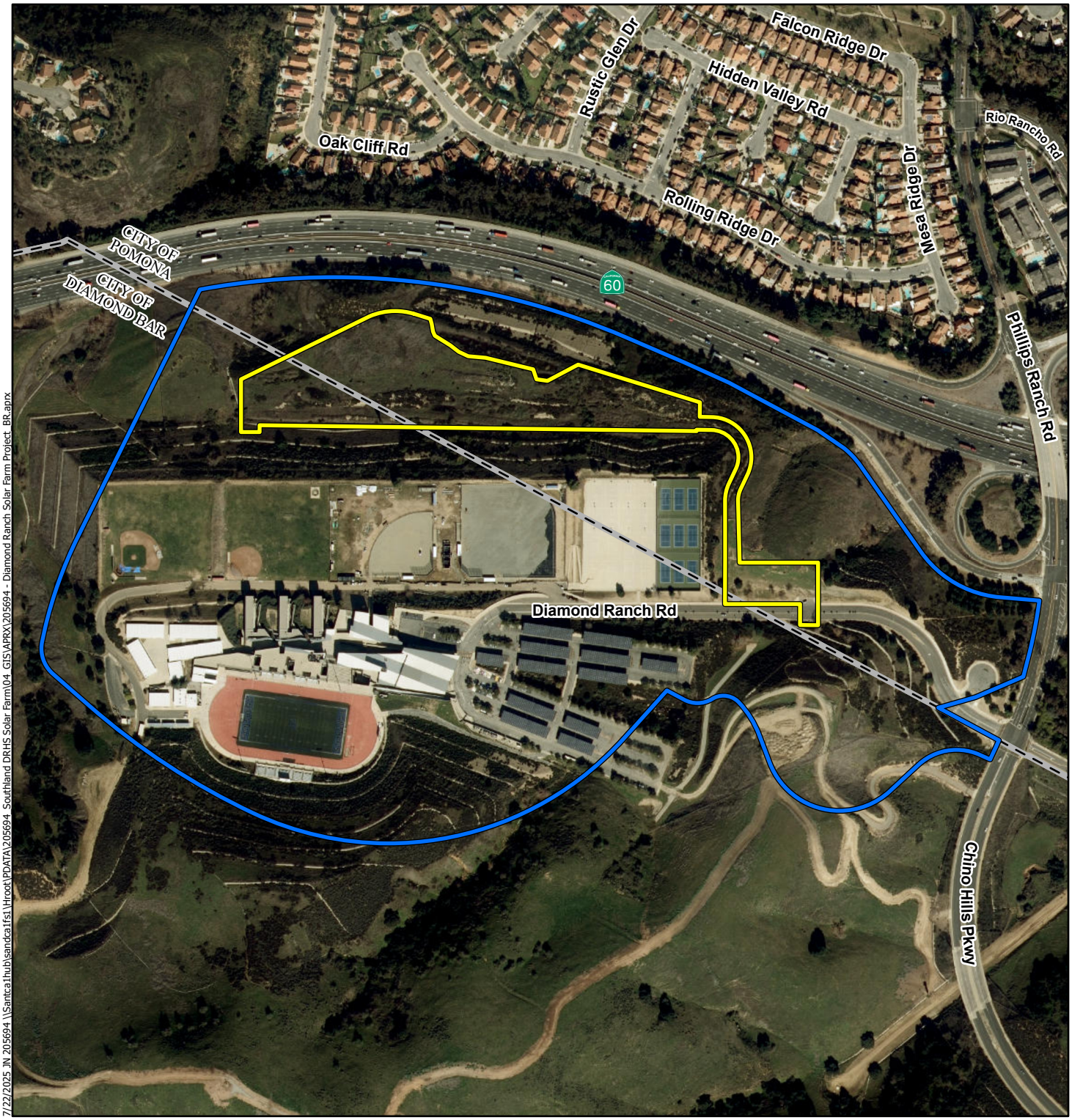
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DIAMOND RANCH HIGH SCHOOL SOLAR FARM PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Regional Vicinity

Figure 1

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL



7/22/2025 JN 205694 \\Santca1hub\sandca1fs1\hroot\PDATA\205694 Southland DRHS Solar Farm\04 GIS\APRX\205694 - Diamond Ranch Solar Farm Project BR.aprx

Legend

- Project Site
- Diamond Ranch High School Campus Boundary

DIAMOND RANCH HIGH SCHOOL SOLAR FARM PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

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0 250 500 US Feet

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online

Project Site

Figure 2



7/22/2025 JN 205694 \\Santca1hub\sandca1fs1\Hroot\PDATA\205694 Southland DRHS Solar Farm\04 GIS\APRX\205694 - Diamond Ranch Solar Farm Project BR.aprx

DIAMOND RANCH HIGH SCHOOL SOLAR FARM PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

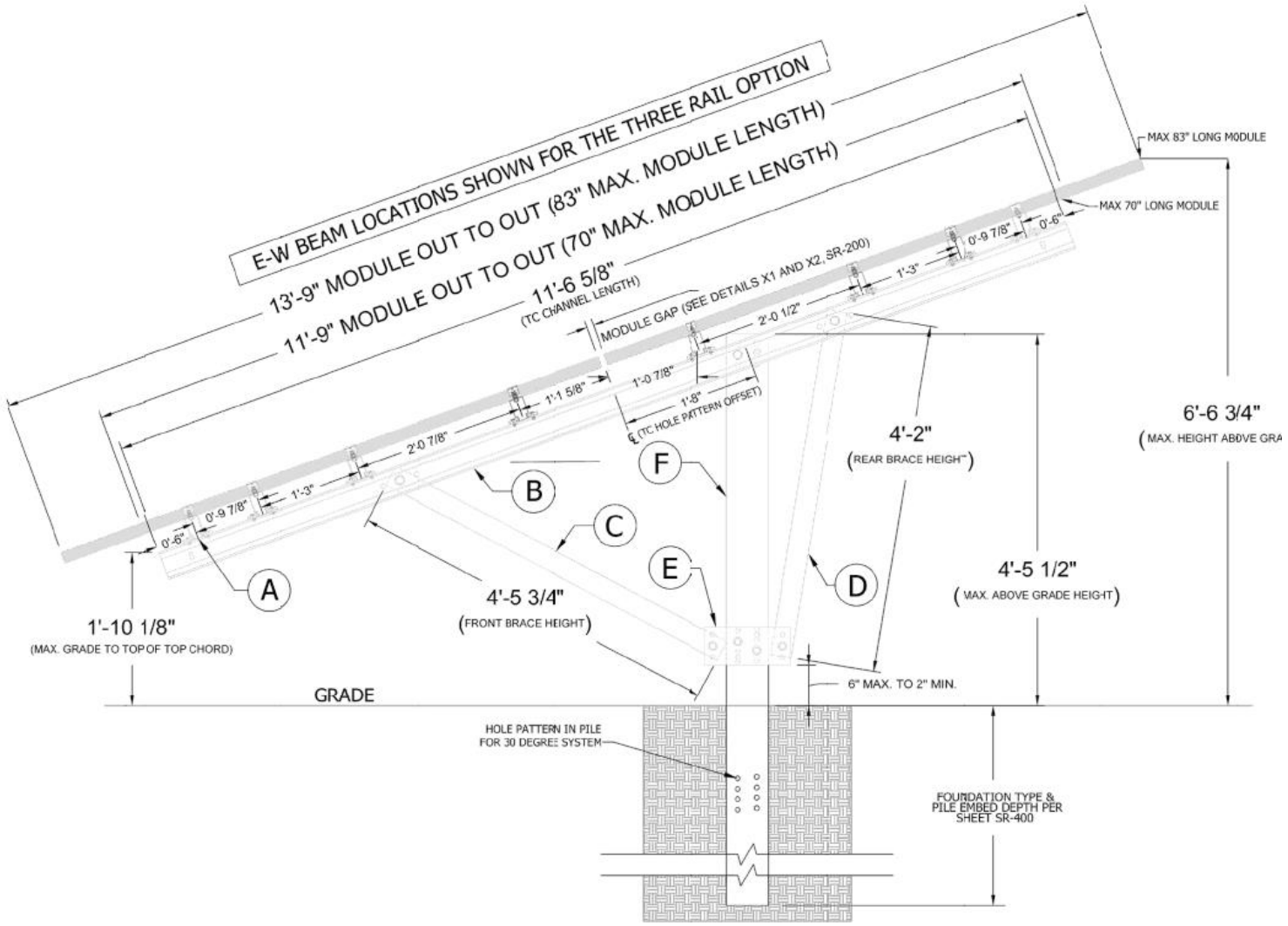
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NOT TO SCALE

Source: Southland, Ursus Victor LLC., May 27, 2025

Project Site Plan

Figure 3



REF NUMBER	PART DESCRIPTION
A	ALUMINUM E-W BEAM (166" OR 246")
B	TOP CHORD CHANNEL
C	FRONT DIAGONAL BRACE (20°)
D	REAR DIAGONAL BRACE (20°)
E	DIAGONAL BRACE PLATE
F	C-PILE (12.5 FT OR 15 FT)

SECTION VIEW OF GFT TABLE - 20° TILT

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Source: Southland, Ursus Victor LLC.

CROSS SECTION OF SOLAR ARRAY
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Figure 4

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

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.

☒ None

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

For the evaluation of potential impacts, the questions in the IS Checklist are stated and an answer is provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the IS. The analysis considers the long-term, direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the project. To each question, there are four possible responses:

- **No Impact**. The project would not have any measurable environmental impact on the environment.
- **Less Than Significant Impact**. The project would have the potential for impacting the environment, although this impact would be below established thresholds that are considered to be significant.
- **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**. The project would have the potential to generate impacts which may be considered a significant effect on the environment, although measures or changes to the development's physical or operational characteristics can reduce these impacts to levels that are less than significant.
- **Potentially Significant Impact**. The project would have impacts which are considered significant, and additional analysis is required to identify measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ 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

Oct 23, 2025

Date

Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

3.1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AESTHETICS: *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 non-urbanized 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) Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. Scenic views or vistas are defined as panoramic public views of various natural features, including the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features. Public access to these views may be from park lands, private and publicly owned sites, and public rights-of-way. According to the General Plans of the Cities of Diamond Bar and Pomona, there are no officially designated scenic vistas in either city.[5] Thus, no impact to scenic vistas would occur.

[5] City of Diamond Bar. 2019. Diamond Bar General Plan 2040. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7072/Diamond-Bar-General-Plan-2040?bidId=; City of Pomona. 2014. City of Pomona 2014 General Plan Update. https://www.pomonaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2402/637521057423830000.

b) Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact. According to the California Department of Transportation's *State Scenic Highway System Map*, no officially designated or eligible state scenic highways are in the vicinity of the project site.[6] The nearest officially designated state scenic highway is a segment of SR 55 located approximately 11 miles to the south. Due to the distance and intervening topography, no impact related to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would occur.

c) Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project, in non-urbanized 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. CEQA Guidelines Section 15387 defines an urbanized area as "a central city or a group of contiguous cities with a population of 50,000 or more, together with adjacent densely populated areas having a population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile." Based on existing conditions, the project site is located in an urbanized area.

Project improvements include ground-mounted solar panels, a switchgear station, and perimeter fencing on a vacant and level building pad. Some of the proposed project components may be visible from SR 60. The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a zoning designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Open Space (OS), which allows permanent open spaces, governmental facilities, and low-intensity outdoor recreational facilities.[7] The portion of the project site in the City of Diamond Bar has a zoning designation of Agricultural District (AG), which allows a variety of uses, including low-density residential uses, agricultural and compatible open space uses, and public facility and recreation uses.[8] Neither city zoning ordinance includes requirements related to scenic quality for the project site's zoning designations.

However, the City of Diamond Bar's General Development Standards for hillside areas includes guidelines "to provide direction and encourage development which is sensitive to the unique characteristics common to hillside properties, which include, slopes, land form, vegetation and scenic quality… [and] [p]rovide… alternative approaches to conventional flat land development practices by achieving land use patterns and intensities that are consistent with the natural characteristics of hill areas (e.g., slopes, landform, vegetation and scenic quality)."[9] The project would involve construction of a portion of the proposed solar farm on an existing hillside in the

[6] California Department of Transportation. n.d. California State Scenic Highway System Map. Accessed February 21, 2025. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa.

[7] City of Pomona. n.d. General Plan and Zoning. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6104341df4d74f7f8e22cc0a2caf536b,

[8] City of Diamond Bar. 2013. Zoning Map. Accessed February 23, 2025. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/96/Diamond-Bar-Zoning-Map-PDF?bidId=.

[9] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Diamond Bar Development Code, Article III, Chapter 22.22, Hillside Management. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://library.municode.com/ca/diamond_bar/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_TIT22DECO_ARTIIISIPLGEDEST_CH22.22HIMA.

City of Diamond Bar. Project construction would entail grading to create terraced slopes for placement solar panels and associated infrastructure. Once the solar panels are installed, the areas disturbed by project construction activities would be covered with a 0.75-inch layer of crushed gravel. Because the project site was rough-graded during construction of the DRHS campus in the mid-1990s and currently contains non-native grasses and some shrubs and trees, and the project site's natural slopes, land form, and vegetation no longer remain, the site does not possess unique characteristics common to hillside properties, pursuant to the City of Diamond Bar's Development Code. Therefore, the project site in its current state does not enhance the scenic quality of the project area or region.

Therefore, the project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, and impacts would be less than significant.

d) Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project does not propose any lighting fixtures and would therefore not create a new source of nighttime lighting. Solar panels are designed to absorb light rather than reflect it. The panels would be installed facing south, toward the high school and away from surrounding residential uses and viewers traveling along SR 60. The proposed equipment and perimeter fencing would be of matte finish and without shine. Therefore, project operations would not create a source of glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

Construction activities would not result in a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect views in the project area. As mentioned, the project site is within the boundaries of the City of Pomona as well as the City of Diamond Bar. The City of Diamond Bar's regulations relative to noise are utilized for this analysis, as the City of Diamond Bar's noise regulations are more restrictive. Construction hours would be limited to weekdays and Saturdays, excluding federal holidays, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. as provided in Section 8.12.720 of the City of Diamond Bar Municipal Code. Any nighttime construction necessitating lighting would be concluded by 7:00 p.m. daily. Additionally, temporary construction lighting would be removed once project construction is completed. Therefore, nighttime views would not be adversely affected during project construction. Impacts related to light and glare would be less than significant.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: *In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forestry resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. 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 non-agricultural 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 forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Would the project 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 non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The project site is located on an undeveloped portion of the DRHS campus that was previously graded in the mid-1990s. According to the California Department of Conservation, the project site is not identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland).[10] The closest Farmland is approximately 2.1 miles northwest of the project site. The project would not convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

Less Than Significant Impact. There are no Williamson Act contract lands within the project site.[11] The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a zoning designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Open Space (OS), which allows permanent open spaces, governmental facilities, and low-intensity outdoor recreational facilities; agricultural uses are not an allowed use.[12] Implementation of the proposed solar farm project would support the District, a local government agency, and its facilities and therefore would not be in conflict with the OS zoning district.

The portion of the project site and DRHS campus that are in the City of Diamond Bar have a land use designation of School and a zoning designation of Agricultural District (AG).[13] The School land use designation identifies land for school facilities,[14] and the AG zoning allows a variety of uses, including low-density residential uses, agricultural and compatible open space uses, and public facility and recreation uses.[15] Nonetheless, general plan designations for public facilities, water, and schools are implemented by all zoning districts.[16] Therefore, as the project would support school and District operations and is consistent with the School land use designation,

[10] California Department of Conservation. n.d. California Important Farmland Finder. Accessed February 18, 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/.

[11] California Department of Conservation. n.d. Williamson Act Enrollment Finder. Accessed February 27, 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/.

[12] City of Pomona. n.d. General Plan and Zoning. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6104341df4d74f7f8e22cc0a2caf536b,

[13] City of Diamond Bar. 2013. Zoning Map. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/96/Diamond-Bar-Zoning-Map-PDF?bidId=.

[14] City of Diamond Bar. 2019. General Plan 2040. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/961/General-Plan-2040.

[15] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Code of Ordinances. Development Code Section 22.12.010(1). Accessed March 27, 2025. https://library.municode.com/ca/diamond_bar/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_TIT22DECO_ARTIIZODIALLAUS_CH22.12SPPUZODI_S22.12.010PUCH

[16] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Code of Ordinances. Development Code Section 22.06.020. Table 2-1, Zoning Districts, Footnote (1). Accessed March 27, 2025. https://library.municode.com/ca/diamond_bar/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_TIT22DECO_ARTIIZODIALLAUS_CH22.06ESZODIADZOMA_S22.06.020ZODIES.

project implementation would not conflict with the City of Diamond Bar's existing zoning for agricultural use.

Accordingly, implementation of the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, and impacts would be less than significant.

c) Would the project 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. No portion of the project site is zoned for forestland or timberland use or located adjacent to forestlands or timberlands. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for forestland, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. No impact would occur.

d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. As stated in response to Response 3.2(c), no portion of the project site is designated as forestland. Therefore, project implementation would not result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use. No impact would occur.

e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. Refer to Responses 3.2(a) through 3.2(d). Project implementation would not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use. No impact would occur.

3.3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AIR QUALITY: *Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district 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 non-attainment 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

To evaluate the project's potential to result in impacts regarding air quality, a project-specific Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis, dated July 2025, was prepared by Vista Environmental, and is included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin, which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. The SCAQMD is responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources and addresses this requirement through preparation of an air quality management plan (AQMP). The *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan* (2022 AQMP) was adopted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) on January 26, 2023, and has been incorporated into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The 2022 AQMP promotes extensive use of zero-emission technologies across all stationary and mobile sources, coupled with rules and regulations, investment strategies, and incentives.[17]

[17] Vista Environmental, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis,* 2025; see Appendix A.

The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook provides direction on how to evaluate potential air quality impacts, how to determine whether these impacts are significant, and how to mitigate these impacts. A proposed project should be considered to be consistent with the AQMP if it furthers one or more policies and does not obstruct other policies.

The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook identifies two key indicators to determine a project's consistency with the 2022 AQMP:

1. Whether or not the project will result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP.
2. Whether or not the project will exceed the assumptions in the AQMP or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

Both of these criteria are evaluated below.

Criterion 1 – Increase in the Frequency or Severity of Violations, Contribute New Violations, or Delay Attainment of Standards?

Based on the air quality modeling analysis prepared for the project (refer to Appendix A), short-term regional and local construction air emissions would not result in a significant impact based on SCAQMD regional thresholds of significance; refer to Table 3.3-1, *Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions*. The project's regional construction-related criteria pollutant emissions (consisting of both on-site and off-site emissions sources) would not exceed the local thresholds, which represents a worst-case scenario, as the local thresholds consider only the on-site emissions generated by the project. Project impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Table 3.3-1. Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Winter 2026	3.55	34.8	33.6	0.10	7.46	4.04
Summer 2026	1.65	13.1	21.8	0.04	2.17	0.81
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	**3.55**	**34.8**	**33.6**	**0.10**	**7.46**	**4.04**
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	**75**	**100**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
SCAQMD Local Thresholds	**--**	**282**	**3,765**	**--**	**49**	**16**
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:
VOC: volatile organic compounds; NO_x: nitrogen oxides; CO: carbon monoxide; SO_2: sulfur dioxide; PM_{10}: particles that are less than 10 micrometers in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$: particles that are less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter

Calculated from CalEEMod Version 2022.1.
Source: Vista Environmental, 2025; refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*.

Project operation would generate emissions from project-related vehicle trips and on-site area sources. Such emissions would be inconsequential on a regional basis and would not result in a significant impact based on SCAQMD thresholds of significance; refer to Table 3.3-2, *Operational Criteria Pollutant Emissions*. The project's regional operations-related criteria pollutant emissions (consisting of both on-site and off-site emissions sources) would not exceed the local thresholds, which represents a worst-case scenario, as the local thresholds consider only the on-site emissions generated by the project. Accordingly, a less than significant long-term impact would

occur. Based on the information provided above, the proposed project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP.

Table 3.3-2. Operational Criteria Pollutant Emissions

	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
Activity	**VOC**	**NOx**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Mobile Sources[1]	0.01	0.01	0.06	<0.01	0.01	<0.01
Area Sources[2]	0.14	<0.01	0.10	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Energy Usage[3]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Emissions	**0.15**	**0.01**	**0.16**	**<0.01**	**0.01**	**<0.01**
SCAQMD Regional Operational Thresholds	**55**	**55**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
SCAQMD Local Operational Thresholds	**--**	**282**	**3,765**	**--**	**12**	**4**
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:
VOC: volatile organic compounds; NO_x: nitrogen oxides; CO: carbon monoxide; SO_2: sulfur dioxide; PM_{10}: particles that are less than 10 micrometers in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$: particles that are less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
[1] Mobile sources consist of emissions from vehicles and road dust.
[2] Area sources consist of emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.
[3] Energy usage consists of emissions from natural gas usage. No natural gas hook-ups are part of the proposed project.
Calculated from CalEEMod Version 2022.1.
Source: Vista Environmental, 2025; refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis*.

Criterion 2 - Exceed Assumptions in the AQMP?

Consistency with the AQMP assumptions is determined by analyzing the proposed project in relation to the assumptions outlined in the 2022 AQMP. The main purpose of this criterion is to ensure that the analyses conducted for the proposed project are aligned with the forecasts used in the AQMP. The 2022 AQMP was developed using planning forecasts provided in Connect SoCal and the 2019 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). Connect SoCal serves as a major planning document for the regional transportation and land use network within Southern California and is updated every four years in accordance with federal and state requirements. The 2019 FTIP offers long-range planning for future transportation improvement projects funded by state and/or federal resources within Southern California. Local governments are mandated to use these plans as the foundation for their own planning purposes to ensure consistency with applicable regional plans under CEQA. For the proposed project, the *Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Areas I and II City of Pomona* (Specific Plan) Land Use Plan defines the assumptions represented in the AQMP.

The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a land use designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan and is zoned Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Open Space (OS), and the portion of the project site in the City of Diamond Bar has a land use designation of School and is zoned Agricultural District (AG). The Phillips Ranch Specific Plan provides the following definition for the Open Space zoning district: "*This district is intended to provide for permanent open spaces, government facilities in the community, and low-intensity, outdoor recreation facilities*." The proposed project is located on the Diamond Ranch High School property. The power generated by the proposed solar farm would be utilized by the District and is thus considered an expansion of the high school use, which is an allowed use under the Open Space land use designation and

zoning. Accordingly, the proposed project would not exceed the assumptions in the AQMP or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

Based on the analysis above, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SCAQMD AQMP. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Less Than Significant Impact. Project implementation would generate air pollutants as a result of construction and operation-related activities. Short-term emissions may result from the use of construction equipment such as graders and dump trucks, as well as from worker vehicle exhaust and fugitive dust. Long-term operational emissions may result from operation of maintenance equipment and vehicle trips.

Construction Emissions

CalEEMod Version 2022.1 was used to estimate the construction-related criteria pollutant emissions from the proposed project; refer to Appendix A, Section 8.1, for details regarding the input parameters used for the analysis. As shown in Table 3.3-1 above, construction emissions would not exceed SCAQMD regional or local thresholds. Table 3.3-1 analyzes both on-site and off-site emissions, which provides for a worst-case analysis, since the local thresholds are for analyzing only the emissions created on-site. Impacts would be less than significant relative to construction emissions.

Operational Emissions

Ongoing operation of the proposed project would result in a long-term increase in air quality emissions. The increase in emissions would result from vehicle trips generated by the project, energy consumption, and on-site area sources. The operations-related regional criteria air quality impacts created by the proposed project have been analyzed with CalEEMod Version 2022.1. Refer to Appendix A, Section 8.1, for the input parameters used in the analysis. The worst-case VOC, NO_x, CO, SO_2, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ daily emissions generated from the proposed project's long-term operations are shown above in Table 3.3-2. As shown in Table 3.3-2, none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the regional thresholds established by SCAQMD. Further, the emissions presented in Table 3.3-2 account for a worst-case analysis, as both on-site and off-site emissions are included, while the local thresholds pertain to on-site emissions only. Accordingly, operational emissions would be less than significant.

Based on the analysis above, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less Than Significant Impact. Some populations and land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollutants than others. CARB has identified the following populations who are most likely to be affected by air pollution: children less than 14 years of age, the elderly over 65 years of age,

athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are the single-family homes located on the north side of SR 60, approximately 500 feet north of the site. There are also multifamily homes located on the east side of Phillips Ranch Road that are approximately 1,000 feet east of the proposed driveway to the project site.

Construction-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

Construction activities may have the potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of localized criteria pollutants or toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions generated by the use of construction equipment. As shown in Table 3.3-2 above, emissions generated by project construction would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds of significance. Therefore, project construction would result in a less than significant impact to local air quality due to on-site emissions.

Construction-Related Toxic Air Contaminant Impacts

TACs of utmost concern include diesel particulates, benzene, formaldehyde, 1,3-butadiene, and acetaldehyde. Health effects of TACs include cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, and death.

According to the SCAQMD CEQA Handbook, any project that has the potential to expose the public to TACs in excess of the following thresholds would be considered to have a significant air quality impact:

- If the maximum incremental cancer risk is 10 in one million or greater; or
- If toxic air contaminants from the proposed project would result in a Hazard Index increase of 1 or greater.

During construction, diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions associated with the operation of heavy equipment would account for the greatest potential of TACs. According to SCAQMD methodology, health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of "individual cancer risk." "Individual cancer risk" is the likelihood that a person exposed to concentrations of TACs over a 70-year lifetime will contract cancer, based on standard risk-assessment methodology. It should be noted that the most current cancer risk assessment methodology recommends analyzing a 30-year exposure period for the nearby sensitive receptors.

Given the relatively limited number of pieces of heavy-duty construction equipment, the varying distances that construction equipment would be from nearby sensitive receptors, and the short-term construction schedule, the proposed project would not result in a long-term (i.e., 30 or 70 years) substantial source of TAC emissions and corresponding individual cancer risk. In addition, the project would adhere to California Code of Regulations Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449, which regulates emissions from off-road diesel equipment in California. This regulation limits idling of equipment to no more than five minutes. Therefore, with adherence to Section 2449 and the minimal use of heavy-duty construction equipment capable of producing DPM emissions, a less than significant short-term (construction-related) TAC impact would occur.

Operations-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from On-site Operations

Project operation would result in potential emissions arising from on-site sources, including operation of maintenance vehicles, and use of landscaping equipment. As shown in Table 3.3-2 above, emissions generated by project operation would not exceed the local NO_x, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds of significance. Therefore, project operation would result in a less than significant impact to local air quality due to on-site emissions.

Operations-Related TAC Impacts

The proposed solar farm would not result in significant long-term TAC emissions. Although the proposed PV solar panels and the transformers in the substation would be constructed with toxic materials, only a negligible amount of TAC emissions would be emitted due to off-gassing from the PV solar panels. This would not create TAC concentrations high enough to create a significant risk of cancer. Therefore, due to the negligible amount of TAC emissions created from the PV solar panels and transformers, and distance to the nearest sensitive receptors, a less than significant TAC impact would occur from operation of the proposed project.

The proposed project would not result in the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact. Individual responses to odors are highly variable and can result in a multitude of effects. Generally, response to an odor may be influenced by a variety of factors including frequency, duration, offensiveness, location, and sensory perception.

Construction-Related Odor Impacts

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include the application of coatings, such as asphalt pavement, paints and solvents, and diesel equipment emissions. Standard construction requirements that limit the time of day when construction may occur, as well as SCAQMD Rule 1113, which limits the VOC content in paints and solvents, would minimize odor impacts relative to construction. Objectionable odors that may be produced during the construction process would be temporary and would not likely be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the project site's boundaries. Due to the transitory nature of construction odors, and through compliance with applicable regulations that reduce odors, project construction would not result in emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. A less than significant impact with regard to odors would occur.

Operations-Related Odor Impacts

The proposed project would consist of the development of a PV solar farm, which does not include any components that are known sources of odors. Therefore, project operations would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

3.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: *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 Wildlife 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 Wildlife 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

This section is based on *the Biological Resources Assessment for the Diamond Ranch High School Solar Farm Project in the Cities of Diamond Bar and Pomona, Los Angeles County,*

California, prepared by Michael Baker International dated August 26, 2025, and included as Appendix B of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project 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 Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. During surveys conducted, one special-status plant species was observed (Southern California black walnut), and six special-status wildlife species were detected (monarch butterfly, Swainson's hawk, coastal California gnatcatcher, Vaux's swift, yellow warbler, and least Bell's vireo) and are further discussed below.

Special Status Plant Species

One special-status plant species detected within the biological study area boundary: Southern California black walnut. Of the five individuals within the biological study area boundary (see Attachment A, Figure 5, of Appendix B), four individuals are within the northeastern portion of the project site and would be removed. One individual is located near the northwestern boundary of the biological study area and would remain in place unimpacted. The removal of four trees, two of which are limited in size (i.e., one inch in diameter or less at breast height) is not expected to reduce the regional Southern California black walnut population below self-sustaining levels. Therefore, impacts to Southern California black walnut would be less than significant.

Special Status Wildlife Species

Six special-status wildlife species were detected within the project site, including monarch butterfly, Swainson's hawk, coastal California gnatcatcher, Vaux's swift, yellow warbler, and least Bell's vireo. Three of the six species including Swainson's hawk, Vaux's swift, and yellow warbler were not observed within the biological study area and no suitable habitat for these species occurs within the biological study area. Therefore, the project would not impact Swainson's hawk, Vaux's swift, or yellow warbler. The remaining three species, as well as special-status wildlife species with potential to occur on the project site, are discussed below.

Monarch Butterfly

The monarch butterfly is a federal proposed threatened species. Two monarch caterpillars were observed on narrow-leaf milkweed in the western portion of the project site. This species is a federal proposed threatened species. Based on online databases of monarch and milkweed locations in the region the milkweed plants on the project site represent only a small fraction of the milkweed known from the region. Several milkweed species are known from the Puente Hills to the south and southwest, Chino Hills to the south and southeast, and San Jose Hills to the west and northwest that are used by monarchs as larval host plants. The removal of the limited number of milkweed plants within the project site is not expected to substantially reduce the number of monarchs or their available habitat to a point where the species is threatened or at risk of elimination in the region. Therefore, potential impacts are considered less than significant. The project site does not support monarch overwintering habitat; no impacts would occur in this regard.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Several coastal California gnatcatchers (federal threatened species and California species of special concern) were observed within the biological study area during the project-specific 2025 focused surveys. Of the approximately 3.09 acres of combined coastal sage scrub communities within the project site, 1.74 acres were observed as utilized by coastal California gnatcatcher. As this species is federally listed as threatened and is a state species of special concern, removal of on-site coastal sage scrub habitat supporting several individuals would be is considered potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-1 would reduce impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher to less than significant.

MM BIO-1 Permanent impacts to 1.74 acres of coastal sage scrub habitat occupied by the coastal California gnatcatcher shall be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio. The project applicant shall obtain an Incidental Take Permit from the USFWS under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the federal Endangered Species Act. A Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) shall be prepared and submitted to USFWS for review and approval, prior to issuance of a grading permit. The HCP shall include an alternatives analysis, monitoring and management measures, and funding assurances. Mitigation shall occur through off-site preservation of occupied gnatcatcher habitat within a USFWS-approved mitigation bank, off-site acquisition of property supporting occupied gnatcatcher habitat, and/or habitat restoration or enhancement in and adjacent to the project site.

In addition, fencing or flagging shall be installed along the limits of disturbance prior to construction to ensure that construction activities are confined to the designated impact footprint to prevent encroachment into adjacent occupied habitat.

If vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities occur during the gnatcatcher breeding season, which is identified in the gnatcatcher survey protocol as occurring between February 15 and August 30, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey within 300 feet of the impact area no more than three days prior to the start of work. If active nests are found, a no-disturbance buffer of at least 100 feet (or as determined in consultation with USFWS) shall be established until the young have fledged.

Least Bell's Vireo

One individual least Bell's vireo (federal and state endangered) was incidentally detected on two occasions during 2025 biological surveys on site (see Attachment A, Figure 6 of Appendix B). The least Bell's vireo was detected within an arroyo willow thicket in the southcentral portion of the biological study area. No direct impacts to this species would occur as these trees would be left in place. However, if project implementation occurs during the bird nesting season (February 1 through August 31), temporary indirect impacts in the form of construction noise may occur and would be considered potentially significant. Implementation of MM BIO-2 would reduce potential indirect impacts to least Bell's vireo to less than significant levels.

MM BIO-2 Within three days prior to project-related ground-disturbing activities that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically February 1 through August 31, or as determined by a qualified biologist), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to

determine if active nests protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or the California Fish and Game Code are present and could be potentially directly or indirectly impacted. If active nests are found, clearing and construction within 100 feet of the nest (300 feet for raptors' nests) shall be postponed or halted at the discretion of the qualified monitoring biologist, or until the biologist has confirmed the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged.

Species with Potential to Occur on Project Site

A total of 16 special-status wildlife species recorded in the region were not observed within the project site but have the potential to occur. Golden eagle could potentially fly over the project site; however, the site does not support suitable nesting habitat for the species. Therefore, no impact would occur to golden eagle.

Southern California legless lizard, California glossy snake, coastal whiptail, red-diamond rattlesnake, coast horned lizard, coast patch-nosed snake, two-striped gartersnake, south coast gartersnake, grasshopper sparrow, long-eared owl, black swift, pallid bat, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, western mastiff bat, western yellow bat, San Diego desert woodrat, and American badger are California species of special concern. Due to limited project impacts to native vegetation communities in the context of the larger open space areas of the Puente Hills, Chino Hills, and San Jose Hills in the region, the proposed project is not expected to decrease populations of these species below self-sustaining levels in the region; therefore, potential impacts to these species are considered less than significant.

There is potential for white-tailed kite (state fully protected) to forage and nest within the project site. Impacts to nesting white-tailed kite would be considered potentially significant. However, implementation of MM BIO-2 above would reduce the impact to less than significant.

Additionally, Crotch's bumble bee, a state candidate endangered species, may occur within the project site. Under the California Endangered Species Act, CDFW treats candidate species as if they are formally listed, affording them full legal protection during the candidacy period. Therefore, impacts must be evaluated as if the species was listed, including consideration of potential take and the need for incidental take authorization, if applicable. The project site supports floral resources that may be used by foraging Crotch's bumble bee and soils that could provide nesting and overwintering habitat. If present, impacts could be considered potentially significant. Implementation of MM BIO-3, would reduce impacts to less than significant.

MM BIO-3 Avoidance and minimization efforts for Crotch's bumble bee shall consist of a pre-construction survey conducted by a qualified biologist at least three days prior to project vegetation removal activities that occur during the bumble bee flight season (February through October). If individuals of any bumble bee species are observed during the pre-construction survey, a biological monitor shall be present during all vegetation removal to protect bumble bees from direct mortality and relocated individuals to adjacent open space areas if necessary.

Western spadefoot is a federal proposed threatened species and California species of special concern. Western spadefoot was not observed within the project site; however, the species has a moderate potential to occur in the wetland in the northwestern portion of the biological study area and use adjacent upland habitat for burrowing. The project has been redesigned to avoid direct impacts to the wetland; therefore, no direct impacts would occur to breeding western

spadefoot. Direct impacts to burrowing western spadefoot in upland habitat areas may occur during construction. Because this is a federal proposed threatened species, direct impacts to upland habitat that may support burrowing individuals are considered potentially significant. Implementation of MM BIO-4 would reduce such impacts to less than significant.

MM BIO-4 No more than seven days prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey of all suitable upland habitat within the project footprint to identify potential western spadefoot burrows. The survey shall include visual inspection and, where appropriate, the use of burrow scopes to confirm occupancy. If active western spadefoot burrows are detected, the biologist shall implement a passive relocation protocol, which may include the installation of exclusion fencing and the careful excavation of burrows under the supervision of a permitted biologist. Individuals encountered during excavation shall be relocated to suitable, undisturbed habitat outside the impact area, in coordination with USFWS and CDFW. All relocation efforts shall be documented in a post-survey report submitted to the lead agency, USFWS, and CDFW. Construction activities may proceed once the biologist confirms that no active burrows occur within the work area.

Fairy shrimp of unknown species were observed within a ponded wetland north of the project impact area but within the biological study area. Vernal pool fairy shrimp (federal threatened) and Riverside fairy shrimp (federal endangered) are known from the region and may occur within the off-site ponded area. The wetland area where the fairy shrimp were observed would be avoided; therefore, no direct impacts would occur.

Indirect impacts related to water quantity and water quality during solar panel maintenance were also considered relative to fairy shrimp. As stated in the project description, there would be two to three wash cycles annually for solar panel maintenance, which equates to a maximum of 6,426 gallons of water use per year (0.5 gallons of water per panel x 4,284 panels x 3 times per year). The majority of panels would be positioned west and southwest of the wetland. The land on which the panels would be mounted slopes toward the northwest, thereby reducing the likelihood that maintenance water would reach the wetland. Due to the limited amount of water used to clean each panel (0.5 gallons per panel), any water used for cleaning the panels closest to the wetland is expected to evaporate or soak into the soil without affecting the wetland. Therefore, although indirect impacts were considered, project design and proper maintenance would ensure that indirect impacts to the off-site wetland do not occur.

Nesting Birds

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC)[18] To maintain compliance with the MBTA and CFGC, clearance surveys are typically required during the breeding season (generally February 1 to August 31 but as early as January 1 for raptors) prior to any ground disturbance or vegetation

[18] Section 3503 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by CFGC or any regulation made pursuant thereto; Section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey); and Section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory non-game bird except as provided by the rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the MBTA, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq).

removal activities to avoid direct and indirect impacts to active bird nests and/or nesting birds. Consequently, if an active bird nest is destroyed or if construction activities result in indirect impacts to nesting birds (e.g., nest abandonment, loss of reproductive effort), it is considered "take" and is potentially punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. Although no nests were observed during field surveys, vegetation within and adjacent to the project site provides suitable nesting opportunities for a variety of bird species and may be impacted during project construction. Implementation of MM BIO-2 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

b) Would the project 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site supports two sensitive vegetation communities, California walnut groves and arroyo willow thickets. As shown in Attachment A, Figure 4, of Appendix B, one patch of California walnut groves (0.31 acres) occurs along the northern boundary of the project site but outside of the project boundary. Therefore, no impacts would occur to California walnut groves.

Three patches of arroyo willow thickets totaling approximately 0.51 acres occur along the southern, western, and northwestern boundaries of the biological study area. Only limited portions of two of the areas are within the project boundary and may be impacted by the proposed project. These areas total approximately 0.10 acres (see Table 1 of Appendix B). Potential impacts to 0.10 acres of arroyo willow thickets would not threaten the existence of this community; therefore, due to the limited area affected as compared to that avoided, impacts are considered less than significant. In addition, the project would protect the willow trees in place.

c) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The aquatic resources delineation mapped 0.41 acres of wetland waters of the state under RWQCB jurisdiction and associated riparian habitat under CDFW jurisdiction. The proposed project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to these wetland features. Therefore, no direct impact would occur.

The potential for indirect impacts to the off-site wetland area was considered—particularly in relation to periodic solar panel maintenance. Due to the limited amount of water used for each panel washing (0.5 gallons per panel), any water used for cleaning the panels closest to the wetland is expected to evaporate or soak into the soil before reaching the wetland, and therefore, such resources would not be adversely affected by project maintenance. No indirect impact would occur in this regard.

d) Would the project 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 Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Wildlife movement through the project site is generally restricted by SR-60 to the north and the Diamond Ranch High School campus to the south. Regional east-west wildlife movement is also constrained by existing residential and road development located at a distance from the campus, although native and

developed open space areas provide movement opportunities around the high school and further south into open space of the Puente Hills. However, the project site is not part of a wildlife corridor, and the proposed improvements would therefore not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory wildlife species. Impacts would be less than significant.

As noted above under Response 3.4(a), MM BIO-2 would be implemented to ensure project conformance with MBTA requirements for the protection of migratory bird species that may nest or breed on-site. The removal of vegetation supporting an active nest during the breeding season would be considered a violation of the MBTA and would result in a potentially significant impact. Implementation of MM BIO-2 would reduce such impacts to less than significant.

The project site does not support fish habitat. The project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish species.

e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. City of Diamond Bar Municipal Code Chapter 22.38, Tree Preservation and Protection, applies to all native oak, walnut, sycamore, and willow trees with a diameter at breast height of 8 inches or greater, as well as other protected trees as defined. The removal of any protected trees with the proposed improvements would have the potential to conflict with City policy and would require issuance of a tree removal permit from the City. Similarly, City of Pomona Municipal Code Section 5809-23, Oak Tree Preservation, applies to all species of oak trees on public or private property outside the City's Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks that have not been designated as specimen trees. The regulation covers trees with a diameter greater than 8 inches, measured 4.5 feet above the mean natural grade. The removal of any oak trees within the City of Pomona would require issuance of a tree removal permit. Implementation of MM BIO-5 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

MM BIO-5 To ensure compliance with applicable tree preservation ordinances, the project applicant shall obtain all necessary tree removal permits from the appropriate jurisdiction (i.e., City of Diamond Bar and/or City of Pomona) prior to the removal or disturbance of any protected tree(s). The applicant shall coordinate with the respective city planning or public works departments to secure the necessary approvals.

f) Would the project 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. The Cities of Diamond Bar and Pomona are not within an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, there would be no conflict and no impact would occur.

3.5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
CULTURAL RESOURCES: *Would the project:*				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

This section is based on the *Cultural Resources and Paleontological Resources Assessment for the Diamond Ranch High School Solar Farm Project, City of Pomona, Los Angeles County, California* (Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment), prepared by Michael Baker International, dated July 24, 2025, and included as Appendix C of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

No Impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 concerns determining the significance of impacts to subsurface archaeological resources and built historical resources (i.e., structures).

The Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment conducted for the project included a pedestrian survey, a South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) records search, and a Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The SCCIC records search found no previously recorded sites or resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The pedestrian survey similarly identified no precontact or historic period archaeological deposits or artifacts, and no built environment resources older than 50 years were identified on the project site. While the NAHC Sacred Lands File database search yielded positive results for tribal sensitivity in the vicinity of the project, as stated in the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D), the project site is underlain with certified engineered fill. Therefore, there are no native soils that would potentially contain cultural resources.

With regard to historical resources, the project site is vacant and has not been developed since it was graded as part of the original construction of DRHS on the school campus. There are no built resources on the project site. Therefore, project implementation would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a built historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. No impact would occur in this regard.

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would require ground-disturbing activities during construction for installation of the solar panels and supporting infrastructure. As noted under Response 3.5(a), the Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment did not identify any archaeological resources or sites within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site and the pedestrian survey results were negative; however, Sacred Lands File search results were positive. Additionally, because alluvial sediments underlie the project area, the potential for encountering previously unrecorded, buried archaeological resources during ground-disturbing activities cannot be entirely ruled out. Given the results of the cultural resources identification efforts, the sensitivity for buried precontact and historic-period archaeological resources is low. Furthermore, as required by standard cultural resource management practices and regulatory compliance, the following inadvertent discovery protocols would address any unanticipated finds:

> If previously unknown archaeological materials (e.g., flaked or ground stone tools, ceramic fragments, historic-period artifacts, faunal remains, or features such as hearths or structural remnants) are encountered during project construction, work would be halted in the immediate area, and a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (48 Federal Register 44738) must be contacted to evaluate the find and recommend appropriate treatment.

Accordingly, impacts to archaeological resources pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 would be less than significant.

c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Less Than Significant Impact. Given the previous rough-grading and fill of the project site, it is unlikely that ground-disturbing activities associated with project construction would result in the disturbance of undiscovered human remains. Nonetheless, in the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during project construction, the District would comply with State of California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5-7055. All ground disturbance would be required to stop within 50 feet of the discovery, and the contractor would notify the District immediately. The District would notify the Los Angeles County coroner. If the coroner determines the remains are human and of Native American descent, in compliance with Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which would be responsible for identifying the legal most likely descendant to take custody of the remains. Through project compliance with the State of California Health and Safety Code, potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

3.6 Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
ENERGY: *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

To evaluate the project's potential to result in impacts regarding energy, the project-specific *Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis*, dated July 29, 2025, was prepared by Vista Environmental, and is included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project 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. Energy used during construction of the proposed renewable energy project would be primarily in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, and machinery. Grid power may also be temporarily used by construction trailers or electric construction equipment. Energy use during construction would be temporary and construction equipment used would be typical of construction projects in the region.

Construction-Related Electricity

During project construction, the consumption of electricity would be from off-site activities as well as from portable generators for on-site construction activities. Electricity use would vary throughout the construction period based on the activities being performed. Construction activities that use energy would include the conveyance of water for dust control, electricity to power the manufacturing of parts and electronic equipment, and other activities necessitating electrical power. Such electricity demand would be temporary and nominal, and would cease upon the completion of construction. Overall, project construction activities would require a limited amount of electricity, which is not anticipated to significantly affect available electricity supplies or infrastructure. Accordingly, the use of electricity during project construction would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

Construction-Related Petroleum Fuel Use

The consumption of petroleum-based fuel constitutes the highest proportion of transportation energy during construction. Such fuel would be used by off-road equipment operating at the

project site and by on-road vehicles transporting workers, equipment, and supplies to and from the project location.

Construction equipment fuel usage for the project was calculated through the use of on-road and off-road equipment assumptions and fuel use assumptions as detailed in Section 8.2, Energy Use Calculations, of Appendix A. As calculated, project construction would consume an estimated 11,590 gallons of gasoline and 56,053 gallons of diesel fuel. This equals approximately 0.0004 percent of the gasoline and 0.019 percent of the diesel used annually in Los Angeles County. Accordingly, construction-related petroleum use would be nominal when compared to current countywide petroleum usage rates.

Construction activities for the proposed project must comply with all state and SCAQMD regulations regarding off-road equipment and on-road trucks, which set minimum fuel efficiency standards. Following conformance with state and SCAQMD regulations, construction activities for the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the proposed solar farm would offset the energy needs of the District. Specifically, the project would generate 2.8 MW of electricity per year, which equates to approximately 20 percent of the District's annual energy use. This solar-generated energy would be added to the power grid and used in place of electricity generated by natural gas sources, and thus, would directly support state and local energy goals. Accordingly, project operation would result in no impact associated with wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Operational effects to energy would be beneficial.

b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. As discussed in Response 3.6(a), the proposed solar farm would offset the energy needs of the District by generating 2.8 MW of electricity per year, which equates to approximately 20 percent of the District's annual energy use. This solar-generated energy would be added to SCE's power grid and used in place of electricity generated by natural gas sources, and thus, would directly support state and local energy goals, including California Senate Bill 100, which requires retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities to procure eligible renewable electricity for 52 percent by the end of 2027, 60 percent by the end of 2030, and 100 percent by the end of 2045. The project would also be consistent with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan)[19] and would help the District meet goals for sustainable and resilient operations as provided in its 2024 Facilities Master Plan.[20] Accordingly, project operation would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or

[19] California Air Resources Board, 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan), December 2022, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan/2022-scoping-plan-documents#:~:text=The%202022%20Scoping%20Plan%20Update%20focuses%20on%20outcomes%20needed%20to,economic%2C%20environmental%2C%20energy%20security%2C.

[20] Pomona Unified School District, 2024 Facilities Conditions Assessment & Facilities Master Plan, https://proudtobe.pusd.org/apps/pages/pfmp.

energy efficiency. Project effects associated with energy would be beneficial, and no impact would occur.

3.7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
GEOLOGY AND SOILS: *Would the project:*				
a) Directly or indirectly cause 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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 direct or indirect 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 geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

This section is based on *Geotechnical Investigation, Proposed Photovoltaic Solar System Canopy Structures, 100 Diamond Ranch Road, Pomona, California* (Global Geo-Engineering, Inc., dated January 25, 2025), included as Appendix D of this IS/MND.

a)i) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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. The project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.[21] The closest known active fault is the Elsinore Fault, located approximately 5.4 miles southeast of the project site. As indicated in the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D), other nearby faults include the Whittier Fault and Sierra Madre Fault Zone, located approximately 7.5 and 9.8 miles away from the project site, respectively. Due to the distance of the closest active fault to the site, ground rupture is not considered a significant hazard at the project site. Additionally, the project would not include habitable structures, and therefore would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. No impact would occur.

a)ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located in a seismically active area of Southern California. A seismic event along the Elsinore Fault, Whittier Fault, or Sierra Madre Fault Zone could result in seismic ground shaking at the project site. The project would comply with seismic design standards identified in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 (California Building Standards Code [CBC]), which would minimize potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death from strong seismic ground shaking. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

a)iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less Than Significant Impact. As stated in the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D), the project site is not located within a State of California delineated Seismic Hazard Zone with a potential for liquefaction during a seismic event. The subsurface soils on the project site consist of compacted fill soils underlain by bedrock at a shallow depth. Therefore, the potential for liquefaction is considered to be low. Impacts would be less than significant.

[21] Department of Conservation. n.d. Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation. Accessed July 24, 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/.

a)iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Pomona General Plan identifies the project site as an area of required investigation for landslides; however, as stated in the Geotechnical Investigation, landslide debris as a result of previous landslides was removed, leaving only unweathered/undisturbed bedrock. Accordingly, there is little to no potential for landsliding on the project site. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities involving soil disturbance, such as grading, excavation, stockpiling, and grading, could result in short-term erosion of exposed soils. The project would disturb more than one acre of land; therefore, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required to be prepared and implemented during project construction. The SWPPP would include measures to minimize the release of hazardous materials from construction sites via stormwater runoff, in compliance with the latest National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements for stormwater discharges. The SWPPP would identify best management practices (BMPs) to be implemented during project construction to prevent erosion, minimize siltation, and protect water quality. Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP would minimize soil erosion from project-related construction activities. Therefore, project construction would result in a less than significant impact involving soil erosion and loss of topsoil.

Once constructed, rain would flow off the solar panels, which could increase the risk of erosion near the dripline (i.e., where the runoff would cascade off the panel edges). This could potentially cause soil loss and impact water quality. However, the crushed gravel that would be laid over the entire project site would minimize soil erosion and the loss of topsoil during project operation. Gravel would provide a stable, erosion-resistant surface (unlike compacted soil or pavement), preventing soil from being washed away by runoff. The gravel would allow water to seep through, promoting infiltration, rather than runoff, over the surface. Accordingly, the crushed gravel coverage would reduce on-site erosion and would also minimize the amount of sediment that would eventually enter the drainage channel west of the project site over time. As such, operation of the project would result in a less than significant impact associated with erosion and loss of topsoil.

c) Would the project 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. Refer to Responses 3.7(a)(i) through 3.7(b) above. The project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and the project site was previously graded to bedrock. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, compressible surficial materials and landslide debris that were on the project site were completely removed during rough-grading in the mid-1990s. Therefore, the unstable soil was removed from the project site, and the site is currently suitable for development. The Geotechnical Investigation includes recommendations to be incorporated in the project site plan designs and specifications and to be implemented during project construction.

Further, project design and construction would comply with the CBC and recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation to minimize potential geologic hazards or instability. Accordingly, project implementation would not result in on-site or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and/or collapse due to unstable geologic units or soils. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. Expansive soils are those that undergo volume changes as moisture content fluctuates, swelling substantially when wet or shrinking when dry. Soil expansion can result in damages by cracking foundations, causing settlement, and distorting structural elements.

The project site was previously rough-graded to bedrock, then overlaid with certified engineered fill. Accordingly, the project site is not underlain by expansive soils. The project would not result in substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property due to expansive soils, and no impact would occur.

e) Would the project 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 involves the construction and operation of a solar farm and does not propose development of habitable structures that would generate the need for the use of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur.

f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The paleontological sensitivity of the project site was evaluated in the Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment; refer to Appendix C of this IS/MND. As stated in the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D), the project site is underlain with certified engineered fill and bedrock belonging to the Puente Formation. However, there is high potential to disturb paleontological resources within undisturbed geologic contexts (i.e., undisturbed bedrock or subsurface geologic deposits in previously undisturbed areas) that are mapped as Soquel and Yorba Members on the project site. Areas of the project site mapped as very young landslide deposits are considered to have low potential to disturb paleontological resources at the surface; however, these surficial deposits may overlay Puente Formation sedimentary rock deposits, as well as older, quaternary sediments at depth. Although fossil material is rare in the Soquel Member, any future discoveries would be considered scientifically valuable due to their rarity. No paleontological resources have been documented within the project site, but significant vertebrate fossil localities have been recovered from similar geologic units within 10 miles of the project site. Due to the vertebrate fossils found in the Puente Formation and its Yorba Member, these geologic units underlying the project site have a high sensitivity for paleontological resources. As such, the mitigation measure would be implemented to minimize potential impacts to unknown paleontological resources:

MM GEO-1 Prior to grading or excavation in sedimentary rock material other than topsoil, the construction contractor shall retain a Society of Vertebrate Paleontology-qualified

paleontologist (i.e., possesses a graduate degree in paleontology, geology, or related field, with demonstrated experience in the vertebrate, invertebrate, or botanical paleontology of California, as well as at least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in paleontological research and at least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in general North American paleontology) to provide or supervise a paleontological sensitivity training to all personnel involved with earth-moving activities. The training session shall focus on how to identify paleontological resources, such as fossils that may be encountered, and the procedures to follow if encountered during construction.

The qualified paleontologist shall monitor earthwork affecting sedimentary rock material other than topsoil or supervise the monitoring of these activities by a paleontological monitor. If any paleontological resources are encountered on the project site, the qualified paleontologist or the paleontological monitor shall halt all ground-disturbing activities within 50 feet of the find until a significance determination is made. If the fossils are determined to be significant, the qualified paleontologist shall prepare and implement a data recovery plan. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- The paleontologist shall ensure that all significant fossils collected are cleaned, identified, catalogued, and permanently curated with an appropriate institution with a research interest in the materials (which may include the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County);
- The paleontologist shall ensure that specialty studies are completed, as appropriate, for any significant fossil collected; and
- The paleontologist shall ensure that curation of fossils is completed in consultation with the District. A letter of acceptance from the curation institution shall be submitted to the District.

The qualified paleontologist will determine when work within the immediate vicinity of the find may resume, or otherwise expand or reduce the construction exclusion buffer as warranted to ensure proper treatment of resources. The qualified paleontologist may reduce the frequency of monitoring, or cease monitoring altogether if observations of specific site conditions warrant (e.g., if geologic formations encountered preclude the likely occurrence of fossils).

As documented in Appendix C, there are no known unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features on the project site. Further, the project site is not identified as a unique paleontological resource in the City of Diamond Bar or the City of Pomona General Plans.[22] While the certified engineered fill has no potential for unique paleontological resources, there is potential for paleontological resources in the underlying bedrock. Implementation of MM GEO-1 would reduce impacts relative to paleontological resources to a less than significant level.

[22] City of Diamond Bar. 2019. Diamond Bar General Plan 2040. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7072/Diamond-Bar-General-Plan-2040?bidId=; City of Pomona. 2014. City of Pomona 2014 General Plan Update. https://www.pomonaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2402/637521057423830000.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	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

To evaluate the project's potential to result in impacts regarding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, a project-specific Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis, dated July 29, 2025, was prepared by Vista Environmental, and is included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

No Impact. As shown in Table 3.8-1, *Project-Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions*, the amortized project construction GHG emissions are anticipated to be 23.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$). Operation of the project would not result in a net increase in GHG emissions. In fact, the proposed solar farm would offset the energy needs of the District by generating 2.8 MW of electricity per year, equating to approximately 20 percent of the District's annual energy use. This solar-generated energy would be added to SCE's power grid and used in place of electricity generated by natural gas sources, and thus, directly supporting state and local initiatives to reduce GHG emissions. Operational project effects associated with GHG emissions would be beneficial. No impact associated with GHG emissions would occur.

Table 3.8-1. Project-Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
Category	**CO_2**	**CH_4**	**N_2O**	**CO_2e**
Construction				
Year 2026	691	0.03	0.04	704
Amortized Construction Emissions (30 years)[1]	23.0	<0.01	<0.01	23.5
SCAQMD Draft Threshold of Significance				**3,000**
Exceed Thresholds?				**No**

Notes:
CO_2 = carbon dioxide; CH_4 = methane; N_2O = nitrogen dioxide; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalent
[1] Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.
Source: Vista Environmental 2025; see Appendix A.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

No Impact. As discussed in Response 3.8(a), once operational, the proposed solar farm would offset the energy needs of the District by generating 2.8 MW of electricity per year, equating to approximately 20 percent of the District's annual energy use. This solar-generated energy would be added to SCE's power grid and used in place of electricity generated by natural gas sources, and thus, directly supporting state and local initiatives to reduce GHG emissions.

As stated in Response 3.6(b), the project would also be consistent with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan)[23] and would help the District meet goals for sustainable and resilient operations as provided in its 2024 Facilities Master Plan.[24] Accordingly, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Project effects associated with energy would be beneficial, and no impact would occur.

[23] California Air Resources Board, 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan), December 2022, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan/2022-scoping-plan-documents#:~:text=The%202022%20Scoping%20Plan%20Update%20focuses%20on%20outcomes%20needed%20to,economic%2C%20environmental%2C%20energy%20security%2C.

[24] Pomona Unified School District, 2024 Facilities Conditions Assessment & Facilities Master Plan, https://proudtobe.pusd.org/apps/pages/pfmp.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: *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 or excessive noise 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

To evaluate the project's potential to result in impacts regarding hazards and hazardous materials, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, dated July 22, 2025, was prepared by Padre Associates and is included in Appendix E of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Currently, there are three piles of discarded roofing observed on the proposed project site which may contain asbestos. During site preparation, these three materials would need to be disposed of prior to construction. Therefore, the project has potential for the release of asbestos to the public and the environment through disposal of the roofing material.

Implementation of MM HAZ-1 would reduce potential impacts relative to ACM to less than significant levels.

MM HAZ-1 Any suspect asbestos-containing material (ACM) on the project site shall be sampled prior to any construction activities. Any identified ACM located within the project site shall be abated by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor, and disposed of according to all state and local regulations.

Additionally, construction of the proposed project could expose workers and/or the public to temporary hazards related to the transport, use, and maintenance of construction equipment and/or materials (i.e., oil, diesel fuel, transmission fluids, and solvents). These activities would be short-term in nature, and the materials used would not be in such quantities or stored in such a manner as to pose a significant safety hazard. The construction contractor would be required to implement standard construction BMPs related to the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in conformance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to the use, handling, and disposal of hazardous substances. Accordingly, typical use of construction-related hazardous materials for the proposed improvements would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

Operation of the proposed solar farm would include regular cleaning of the solar arrays to remove debris, ensuring structural integrity of the system, trimming and/or removal of vegetation to prevent shading of the panels and potential damage of the system, and removal of trash on-site. Potential chemicals used for these activities would be limited. Panels would be hand- or power-washed typically with water and a biodegradable detergent, as needed (two to three times per year). Vegetation would be trimmed/removed using hand tools and, as necessary, power tools such as string trimmers (i.e., weed whackers), hedge trimmers, and mowers. The power tools may require maintenance using limited amounts of hazardous materials such as diesel fuel, oils, and lubricants. Therefore, project operation would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and operational impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project 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 with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed in Response 3.9(a), project construction could potentially result in the release of ACM; however, with implementation of MM HAZ-1, such impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Additionally, construction and operations of the proposed project would require limited use of hazardous materials. Although the potential for accidental releases (e.g., spilling of hydraulic fluids

or diesel fuel from on-site construction equipment maintenance) exists, such incidents would be limited to small volumes and/or low concentrations. Moreover, the construction contractor would be required to implement standard construction BMPs to avoid accidental spills and minimize the release in such an event in conformance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding the use and handling of hazardous substances. Construction of the project would not 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, and construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in Response 3.9(a), project operations would not require use of substantial amounts of hazardous materials; the use of any such materials would occur in conformance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. It is noted that according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, workers in the solar energy industry could be exposed to electrical hazards, such as arc flashes (which include burn and blast hazards), electric shock, falls, and thermal burn hazards. However, such worker exposure to such hazards would not result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant.

c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is located on the DRHS campus, immediately north of the existing school facilities. There are no other existing or proposed schools within 0.25 miles of the project site. Project construction and operation would involve the use of small volumes of hydraulic fluids, diesel fuel, oils, and lubricants for equipment maintenance; however, construction and operation of the proposed solar farm would comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, as well as standard construction BMPs that would ensure the safe handling of hazardous materials during transport, use, storage, and disposal. Moreover, construction and operational maintenance activities would be scheduled to minimize disruptions to school activities and operations and would not affect students or staff at DRHS. As discussed in Response 3.9(a), the proposed project's site preparation may have potential impact for emitting hazardous emissions associated with ACM. However, implementation of MM HAZ-1 would reduce potential impacts associated with hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste to less than significant levels.

d) Would the project 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. The hazardous materials site databases compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, known as the Cortese List, were reviewed to determine if the project site is listed as a hazardous materials site. The project site is not included on the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor database.[25] According to the SWRCB's GeoTracker database, there are no active hazardous material cleanup sites within 1.5 miles of the project

[25] California Department of Toxic Substances Control. n.d. EnviroStor. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/.

site.[26] The project site also is not included on the list of solid waste disposal sites identified by the SWRCB with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit.[27] Additionally, the project site is not included on the list of active Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders from the SWRCB.[28] Lastly, the project site is not included on the list of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code, as identified by the Department of Toxic Substances Control.[29] As such, the project would not be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Project implementation would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, and no impact would occur.

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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The project site is not located within the boundary of an airport land use plan and there are no public or private airports or airstrips within 2 miles of the project site.[30] The nearest airport to the project site is the Brackett Field Airport, which is approximately 4.5 miles north of the project site. Furthermore, the proposed project would not include a land use that would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels. No impact would occur in this regard.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. The Cities of Diamond Bar and Pomona have each adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). Both LHMPs contain “hazard mitigation actions” that reduce the risk of damage or injury from hazards.[31] The Diamond Bar LHMP identifies DRHS as a Critical Facility that can be used as community space in the event of an emergency. The proposed project would not affect the availability of the campus for use as a Critical Facility during an emergency event. The proposed project would not result in temporary road closures or permanent alterations to existing area vehicular circulation routes; construction-related parking, staging, and laydown areas would

[26] California State Water Resources Control Board. n.d. GeoTracker. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/.

[27] California Environmental Protection Agency. n.d. Sites Identified with Waste Constituents Above Hazardous Waste Levels Outside the Waste Management Unit. Accessed March 25, 2025. https://calepa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SiteCleanup-CorteseList-CurrentList.pdf.

[28] California Environmental Protection Agency. n.d. Site Cleanup Cortese List – List of Active Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders. Accessed March 25, 2025. https://calepa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SiteCleanup-CorteseList-CDOCAOList.xlsx.

[29] California Environmental Protection Agency. n.d. Cortese List: Section 65962.5(a) – Information Required From the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Under Government Code Section 65962.5(a). Accessed Match 25, 2025. https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/section-65962-5a/.

[30] County of Los Angeles. 2015. Brackett Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. https://planning.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Brackett-Field-Airport-Land-Use-Compatibility-Plan.pdf.

[31] City of Pomona. 2022. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. https://www.pomonaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/6946/638586379687900000; City of Diamond Bar. 2022. Hazard Mitigation Plan. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10286/Diamond-Bar-Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-2022?bidId=.

occur within the project site. As such, project implementation would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur.

g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project would not introduce land uses or other conditions that would increase the risk of wildfire. The project site is classified as a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone, indicating a lower risk for the potential of wildfire occurrence.[32] It is noted that on March 24, 2025, the State Fire Marshal recommended the project site be classified as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone; however, the revised fire hazard severity zone maps have not yet been adopted.[33]

The project does not propose any habitable structures and would not expose students and staff at the campus or nearby residential uses to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Impacts related to wildland fires would be less than significant.

[32] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Diamond Bar Fire Hazard Zones. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=107f1b2b5c624705b0c4621243f8f084.

[33] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. n.d. Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: *Would the project:*				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water 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 storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. As part of Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has established regulations under the NPDES program to control direct stormwater discharges. In California, the SWRCB administers the NPDES program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements. The NPDES program regulates industrial pollutant discharges, which include construction activities. The SWRCB works in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality. The project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Dischargers whose projects disturb one or more acres of soil are required to obtain coverage under the SWRCB's NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ (Construction General Permit). The project site is approximately 11.5 acres. The Construction General Permit requires the project applicant to prepare and implement a SWPPP. The SWPPP would specify BMPs to be implemented during project construction. Potential BMPs include the placement of fiber rolls along the perimeter of the project site and at existing storm drain inlets; protection of existing storm drains; and implementation of vehicle and equipment washouts. Implementation of the BMPs would ensure any runoff or discharges during the project construction phase would not violate any water quality standards. Upon completion of the project, the project applicant would be required to submit a Notice of Termination to the SWRCB to indicate that construction has been completed. With adherence to the Construction General Permit, the project-specific SWPPP, and standard construction BMPs, project construction would not result in the violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements and would not otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. Construction-related impacts to water quality would be less than significant.

Project operation activities would involve routine maintenance of the solar panels, which would be limited to washing the solar panels with water and a biodegradable detergent and vegetation trimming/removal. The use of biodegradable detergent for solar panel cleaning two to three times a year would not adversely affect surface water quality downstream of the project site or groundwater quality, as the amount of cleaning solution (i.e., water and biodegradable detergent) would be limited to the amount needed to clean the solar panels and would not result in waste discharge into surface water or groundwater. Therefore, project operation would not involve land uses or activities that would violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements and would not otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Operational impacts to water quality would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would not require the use of groundwater. According to the project-specific Geotechnical Investigation (refer to Appendix D), on-site groundwater depths exceed 120 feet; therefore, no groundwater would be encountered during

project construction. The project would introduce minimal new impervious surfaces on the project site in the form of the foundation piles for the solar panels and the foundations for the switching gear and meters. The ground under the panels would remain pervious and covered with crushed gravel, which would allow rain to flow off the solar panels and percolate into the ground, similar to existing project site conditions (undeveloped). Project operation would not require use of groundwater. Therefore, project implementation would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Impacts would be less than significant.

c)i) Would the project 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction would entail grading to create terraced slopes for placement of the solar panels and associated infrastructure, which would result in alteration of the existing drainage pattern on-site. However, the project would not result in alteration of a stream or river; neither does the project site itself include a stream or river. As stated in Responses 3.7(b) and 3.10(a), project construction would require implementation of a project-specific SWPPP that would include BMPs to prevent erosion, minimize siltation, and protect water quality both on- and off-site. Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP would minimize soil erosion and siltation on- and off-site from project-related construction activities. Therefore, project construction would result in a less than significant impact involving soil erosion and siltation on- and off-site, and construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in Response 3.10(b), the project would introduce minimal new impervious surfaces on the project site, which would not affect the percolation of rainfall into the ground. Once constructed, rain would flow off the solar panels, which could increase the risk of erosion near the dripline where the runoff cascades off the panel edges. This could potentially cause soil loss and impact water quality. However, crushed gravel would be laid over the entire project site to minimize soil erosion and siltation during project operation. The gravel would provide a stable, erosion-resistant surface (unlike compacted soil or pavement), preventing soil from being washed away by runoff. Moreover, the spaces between the stones would allow water to seep through, promoting infiltration instead of runoff over the surface. Accordingly, the crushed gravel coverage would reduce potential on-site erosion and would also minimize the amount of sediment that would eventually enter the drainage channel west of the project site over time. As such, operation of the project would result in a less than significant impact associated with erosion and siltation on- and off-site and operational impacts would be less than significant.

c)ii) Would the project 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 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. As discussed in Response 3.10(c)(i), the project site does not include a river or stream, and the proposed project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns of the site or area. The project site is located in an area of minimal flood hazard (Flood

Zone X) and is not located in a 100-year or 500-year floodplain.[34] Therefore, the project site and the surrounding area are not at risk for flooding. Implementation of the project would not alter drainage patterns of the site in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site, and impacts would be less than significant.

c)iii) Would the project 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 create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Response 3.10(c)(i), the project site does not include a river or stream, and the proposed project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns of the site or area. As stated in Response 3.10(b), the project would introduce minimal new impervious surfaces, allowing rain to flow off the proposed solar panels and percolate into the ground similar to existing project site conditions. As such, the project would not 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. Impacts would be less than significant.

c)iv) Would the project 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 impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Response 3.10(c)(i), the project site does not include a river or stream, and the proposed project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns of the site or area. As stated in Response 3.10(c)(ii), the project site is not located in a 100-year or 500-year floodplain. As stated in Response 3.10(b), the project would introduce minimal new impervious surfaces, allowing rainfall to percolate into the ground similar to existing project site conditions. Additionally, the project would not include barriers that would impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact. As discussed in Response 3.10(c)(ii), the project site is not located in a flood hazard zone. A tsunami is a great sea wave, commonly referred to as a tidal wave, produced by a substantial undersea disturbance such as earthquakes. The project site is located over 40 miles from the Pacific Ocean and is not subject to a potential tsunami as mapped by the California Department of Conservation.[35] A seiche is an oscillation of a body of water in an enclosed or semi-enclosed basin, such as a reservoir, harbor, lake, or storage tank. The closest confined body of water is Arnold Reservoir, 1.5 miles south of the project site. Due to the distance and intervening topography, the project site is not at risk of inundation from a seiche. Because the project site is

[34] City of Diamond Bar. 2022. Hazard Mitigation Plan. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10286/Diamond-Bar-Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-2022?bidId=.

[35] California Department of Conservation. n.d. Tsunami Hazard Area Map. Accessed March 26, 2025 https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/ts_evacuation/.

not in a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone, the project would not risk release of pollutants due to inundation. No impact would occur.

e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Responses 3.7(b) and 3.10(a), compliance with the Construction General Permit and the project-specific SWPPP would reduce potential short-term construction-related impacts to water quality to less than significant levels. The SWPPP would specify BMPs to be used during project construction. Implementation of the BMPs would ensure runoff and discharges during project construction would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

The project site is located in the Santa Ana River Basin.[36] The Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin establishes water quality standards for ground and surface waters within the southwestern San Bernardino County, western Riverside County, and northwestern Orange County, including the project site. The project site is not in the vicinity of any impaired water bodies and the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin.[37]

The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires local public agencies and groundwater sustainability agencies in high- and medium-priority basins to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans or prepare an alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan. The project site is located in the Santa Ana River Groundwater Basin, which is designated as a very low priority basin.[38] Moreover, as discussed in Response 3.10(b), the proposed project would not use groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Therefore, no sustainable groundwater management plan applies to the project site, and no impact related to groundwater management would occur.

The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

[36] California State Water Resources Control Board. n.d. Basin Plan Portal. Accessed March 26, 2025. https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=116f7daa9c4d4103afda1257be82eb16.

[37] Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. 2025. Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/.

[38] California Department of Natural Resources. n.d. SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard. Accessed February 24, 2025. https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
LAND USE AND PLANNING: *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) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The approximately 11.5-acre project site is located within the campus of DRHS, immediately north of the existing high school. Implementation of the proposed solar farm would not result in physical barriers to access to surrounding areas or uses. Therefore, the project would not physically divide an established community, and no impact would occur.

b) Would the project 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. The project site is within the jurisdictions of the City of Diamond Bar and the City of Pomona. The portion of the project site in the City of Pomona has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan and a zoning designation of Phillips Ranch Specific Plan Open Space (OS), which permits permanent open spaces, governmental facilities, and low-intensity outdoor recreational facilities.[39] The proposed solar farm project would support existing government facilities, specifically District schools and facilities. The project would conform with the designated land use and zoning regulations and would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with the City of Pomona land use plan, policy, or regulations.

The portions of the project site and DRHS campus in the City of Diamond Bar have a land use designation of School and a zoning designation of Agricultural District (AG).[40] The School land use designation identifies land for school facilities,[41] and the AG zoning allows a variety of land uses including low-density residential, agricultural and compatible open space, and public facility

[39] City of Pomona. n.d. General Plan and Zoning. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6104341df4d74f7f8e22cc0a2caf536b.

[40] City of Diamond Bar. 2013. Zoning Map. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/96/Diamond-Bar-Zoning-Map-PDF?bidId=.

[41] City of Diamond Bar. 2019. General Plan 2040. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/961/General-Plan-2040.

and recreational.[42] Nonetheless, general plan designations for public facilities, water, and school are implemented by all zoning districts.[43] As the proposed project would result in a continuation of the existing use of the project site (public school facilities) and would support school and District operations, it is considered consistent with the School land use designation. Project implementation would not conflict with a land use plan, policy, or other regulations implemented by the City of Diamond Bar. Impacts would be less than significant.

[42] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Code of Ordinances. Development Code Section 22.12.010(1). Accessed March 27, 2025. https://library.municode.com/ca/diamond_bar/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_TIT22DECO_ARTIIZODIALLAUS_CH22.12SPPUZODI_S22.12.010PUCH.

[43] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Code of Ordinances. Development Code Section 22.06.020. Table 2-1, Zoning Districts, Footnote (1). Accessed March 27, 2025. https://library.municode.com/ca/diamond_bar/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_TIT22DECO_ARTIIZODIALLAUS_CH22.06ESZODIADZOMA_S22.06.020ZODIES.

3.12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
MINERAL RESOURCES: *Would the project:*				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of 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) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. The project site is in Mineral Resource Zone 3, identified as areas containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance.[44] This mineral resource designation is intended to prevent incompatible land use development on areas determined to have significant mineral resource deposits. Regardless, the project site is on the DRHS campus, which is owned by the District and is adjacent to existing DRHS facilities. As such, the project site is not available for mineral resource recovery. The project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. No impact would occur.

b) Would the project 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. The City of Diamond Bar and City of Pomona General Plans do not identify the project site as a locally important mineral resource recovery site.[45] The project site is on the DRHS campus, which is owned by the District, and is adjacent to existing DRHS facilities. As such, the project site is not available for mineral resource recovery. No impact would occur.

[44] California Geological Survey, *Updated Mineral Land Classification Map for Portland Cement Concrete-Grade Aggregate in the Claremont-Upland Production-Consumption (P-C) Region, Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, California*, 2007.

[45] City of Diamond Bar. 2019. Diamond Bar General Plan 2040. https://www.diamondbarca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7072/Diamond-Bar-General-Plan-2040?bidId=; City of Pomona. 2014. City of Pomona 2014 General Plan Update. https://www.pomonaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2402/637521057423830000.

3.13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
NOISE: *Would the project result in:*				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in 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 groundborne vibration or groundborne 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 two 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

To evaluate the potential project impacts regarding noise, a project-specific *Noise Impact Analysis*, dated August 2025, was prepared by Vista Environmental, and is included as Appendix F of this IS/MND. The City of Pomona's noise thresholds were used because they are the same or more stringent than the City of Diamond Bar's noise thresholds.

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in 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 Impact. Construction and operational impacts related to temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels are discussed below.

Construction-Related Noise

Construction-Related Roadway Noise Impacts

Construction activities have the potential to generate noise levels that exceed applicable standards in proximity to sensitive receptors, such as schools and residential uses. As neither the City of Pomona General Plan nor Municipal Code define what level of increase in roadway noise would be considered significant, the noise increase threshold guidance provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) was utilized for the noise impact analysis; refer to Table 3.13-1, *FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure*. As shown in Table 3.13-1, the allowable

cumulative noise level increase created from the proposed project would range from 0 to 7 A-weighted decibels (dBA),[46] which is based on existing (ambient) noise levels in the project vicinity.

Table 3.13-1. FTA Project Effects on Cumulative Noise Exposure

Existing Noise Exposure (dBA, L_{eq}, or L_{dn})	Allowable Noise Impact Exposure (dBA, L_{eq}, or L_{dn})		
	Projects Only	Combined	Noise Exposure Increase
45	51	52	+7
50	53	55	+5
55	55	58	+3
60	57	62	+2
65	60	66	+1
70	64	71	+1
75	65	75	0

Notes:
dBA: A-weighted decibels
Leq: Equivalent sound level
Ldn: Day-night average
Source: Vista Environmental, August 1, 2025; refer to Appendix F, *Noise Impact Analysis*.

During project construction, installation of the PV system would generate the highest number of construction trips, with up to 100 worker trips and 50 vendor truck trips per day. It is anticipated that the majority of such trips would access the project site via SR 60 to Phillips Ranch Road to Diamond Ranch Road. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site include single-family residences to the north of SR 60, approximately 500 feet from the project site. Multi-family residences are also located on the east side of Phillips Ranch Road, approximately 1,000 feet from the project site. In order for the project to result in a significant impact from the increase in vehicular traffic on Phillips Ranch Road, the amount of roadway traffic would need to double. However, project construction would result in an approximately 0.7 percent temporary increase in traffic volumes on Phillips Ranch Road. Therefore, construction-related roadway noise impacts would be less than significant.

Off-Road Construction Equipment Noise Impacts

Noise impacts from construction activities associated with the proposed project would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities. The nearest sensitive receptors are the single-family homes located on the north side of SR 60, which are approximately 500 feet north of the project site. There are also multifamily homes located on the east side of Phillips Ranch Road, which are approximately 1,000 feet east of the proposed driveway to the project site.

Section 18-305(3) of the City of Pomona Municipal Code exempts construction noise provided: (1) that construction activities occur between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays from the City's noise standards; and (2) noise levels created by construction activities do not exceed 65 dBA at any nearby residential property.

[46] A-weighted decibels (dBA) approximate the subjective response of the human ear to a broad frequency noise source by discriminating against very low and very high frequencies of the audible spectrum. They are adjusted to reflect only those frequencies that are audible to the human ear.

Potential construction noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors were calculated using the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) and the parameters and assumptions detailed in Section 6.1 of Appendix F. Table E of Appendix F shows construction equipment noise emissions and usage factors, which are used to help determine construction noise levels at sensitive receptors. The results are shown below in Table 3.13-2, *Construction Noise Levels at Sensitive Receptors*.

Table 3.13-2. Construction Noise Levels at Sensitive Receptors

Construction Phase	Construction Noise Level (dBA Leq) at:	
	Residences to North[1]	Residences to East[1]
Phase 1: Site Preparation and Access Road Construction	61	50
Phase 2: Grading	61	51
Phase 3: Electrical Infrastructure	60	49
Phase 4: PV System and Switchgear Stations Installation	61	50
Phase 5: Placement of Gravel and Site Cleanup	60	49
Construction Noise Threshold[2]	**65**	**65**
Exceed Threshold?	No	No

Notes:
[1] The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site include single-family residences to the north of SR 60, approximately 500 feet from the project site. Multi-family residences are also located on the east side of Phillips Ranch Road, approximately 1,000 feet from the project site.
[2] Construction noise threshold for nearby homes based on Section 18-305 of the City of Pomona Municipal Code.
Source: Vista Environmental, August 1, 2025; refer to Appendix F, *Noise I*mpact Analysis.

As shown in Table 3.13-2, the greatest noise impacts would occur during the grading phase of project construction, with noise levels as high as 61 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest homes to the north and as high as 51 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest homes to the east. Table 3.13-2 shows that none of the phases of construction would exceed the City's construction noise standard of 65 dBA at the homes to the east. Therefore, through adherence to the limitation of allowable construction times provided in Section 18-305(3) of the City of Pomona Municipal Code, construction-related noise levels would not exceed any standards established in the General Plan or Noise Ordinance, nor would project construction activities create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operational-Related Noise

The proposed project would consist of the development of a PV solar farm. Potential noise impacts associated with its operation would result from project-generated vehicular traffic on nearby roadways and from on-site activities (i.e., maintenance).

Roadway Vehicular Noise

Vehicle noise is a combination of the noise produced by the engine, exhaust, and tires. The level of traffic noise depends on three primary factors: (1) the volume of traffic; (2) the speed of traffic; and (3) the number of vehicles in the flow of traffic. The project does not propose uses that would require a substantial number of truck trips, nor would the project alter the speed limit on any existing roadways. As such, the analysis of potential off-site noise impacts is focused on the change of volume of traffic that would occur with development of the proposed project.

As neither the City of Pomona General Plan nor Municipal Code defines what level of increase in roadway noise would be considered significant, the noise increase threshold guidance provided by the FTA for a moderate impact has been detailed above in Table 3.13-1. As shown in Table 3.13-1, the project contribution to the noise environment can range between 0 and 7 dB, which is dependent on the existing noise levels.

Operation of the proposed project is anticipated to generate two daily trips. The construction-related roadway noise analysis above found that the 150 daily trips generated by construction activities would result in a negligible increase to roadway noise. As such, operation of the proposed project, which would generate an average of two daily trips, would also result in a negligible increase in roadway noise. Therefore, a less than significant roadway noise impact would occur from operation of the proposed project.

On-site Noise Sources

Operation of the proposed PV solar farm would generally consist of a passive use that would not generate substantial levels of noise. However, the proposed switchgear stations would include transformers that are a known source of noise. As detailed in Appendix F, a 7,501 to 10,000 KVA rated transformer would create a noise level of 68 dBA at a distance of 1 meter. Section 18-311(a) of the City of Pomona Municipal Code limits noise created on the project site at the nearby single-family homes to 60 dBA between 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 50 dBA between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

To determine potential noise impacts at the nearby homes to the north and east of the project site from operation of the transformers, noise levels were calculated through the use of standard geometric spreading of noise from a point source, with a drop-off rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance between the source and receiver; refer to Table 3.13-3, *Operational Noise Levels at Sensitive Receptors*.

Table 3.13-3. Operational Noise Levels at Sensitive Receptors

	Homes to North		Homes to East	
Noise Source	**Distance - Source to Homes (feet)**	**Noise Level[1] (dBA L_{eq})**	**Distance - Source to Homes (feet)**	**Noise Level[1] (dBA L_{eq})**
Transformers[2]	800	20	980	19
City Residential Noise Standards (day/night)		**60/50**		**60/50**
Exceed City Noise Standard?		**No/No**		**No/No**

Notes:
[1] The calculated noise levels based on standard geometric spreading of noise of a 6 dB reduction per doubling of distance between source and receptor.
[2] Based on transformer noise rating of 68 dBA at 1 meter (3.28 feet).
Source: Vista Environmental, August 1, 2025; refer to Appendix F, *Noise Impact Analysis*.

As shown in Table 3.13-3, the operation of the transformers would create noise levels of 20 dBA at the homes north of the project site, and 19 dBA at the homes east of the project site. The worst-case operational noise level of 20 dBA would be below both the City's daytime noise standard of 60 dBA and nighttime noise standard of 50 dBA. It should also be noted that the operational noise levels would be below the lowest measured ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the nearby homes, which ranged from 59.9 and 62.2 dBA L_{eq} (see Table D, Existing [Ambient] Noise Measurement Results, of Appendix F). Therefore, operational noise impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Based on the analyses above, the proposed project would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. A less than significant impact would occur.

b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides, etc.) or man-made causes (explosions, machinery, traffic, planes, trains, construction activities/equipment, etc.). Vibration sources may be continuous (e.g., factory machinery) or transient (e.g., explosions). Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. Several different methods are typically used to quantify vibration amplitude. One is the peak particle velocity (PPV); another is the root mean square (RMS) velocity. The PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. The RMS velocity is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal. The PPV and RMS vibration velocity amplitudes are used to evaluate human response to vibration. Groundborne vibration can be a concern in instances where buildings shake and substantial rumblings occur.

Construction-Related Vibration Impacts

Construction activities for the proposed project are anticipated to include the following phases of construction: (1) Site Preparation and Access Road Construction; (2) Grading; (3) Electrical Infrastructure; (4) PV System and Switchgear Stations Installation; and (5) Placement of Gravel and Site Cleanup. Project construction activities would have the potential to result in groundborne vibration that may affect off-site sensitive receptors. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are the single-family homes located north of SR 60 at a distance of approximately 500 feet.

Section 18-309 of the City of Pomona Municipal Code restricts the creation of vibration that is perceptible on any nearby property. Section 18-309 defines the threshold of perception to be more than 0.05 inch per second RMS vertical velocity.

The main source of vibration during construction would be from the operation of a bulldozer on the project site. According to the FTA (see Table F of Appendix F), a large bulldozer would create a vibration level of 0.089 inches per second PPV or 0.022 inches per second RMS at a distance of 25 feet from the source. Based on typical propagation rates, the vibration level at the nearest homes (approximately 500 feet away) would be 0.003 inches per second PPV or 0.0019 inches per second RMS. The vibration level at the nearest homes would therefore be well below the designated 0.05 inch per second RMS threshold. Accordingly, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from construction of the proposed project.

Operational-Related Vibration Impacts

The proposed project would consist of the operation of a PV solar farm. Ongoing operations would not include any known vibration sources. Thus, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from operation of the proposed project.

The proposed project would not result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. A less than significant impact would occur.

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 two 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 project site is not located within the boundary of an airport land use plan, and there are no public or private airports or airstrips within 2 miles of the project site. The nearest airport/airstrip is the Brackett Field Airport, approximately 4.5 miles north of the project site.[47] The proposed project would not include a land use that would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels. Therefore, no impact would occur.

[47] County of Los Angeles. 2015. Brackett Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. https://planning.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Brackett-Field-Airport-Land-Use-Compatibility-Plan.pdf.

3.14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
POPULATION AND HOUSING: *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) Would the project 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)?

No Impact. The proposed project would consist of the construction and operation of a solar farm on a vacant portion of the DRHS campus. The project would not include any habitable structures or extension of roadways that would induce population or employment growth in the area. Energy produced by the solar farm would be utilized solely at District facilities and would not be available for use by existing or future residential, commercial, or other land uses. The project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area. No impact would occur.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The proposed project would occur on undeveloped District-owned land, and no existing people or housing would be displaced. As such, no replacement housing construction would be necessary, and no impact would occur.

3.15 Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
PUBLIC SERVICES: *Would the project:*				
a) Would the project 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:				
i) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
i) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a)i) Would the project 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 fire protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Los Angeles County Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services to the project site. The closest fire station to the project site is Los Angeles County Fire Department Station No. 188, at 18 Village Loop Road in Pomona, which is located approximately 0.7 miles northeast of the project site.

The project would result in the construction and operation of a PV solar facility on the existing school campus. No new housing would be constructed, and no increase in student population or faculty would result, that would generate new demand for fire protection services. In this regard, the proposed use would not require the provision of, or need for, new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection. Impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

a)ii) Would the project 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 police protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Pomona Police Department provides law enforcement services to the DRHS campus, including the project site. The closest police station, located at 490 West Mission Boulevard in Pomona, is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the project site. The District provides security services that patrol the school campus, including the project site. Campus security would continue to patrol the project site during project construction and operation. Additionally, a perimeter fence would be installed around the proposed solar farm, which would help reduce the potential for trespassing and vandalism.

Implementation of the proposed solar farm on the DRHS campus would not increase the student enrollment or faculty at the campus, nor would the project include other land uses (i.e., residential, office, industrial, commercial) that would substantially increase the demand for law enforcement, potentially triggering the need for new or expanded police facilities. The proposed project would not require the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, and other performance objectives. Impacts related to police protection would be less than significant.

a)iii) Would the project 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 schools?

No Impact. The project site is located within the boundaries of the DRHS campus, immediately north of existing school facilities. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts to existing school facilities that would require the provision of new or physically altered school facilities. The proposed solar farm would not increase student-aged population or faculty, and, therefore, the project would not result in the demand for new or expanded school facilities. The project would not result in the provision or need for new or physically altered school facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios and other performance objectives. No impact related to schools would occur.

a)iv) Would the project 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 parks?

No Impact. The closest park is Carlton J. Peterson Park, located 1 mile northwest of the project site at 24142 Sylvan Glen Road. Implementation of the proposed solar farm on the DRHS campus would not result in an increase in student enrollment or faculty at the campus, nor would the project include other land uses (i.e., residential, office, industrial, commercial) that may increase the demand for parks or trigger the need for new or expanded park facilities. The proposed project would not require the provision of new or physically altered parks in order to maintain acceptable service ratios and other performance objectives. No impact related to parks would occur.

a)v) Would the project 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 other public facilities?

No Impact. An increase in population or housing is generally associated with an increase in demand for other public facilities (e.g., libraries, community centers, healthcare centers). Implementation of the proposed solar farm would not increase student enrollment or faculty at the campus, nor would the project include other land uses (i.e., residential, office, industrial, commercial) that would substantially increase the demand for other public facilities that would trigger the need for new or expanded public facilities. The proposed project would not require the provision of new or physically altered public facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, and other performance objectives. No impact to other public facilities would occur.

3.16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
RECREATION: *Would the project:*				
a) Would the project 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) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Would the project 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. Refer to Response 3.15(a)(iv). The project consists of the construction and operation of a solar farm on vacant land on the DRHS campus. Implementation of the proposed solar farm would not increase student enrollment or faculty at the campus, nor would the project include residential uses that would increase the number of residents in either the City of Pomona or the City of Diamond Bar. As such, the project would not cause an increase in the use of existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities that would result in substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. No impact related to recreational facilities would occur.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. Refer to Responses 3.15(a)(iv) and 3.16(a). No impact related to recreational facilities would occur.

3.17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
TRANSPORTATION: *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

This section is based on the *Southland Diamond Ranch School Solar Farm – Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment*, prepared by Michael Baker International, dated February 24, 2025, and included as Appendix G of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project would not modify or affect any public transit stops, roadways, bicycle facilities, or pedestrian facilities. Access to the project site would be from an existing driveway apron on Diamond Ranch Road. Construction vehicles would access the existing driveway, and all construction-related parking and staging would occur on the project site. Implementation of the project would not result in any temporary or permanent road closures off-site. Project construction and operation would not affect the City of Diamond Bar's or City of Pomona's existing and planned circulation system, including school bus routes serving DRHS. Therefore, the project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less Than Significant Impact. A VMT screening assessment was prepared for the project (see Appendix G). The project-specific VMT screening assessment used the *City of Pomona Transportation Study Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment* (October 2020) to analyze project impacts related to transportation. The City of Pomona VMT

guidelines provide screening criteria to determine if a development project is presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact. The City of Pomona's VMT guidelines were used because they are the same or more stringent than the City of Diamond Bar's VMT guidelines.

Pursuant to the City of Pomona VMT Guidelines, because the proposed solar farm would provide electricity to only District facilities (local-serving kindergarten through twelfth grade schools) and would generate fewer than 110 daily vehicle trips, the project is presumed to result in a less than significant transportation-related impact. The City of Diamond Bar similarly identifies projects that generate fewer than 110 daily vehicle trips as having less than significant impacts relative to VMT.[48] Therefore, a detailed VMT analysis is not required and the project would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact. Project implementation would include the construction of an access road system that would solely be used for solar panel maintenance on the school campus. The access road would be accessed from an existing driveway apron from Diamond Ranch Road. The proposed access improvements do not include any geometric design features that would substantially increase hazards. There are no obstructions at the existing driveway apron that would block views or create a dangerous intersection. Internally, the project would include 26-foot-wide service roads to provide vehicle access to maintain the panels. A main east-west road would be constructed on the south side of the solar farm, and three north-south "finger" roads would be installed between the solar panels. On-site parking would be available along the east-west internal road and near the driveway apron. Additionally, the project would not substantially increase hazards due to incompatible uses. The project would result in installation of a PV solar panel field on the existing school campus and would not interfere or conflict with off-site operations or uses.

The project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. No impact would occur in this regard.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction haul trucks and construction worker vehicles would access the project site from the existing driveway apron on Diamond Ranch Road via adjacent highways and roadways. Construction staging, laydown, and parking would occur on the project site; no off-site areas would be affected wherein emergency access could potentially be affected.. During construction, ingress and egress to DRHS would be maintained at all times. Project construction and operation would not result in any temporary or permanent roadway or lane closures off-site. Access to the project site during operation would be available via the existing driveway apron and proposed access roads. Emergency access to DRHS school facilities, as well as the project site, would be maintained during construction and operation of the project. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

[48] City of Diamond Bar. 2024. *City of Diamond Bar Transportation Study Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment*.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: *Would the project:*				
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a)i) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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 Impact. The Cultural Resources Assessment conducted for the project included a pedestrian survey, an SCCIC records search, and a Sacred Lands File search with the NAHC. The SCCIC records search found no previously recorded sites or resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The pedestrian survey similarly identified no precontact deposits or artifacts. The NAHC responded in a letter dated March 17, 2025, stating that the search of the Sacred Lands File was positive, indicating that tribal cultural resources have been identified in the

project vicinity. While the NAHC Sacred Lands File database search yielded positive results for tribal sensitivity in the vicinity of the project, as stated in the Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix D), the project site is underlain with certified engineered fill. Therefore, there are no native soils that would potentially contain cultural resources.

As discussed in Section 3.5(b), should previously unknown archaeological materials (e.g., flaked or ground stone tools, ceramic fragments, historic-period artifacts, faunal remains, features such as hearths or structural remnants, or similar resources) be encountered during construction, work would be halted in the immediate area, and a qualified archaeologist would be contacted to evaluate the find and recommend appropriate treatment. Impacts would be less than significant.

a)ii) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 3.18(a).

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	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, wastewater treatment or storm water 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) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project consists of construction and operation of a PV solar farm that would generate energy to be exported to SCE's grid to offset energy use at 20 District-owned properties. The project would involve improvements to allow renewable energy generated by the project to be distributed to an existing SCE 12-kV distribution line located beneath Diamond Ranch Road and exported to SCE's grid. Expansion of an existing SCE electrical vault system located directly across the existing driveway apron on Diamond Ranch Road would be required. The potential environmental effects related to expansion of the SCE vault system have been

evaluated in this IS/MND. Project implementation would not result in the relocation or construction of other new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. The project would result in less than significant impacts related to these facilities.

b) Would the project 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. Construction of the proposed project would require nominal amounts of water, such as for dust suppression. These activities would not result in substantial water demand and would cease once construction is complete. Project operation would include routine maintenance of the PV solar farm, which includes hand- or power-washing the solar panels as needed (two to three times per year) to maintain their efficiency and lifespan, since dirt, dust, and debris reduce the amount of sunlight absorbed, leading to decreased energy production. The panels would be cleaned with water and a biodegradable detergent. The cleaning solution would be applied to minimize the amount of water required. Approximately 0.5 gallons per panel would be used during the washing cycle; with two to three wash cycles per year and 4,284 panels, this equals less than 10,000 gallons per year for washing. Municipal water, and in some cases deionized water, would be used for the wash cycles. As such, operation of the project would result in nominal water use. Therefore, sufficient water supplies would be available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Impacts to water supplies would be less than significant.

c) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The project would not include any improvements or land uses that would necessitate wastewater treatment. Therefore, no impact related to wastewater treatment capacity would occur.

d) Would the project 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. During project construction, waste generated would be limited to construction packaging and residual waste materials. The project site consists of engineered fill, which is suitable for reuse at off-site construction sites; therefore, the excess soil from project site grading would not be disposed to a landfill. Debris from project construction would be recycled to the extent feasible at a local recycling facility and/or brought to the closest landfill, Olinda Alpha Landfill, which has a remaining capacity of approximately 17.5 million tons, with estimated closure occurring in the year 2036.[49] Project construction debris would be recycled, reused, or diverted to the extent feasible and would comply with California's construction debris recycling requirements, pursuant to the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires that at

[49] Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. n.d. SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details: Olinda Alpha Landfill. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2757?siteID=2093.

least 65 percent of nonhazardous installation and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse.

Operation of the proposed PV solar farm would result in minimal solid waste in the form of vegetation debris from maintenance activities and any trash found on-site. The vegetation waste would be disposed in "green waste" containers for composting at commercial waste facilities, similar to that which presently occurs during maintenance activities at the DRHS campus. The project would not generate waste in excess of established state and local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 3.19(d). The proposed project would comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding solid waste reduction. The project would comply with the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of nonhazardous installation and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
WILDFIRE: *If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity 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, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is classified as a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone.[50] It is noted that the State Fire Marshal recommended on March 24, 2025, that the project site be classified as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone; however, the revised fire hazard severity zone maps have not yet been adopted.[51] The project site is not located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or land classified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). The closest

[50] City of Diamond Bar. n.d. Diamond Bar Fire Hazard Zones. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=107f1b2b5c624705b0c4621243f8f084.

[51] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. n.d. Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0.

VHFHSZ is approximately 0.6 miles south of the project site.[52] The project consists of a PV solar farm on an approximately 11.5-acre site north of the DRHS facilities. As discussed in Responses 3.9(f) and 3.17(d), construction and operation of the proposed solar farm would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, 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?

No Impact. As stated in Response 3.20(a), the project site is not in an SRA or a VHFHSZ, with the closest VHFHSZ located approximately 0.6 miles south of the project site. The terraced slopes proposed as part of the project would entail a 1 percent slope. This is considered a nominal increase and would not exacerbate wildfire risks at the project site. The project does not propose any elements that would increase wildfire risks at the project site, thereby exposing project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. No impact would occur.

c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project 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 project would involve implementation of a proposed PV solar farm, including access roads and associated electrical infrastructure, approximately 0.6 miles from the closest VHFHSZ or SRA. As discussed in Response 3.15(a)(i), various flammable materials may be stored on-site during construction and operations, and some project components would be electrified. No fuel breaks or emergency water sources are required or proposed. The majority of electrical utility improvements required with the project would be undergrounded or contained within metal enclosures. All proposed utility connections and improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with applicable federal and state standards and regulations to minimize the potential for increased wildfire risk.

New access roadways would provide site access from the existing off-site road network. All project roadway improvements would be constructed in conformance with applicable engineering design requirements and regulations. The on-site access roads would be cleared and compacted to allow maintenance equipment and emergency vehicles to access the solar arrays. These access roads would remain in place and would be maintained over the long term to support ongoing project operations and maintenance activities after construction is completed.

During project operation, routine maintenance activities would include trimming/removing overgrown vegetation. Accordingly, the amount of flammable vegetation on-site would be minimal. The use of vehicles during project construction and operation may increase fire risk due to the

[52] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. n.d. Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer. Accessed May 30, 2025. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0.

driving of heated mufflers and possible scraping of metal over vegetated areas, which could cause a spark. Such conditions may result in a slight increase in the potential risk of wildfire ignition.

However, prior to the issuance of grading permits, the City of Pomona and the City of Diamond Bar would require the project proponent to prepare a fire safety plan for use during construction and operation of the proposed project. Implementation of the city-approved fire safety plan for the project would ensure that impacts associated with wildfire risk would be less than significant.

d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Response 3.7(a)(iv), there is little to no potential for landsliding on the project site. Project construction would entail grading to create terraced slopes for placement of solar panels and associated infrastructure, removal of on-site vegetation, and covering the project site with a layer of crushed gravel. As discussed in Response 3.10(c)(i), the crushed gravel that would cover the entire project site would minimize soil erosion and siltation and would also minimize the amount of sediment entering the drainage channel west of the project site. As such, the project would not result in increased runoff, slope stability, or change in drainage on-site or off-site. In the event the project site is burned during a wildfire, the project site would continue to be covered by crushed gravel that would continue to minimize runoff, ensure slope stability, and minimize soil erosion that could affect drainages. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, after implementation of MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-5, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to biological resources. As discussed in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to archaeological and tribal cultural resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not potentially 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. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. A significant impact may occur if the project, in conjunction with related projects proposed for development in the City of Pomona and/or the City of Diamond Bar, would result in impacts that are less than significant when viewed separately but would be significant when viewed together. When considering the proposed project in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity of the project site, the proposed project does not have the potential to cause impacts that are cumulatively considerable. As detailed in the above discussions, the proposed project would not result in any significant and unmitigable impacts in any environmental categories. In all cases, the impacts associated with the project are limited to the project site or are of such a negligible degree that they would not result in a significant contribution to any cumulative impacts.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less Than Significant Impact. As analyzed in Section 3.3, Air Quality, and Section 3.13, Noise, the project would result in less than significant impacts relative to air quality and noise. As stated in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the project would result in a beneficial effect related to GHG emissions. Accordingly, the project would not result in environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

4.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Lead Agency

Pomona Unified School District

Pomona Unified School District
800 S. Garey Avenue
Pomona, California 91766
Ronald Gonzales-Lawrence
909-397-4800, Ext. 23885

Michael Baker International, Inc.

IS/MND

Bob Stark, AICP, Principal-in-Charge
Melissa Whittemore, Project Manager
Nicole Marotz, Senior Environmental Planner
Haley Walker, Environmental Planner
Audrey Tamayo, Environmental Planner
Shannon Liska, AICP, Environmental Planner
Ana Cotham, Technical Editor
Connor Lance, GIS Specialist

Biological Resources Assessment

Kristin Szabo, Senior Biologist/Technical Specialist

Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment

James Daniels, PhD, RPA, Principal Investigator/Senior Archaeologist
Peter Kloess, PhD, Principal Paleontologist
Rachel Garcia, MA, Associate Archaeologist
Tara Kloess, BA, Associate Paleontologist

Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Assessment

Jacob Swim, TE, Transportation Engineer

Padre Associates, Inc.

Phase I Environmental Stie Assessment

Alan Churchill, PG, Senior Geologist
Alan J. Klein, CPESC, QSD/QSP, Associate Senior Environmental Scientist

Global Geo-Engineering, Inc.

Geotechnical Investigation

Mohan B. Upasan, RGE, Principal Geotechnical Engineer
Kevin B. Young, CEG, Principal Engineering Geologist

Vista Environmental

Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis

Greg Tonkovich, INCE, AICP

Noise Impact Analysis

Greg Tonkovich, INCE, AICP

APPENDIX A: Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis

APPENDIX B: Biological Resources Assessment

APPENDIX C: Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment

APPENDIX D: Geotechnical Investigation

APPENDIX E: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

APPENDIX F: Noise Impact Analysis

APPENDIX G: VMT Screening Assessment