CITY OF
LAGUNA BEACH

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

DATE: January 14, 2026

PROJECT TITLE: Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Plan

PROJECT LOCATION: The Aliso Creek Estuary is located at the mouth of Aliso Creek at the Pacific Ocean in South Laguna Beach, California.

PROPONENT:
Laguna Ocean Foundation
1278 Glenneyre Street, #133
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

LEAD AGENCY:
City of Laguna Beach
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, California 92651

RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:
County of Orange
333 W. Santa Ana Boulevard
Santa Ana, CA 92701

South Coast Water District
31592 West Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651-6907

South Orange County Wastewater Authority
34156 Del Obispo Street
Dana Point, CA 92629

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to inform responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and other interested stakeholders that the City of Laguna Beach (City) has independently determined that the proposed Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Plan (Project) may result in potentially significant environmental impacts. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will therefore be prepared to assess these impacts pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.). The City has prepared an Initial Study (IS) in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15000 et seq.). This IS addresses potential impacts associated with the proposed Project and describes the scope of the forthcoming EIR.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW AND COMMENTS

This NOP is being distributed to solicit written comments from responsible agencies, trustee agencies, federal agencies involved in approving or funding the project, and other interested stakeholders regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the EIR including significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures, and other pertinent information consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b).

The public review period for this NOP extends from **January 15, 2026** to **February 14, 2026**. Please provide any written comments (either by mail or electronically) no later than **5:00 pm** on **February 14, 2026**. Please direct all comments to the following address:

Ms. Shaveta Sharma, Senior Planner
Community Development Department
City of Laguna Beach
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, California 92651
ssharma@lagunabeachcity.net

SCOPING MEETING

Two public scoping meetings will be held on **January 21, 2026** from **3:00 pm to 4:00 pm** and **6:00 pm** to **7:00 pm** at **Laguna Beach Community and Susi Q Center**, located at **380 Third Street Laguna Beach, CA 92651**. The public scoping meetings will begin with a brief presentation and overview of the proposed Project followed by time for oral public comments. The purpose of this public scoping meetings will be to assist the City of Laguna Beach in identifying the range of potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives to be analyzed in depth in the Draft EIR.

REVIEW MATERIALS

Copies of this NOP and the IS are available for public review at: https://www.lagunabeachcity.net/government/departments/community-development/planning-zoning/public-notices as well as at the **Planning Division Counter**, located at **505 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651**.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed Project would restore the Aliso Creek Estuary by removing artificial fill, widening the channelized watercourse, creating new functional wetland habitats, improving water quality, and returning the estuary to its natural "intermittently open" condition. These proposed restoration activities would include the demolition of the existing beach overflow parking lot, construction of a new multi-modal facilities, installation of landscaping, and reconstruction of the play area and tot lot. The Project site encompasses an existing estuary located at the mouth of Aliso Creek at the Pacific Ocean in South Laguna Beach, California. Specifically, the Project site is located between Country Club Drive and South Coast Highway (see Figure 1). According to the City of Laguna Beach Zoning Map and General Plan Land Use Map, the Project site is zoned for Recreation (REC) (City of Laguna Beach 2012b, 2012c).

DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

In addition to certification of the EIR and approval of the proposed Project by the City, discretionary approvals required from the City include Planning Commission issuance of a Design Review entitlement and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Additionally, the implementation of the proposed Project would require the issuance of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) by the City and the California Coastal Commission (CCC), issuance of Clean Water Act (CWA) permits by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and issuance of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

PROJECT IMPACTS

Based on the findings of the IS, the City of Laguna Beach has identified potential impacts to the following resource areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Services Systems

The EIR for the proposed Project will identify mitigation measures and consider alternatives that would avoid or substantially reduce potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed Project while attaining most of the basic project objectives in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Initial Study

1. Project Title:
Aliso Creek Estuary Restoration Plan

3. Applicant
Laguna Ocean Foundation
1278 Glenneyre Street, #133
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:
City of Laguna Beach
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, California 92651

3. Responsible Agency Names and Addresses:
County of Orange
333 W. Santa Ana Boulevard
Santa Ana, CA 92701

South Coast Water District
31592 West Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651-6907

South Orange County Wastewater Authority
34156 Del Obispo Street
Dana Point, CA 92629

4. Contact Person:
Ms. Shaveta Sharma, Senior Planner
Community Development Department
City of Laguna Beach
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, California 92651
ssharma@lagunabeachcity.net

5. Project Location:
The Aliso Creek Estuary is located at the mouth of Aliso Creek at the Pacific Ocean in southern Laguna Beach, Orange County, California.

6. General Plan Designation(s):
PRP – Public Recreation and Parks

7. Zoning Designation(s):
REC – Recreation Zone

Figure 1. Project Location

8. Description of Project:

Project Site

The Project site is located at the mouth of Aliso Creek along the coast of South Laguna Beach, in South Orange County (refer to Figure 1). The Project site, which is located entirely within the Coastal Zone, encompasses approximately 1,500 linear feet of Aliso Creek as well as its adjacent steep, vegetated banks, beginning at the confluence of the estuary with the Pacific Ocean. Most of the Project site is located within Aliso Beach Park, a municipal park owned and operated by the City of Laguna Beach. Aliso Beach Park is bisected by the Coast Highway, which creates a beach front portion and an inland portion of the park. (The creek flows to the beach through an archway below the Aliso Creek Bridge, which is maintained by the California Department of Transportation [Caltrans].)

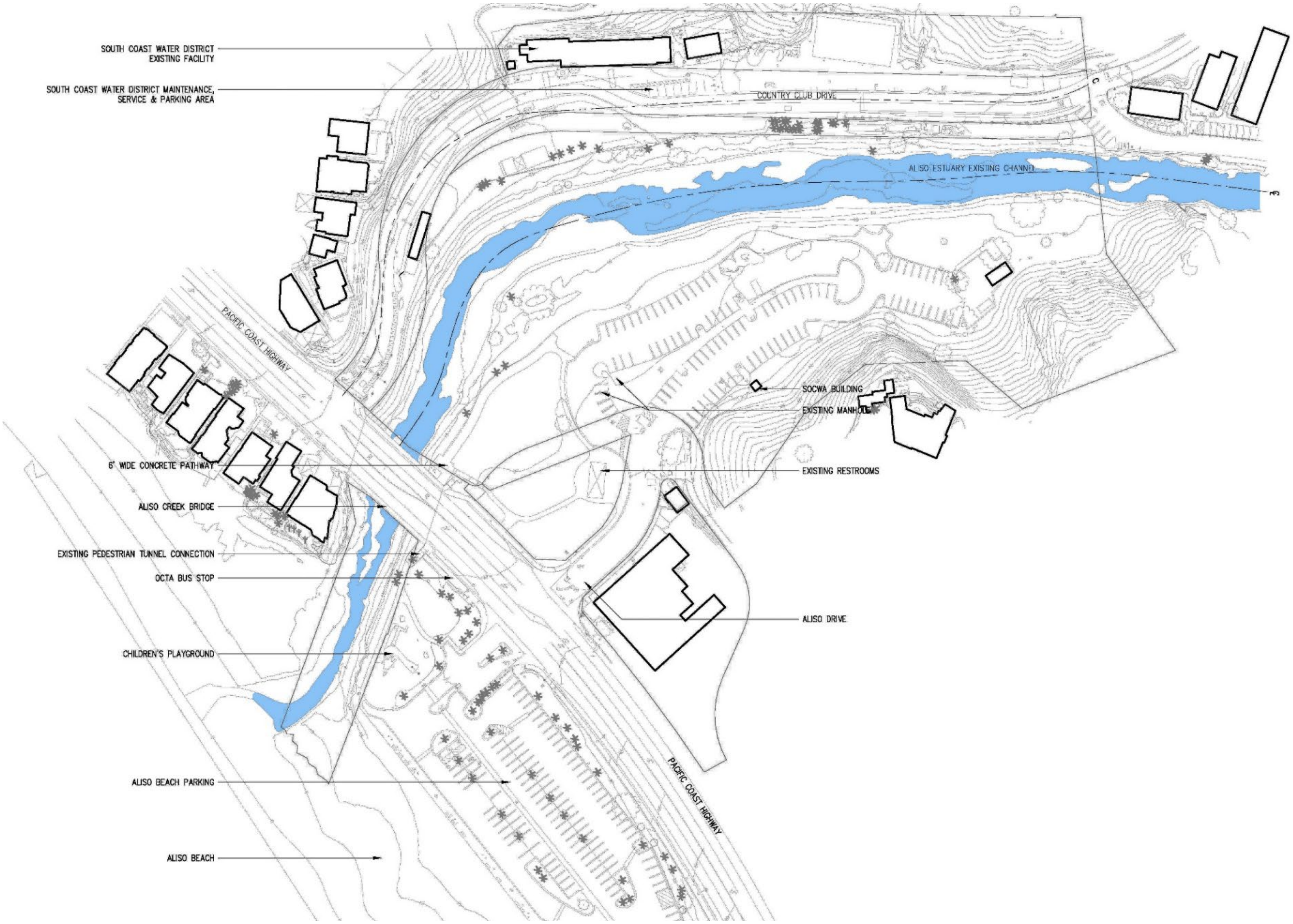
Photographs 1 and 2. *The Aliso Creek Estuary (left) is currently a narrow channelized water course (left) that flows from Aliso Canyon to the ocean through the Coast Highway Bridge (right). The proposed Project would expand the channel, restoring its ecological function.*

The beach front portion of the park includes a 146-space parking lot, picnic area, playground, concession stand (Lost Pier Cafe), restrooms, accessible paved paths, fire pits, and the beach. The mouth of the estuary is located at the north end of these park facilities, adjacent to the picnic and playground areas (see Figure 2).

The inland portion of the park, located on the south side of Aliso Creek, can be accessed from the beach through a pedestrian underpass under the Coast Highway Bridge. These facilities include a paved overflow parking lot providing approximately 120 spaces, a public restroom, an open manicured lawn, and several large shade trees in and around the parking lot and lawn area (see Figure 2).

There is also a gravel parking lot on the north side of the creek, part of which is within the park boundary and part of which is owned by South Coast Water District (SCWD) (see Figure 2). SCWD is currently using the gravel lot for construction staging/equipment storage. This gravel lot north of the creek is connected to the inland portion of the park on the south side of Aliso Creek by a sidewalk along the Coast Highway Bridge and a stairway down into the park.

Figure 2. Existing Project Site



Surrounding Land Uses

While much of the Project site itself is undeveloped, the Project site is surrounded by urban development. SCWD’s maintenance facilities are located adjacent to the north of the Project site across Country Club Drive. General activities at these buildings include wastewater treatment and transportation. Single-family and multi-family residential uses are located along the coast north of the Project site across Country Club Drive. Single-family housing is also located in the neighborhood to the south of the Project site. The undeveloped area to the northeast of the Project site is comprised of open space and conservation areas. The Ranch Resort and Golf Course are along the north bank of Aliso Creek and extend across to the south bank at the upstream end of the Project site. Upstream of the golf course, Aliso Creek runs through the approximately 4,500-acre Aliso and Woods Canyon Wilderness Park, which extends along the southern hillside.

Photographs 3 and 4. *SCWDs maintenance facilities (left) are located adjacent to the north of the Project site along Country Club Drive and The Ranch (right) is located further upstream of the Project site along Country Club Drive.*

Project Description

The proposed Project would restore the Aliso Creek Estuary from its current condition to a healthy, functional ecosystem. In its existing state the estuary is a degraded lagoon, which stores urban runoff and provides no significant value as a natural habitat for native plants, fish, or wildlife. The proposed Project would restore a portion of the wetland habitat that historically occupied the Project site, by removing the existing surface parking lot and associated artificial fill, widening the channelized watercourse, and restoring the estuary’s natural connection to the ocean.

The Restoration Site Plan proposes new, upgraded park facilities designed to provide public opportunities to experience the restored ecosystem in a wilderness park setting. These features include an interpretive loop trail around the restored estuary with seating and viewing areas, a pedestrian bridge over the restored wetland habitat, and an overlook area suitable for guided educational visits (see Figure 3). The Public Access Plan emphasizes enhanced access to the site via multiple modes of transportation through a multi-modal mobility hub, consistent with citywide visitor mobility strategies (see Figure 3).

Project History

The Restoration Site Plan is the product of an extended planning and design process that began in 2016 with the Conceptual Restoration Plan (Environmental Science Associates [ESA] 2018).[1] The 2018 Conceptual Restoration Plan was refined through subsequent interactions and input from affected landowners, regulatory agencies, the general public, and the Science Advisory Team (SAT) that was established for the proposed Project as well as multiple discussions with City staff and Planning Commissioners, including Planning Commission Concept Design Review (August 21, 2024). Together these discussions and iterative revisions yielded the Restoration Site Plan, as currently proposed.

Estuary Restoration

The proposed Project would restore an ecosystem of a unique type that does not exist elsewhere in Laguna Beach and has been largely lost throughout Southern California. Wetlands ecologists identify the Aliso Creek Estuary as a "small, intermittently open estuary."[2] An "intermittently open" estuary system is one whose mouth to the ocean is naturally closed most of the time and open only intermittently under certain natural conditions. Historically, in its earlier, more natural state, the mouth of the Aliso Creek Estuary would close due to the natural process of wave action building up a sand berm at the mouth. The natural sand berm inhibits the exchange of fresh water from the lagoon and sea water from the ocean, except for relatively minor seepages through the base of the berm. Under historic conditions the estuary mouth would open as a result of natural processes in two ways. Following wet weather storms, high flows from the creek would wash out the berm to release storm water into the ocean. The other natural process is high tides and/or high surf overtopping and breaching the berm. The actions of tides and surf, which vary multiple times a day, can result in a natural sequence of opening and closing of the mouth, as the berm is eroded and builds up again with the retreat of the surf and/or tides, sometimes resulting in multiple opening and closing events per day.[3] The seasonality and diurnal patterns of these natural processes govern the frequency and duration of the open or closed state of the estuary mouth, which in turn regulates the exchange of fresh and salt water and the chemical and physical properties of the estuary. Analyses indicate that under more natural conditions the estuary mouth was closed up to 90 percent of the time on an annual basis. The natural dynamics of this intermittently open system are largely responsible for the estuary's ecosystem functions.

Proposed Restoration Actions

The goal of the proposed Project is to restore the fundamental dynamics of the estuary to support basic ecosystem functions, which in turn support the natural habitats and wildlife native to the estuary. Technical studies prepared for the Conceptual Restoration Plan (2018) evaluated the

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[1] The Conceptual Restoration Plan was developed over a 2-year period that included extensive technical studies, community outreach and interaction with multiple stakeholders, landowners and public agencies. The Plan was funded through a grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy. The resulting report and technical appendices can be found at: https://www.lagunaoceanfoundation.org/aliso-creek-estuary-restoration.

[2] Southern California Coastal Water Research Project. 2011. Classification of California Estuaries Based on Natural Closure Patterns: Templates for Restoration and Management. Technical Report 619.a – August 2011. See also Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, 2020. Wetlands on the Edge, Work Plan 2020.

[3] The natural process of opening and closing due to tidal and wave action is disrupted when the berm is breached by artificial means.

feasibility of restoring the estuary and determined that the estuary's basic ecosystem functions can be restored through the combined effects of five restoration actions, summarized below:

- Restore a portion of the estuary's native wetland and upland habitats in addition to open water. Removal of wetland habitat and placement of fill within the estuary when constructing the inland portion of Aliso Beach Park destroyed the natural ecosystem. The proposed Project would restore a portion of the natural habitat that was previously removed. The habitat would be restored by removing artificial fill and revegetating the restored area with native wetland vegetation.

Photograph 5. *The proposed Project would remove the existing surface parking lot and widen and deepen the estuary.*

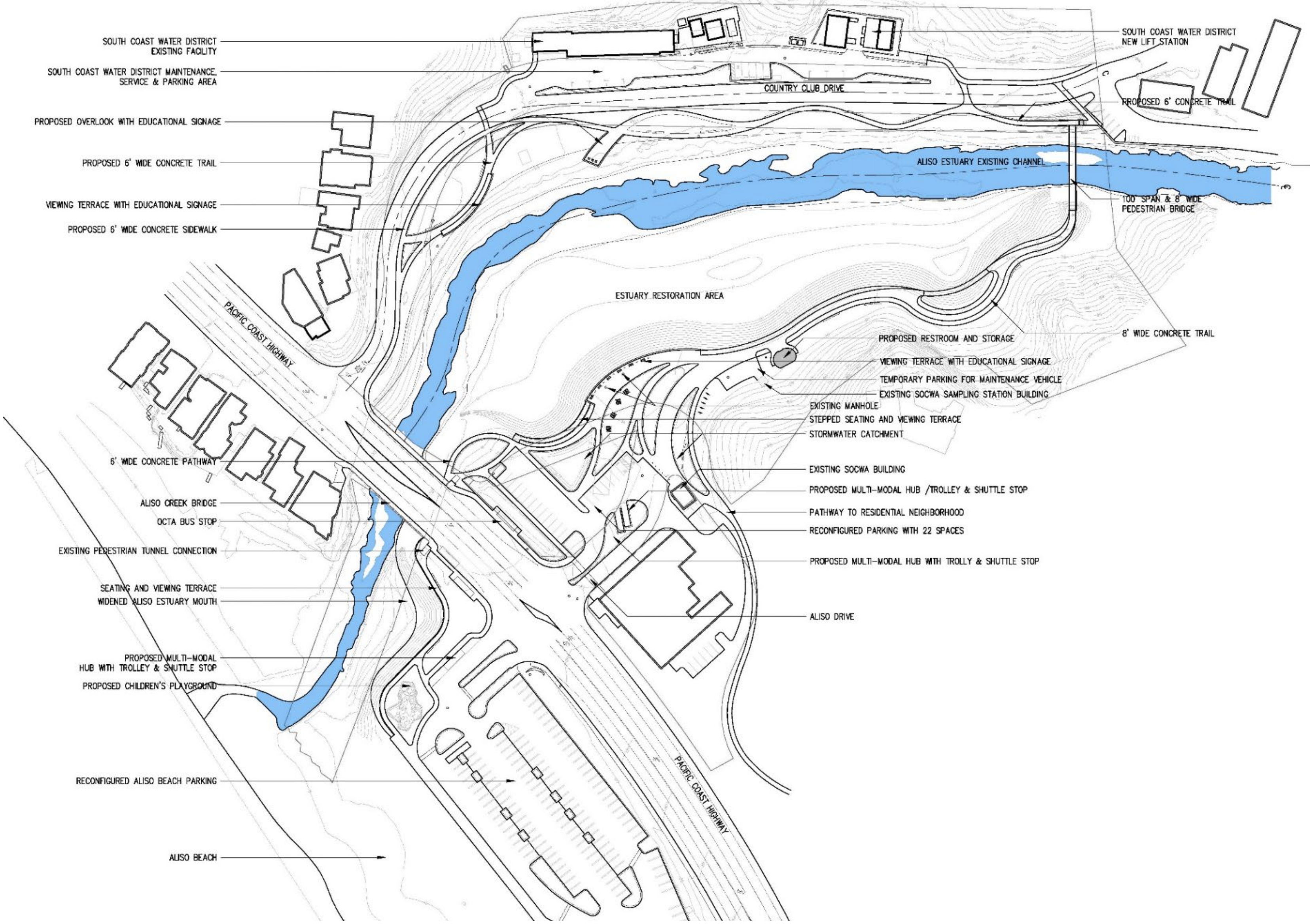
- Widen the estuary to increase the volume of water that can be held when it is closed. The segment of Aliso Creek just upstream of the Coast Highway Bridge is currently confined to a narrow, artificial channel, severely restricting the flow of water through the estuary and the volume of water when the estuary is closed. These artificially modified conditions fundamentally altered the natural hydrodynamics of the system. They also result in reduced open water habitat. The proposed Project would increase the volume of water held in the lagoon by restoring a portion of its former capacity. The enhanced capacity would reduce the frequency of natural breaching caused by water entering the lagoon from upstream, thereby contributing to a return to the estuary's natural "intermittently open" condition. Although the Restoration Site Plan proposes to increase the capacity of the estuary to less than half of its historical volume, analyses performed in the early design stage indicate that the proposed enlargement, combined with other restoration actions, will effectively restore basic ecosystem functions (ESA 2018).

- Remove artificial fill on the south side of the channel downstream of the Coast Highway Bridge and realign (i.e., setback) a seaward portion the rock revetment structure to improve natural mouth dynamics and allow the lagoon to form to the south. This would give the channel mouth more space to migrate south, away from beachfront homes north of the creek.

- Reduce the breaching frequency of the sand berm at the mouth of the estuary to more closely approximate the seasonal dynamics of natural processes. A larger sized lagoon would tend to remain closed more often during the dry season as the increased volume and evapotranspiration leads to lowered water levels compared to the existing channelized conditions at Aliso Creek.

- Implement a long-term Adaptive Management Plan to oversee ecosystem functions, establish native vegetation, ensure compliance with permit requirements, manage on-site public education and outreach, and implement management actions in response to dynamic ecosystem behavior and site conditions to achieve restoration objectives.

Figure 3. Proposed Site Plan



The combined effect of these actions would restore the estuary's basic ecosystem functions, principally by restoring habitat and the conditions that govern the intermittently open condition of the mouth (ESA 2018). The restored estuary is projected to be closed up to 90 percent of the time, consistent with historical conditions. Once wetland habitats are restored, the estuary is expected to provide habitat for native fish and wildlife, eventually providing suitable habitat for the tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), a federally listed endangered fish species that formerly occupied the site. It would also re-establish natural habitat links from the neighboring upland habitat areas to the estuary and creek, as well as the critical link from upstream habitats in Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park and the Laguna Beach State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA), a no-take area designed to protect marine life and habitats. The success of these five restoration actions is supported by feasibility studies conducted in 2017 for the Conceptual Restoration Plan, and by the consensus opinion of the wetlands restoration experts comprising the SAT.

Proposed Restoration Plan

The proposed Restoration Site Plan reflects the five restoration actions described above, principally in its grading and habitat restoration plans. In addition, the proposed Project includes a new park plan, primarily affecting the inland park, to provide public access and use in relation to the restored ecosystem.

The proposed Restoration Site Plan consists of several components:

- Proposed Site Plan
- Habitat Restoration Plan
- Landscape Plan
- Public Access and Amenities Plan
- Grading Plan
- Water Quality Management Plan
- Adaptive Management Plan
- Utilities Avoidance and Relocation Plan
- Implementation Plan for Property and Land Use Issues

Several technical studies were prepared to determine feasibility of the restoration and further guide design and refinement of the Restoration Site Plan following the Conceptual Restoration Plan (2018):

- Hydrodynamic Modeling Report (Flooding and Scour)
- Coastal Processes Study
- Water and Sediment Quality Study
- Geotechnical Evaluation
- Tree Survey Report
- Topographic Survey and Boundary Mapping
- Conceptual Utility Modification Plan
- Traffic and Trip Generation

Additional technical studies have been prepared or will be prepared to facilitate the impact analysis provided in the EIR.

- Construction Phasing, Equipment and Duration Assessment
- Air Quality and Greenhouse (GHG) modeling (CalEEMod)
- Phase I Cultural Resources Study
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)
- Wetland Delineation and Impact Assessment
- Biological Resources Technical Report
- Trip Generation Analysis
- Parking and Circulation Analysis
- Pedestrian Bridge Assessment (Concept Development and Flood/Scour Modeling)

The Restoration Site Plan and associated technical studies will inform the impact analysis and conclusions provided in the EIR and will be provided as appendices, as appropriate.

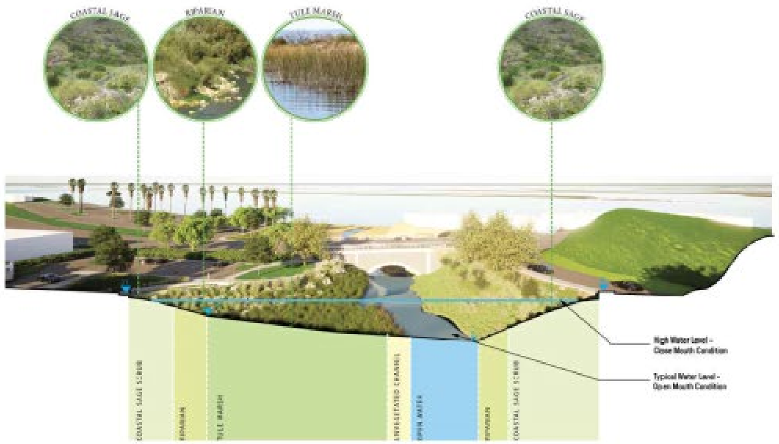
Proposed Site Plan

As previously described, the Proposed Site Plan is shown in Figure 3. Additionally, Figure 4 presents illustrative cross-sections of the restored estuary at three locations upstream of the Coast Highway Bridge. As shown therein, the estuary would be restored with a range of six native habitat types, located according to an elevational gradient relative to the average water level under restored conditions. Proposed habitat types include: open water, unvegetated channel, tule marsh, riparian, coastal sage scrub, and coastal dune.

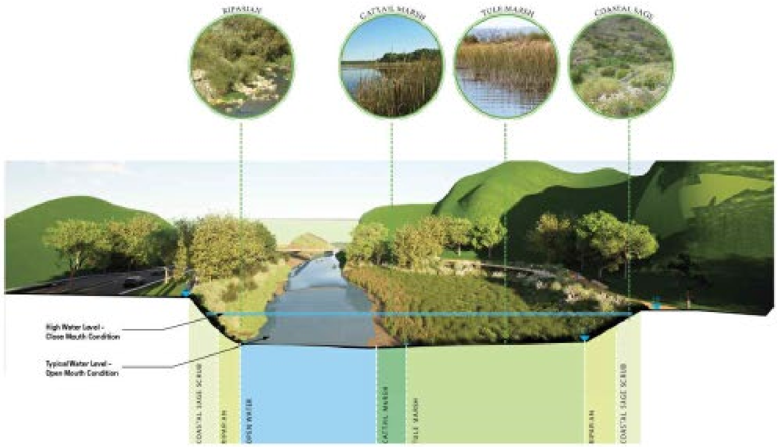
In addition to restoring the natural ecosystem, the Proposed Site Plan would upgrade much of Aliso Beach Park with new amenities, especially on the inland side. Under current conditions, the character of the inland park is dominated by the large lawn and overflow parking lot. The lawn is rarely used by the public and the parking lot is under-utilized most of the year. The many mature trees (of which very few are native) provide the greatest visual amenity to the park. A paved walkway bordering the creek leads from the parking area to the pedestrian tunnel under the Coast Highway Bridge. None of the features of the current site plan enable an experience for park visitors that relates to the site’s natural setting at the mouth of Aliso Canyon, the Aliso Creek, its estuary, natural habitats, or any of the natural features upstream or on the upper slopes surrounding the park.

The Restoration Site Plan would modify the character of the inland park through restoration of the estuary and introduction of park amenities and features that emphasize public access and experience of the restored ecosystem and its setting in a natural wilderness park. The proposed Restoration Site Plan would create a transition from active recreational uses on the beach side of Aliso Beach Park to a wilderness park oriented around the restored estuary ecosystem on the inland side of the Coast Highway Bridge. The park’s wilderness character on the inland side is conceived as a transition to the larger wilderness park upstream in the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park. The restoration of natural habitat and the proposed transition respond to the urban/wilderness edge that characterizes Laguna Beach as a whole and its unique relationship to natural open space. Restoration of the estuary would also restore a critical link from upstream habitats in Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park to the Laguna Beach SMCA, providing functional natural ecosystems that underlie the visual experienced by the park visitor.

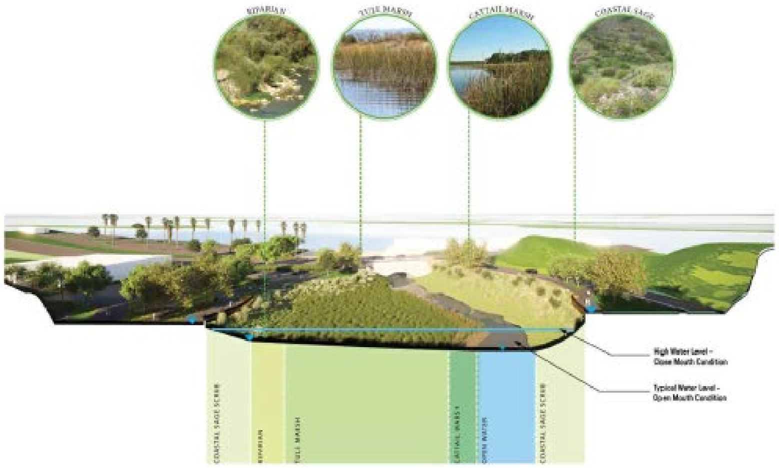
Figure 4. Project Site Cross Sections



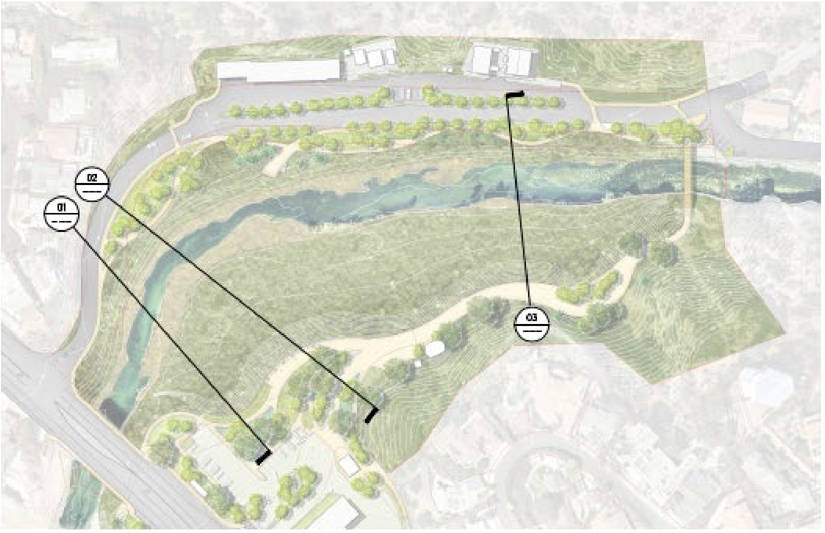
RESTORATION AREA - SECTION 1



RESTORATION AREA - SECTION 3



RESTORATION AREA - SECTION 2



KEY PLAN

Public Viewing Areas and Interpretive Trail

Photograph 6. *The proposed pedestrian bridge would enhance public access by connecting the loop trail on both sides of the restored estuary.*

The Restoration Site Plan is designed to facilitate a non-intrusive but visually intimate visitor experience of the restored estuary in the natural setting of a wilderness park. The Restoration Site Plan includes public viewing areas, an interpretive loop trail system around the estuary, and a pedestrian bridge, seating areas and furnishings (e.g., lighting fixtures, bollards, signage, etc.). The proposed Project does not include formal educational programs; however, these public access amenities provide opportunities for the inland park to function as focus point for education and interpretive programs related to the restored estuarine ecosystem, the coastal and marine systems downstream, adjacent terrestrial ecosystems, the upstream watershed, natural history, early Laguna Beach history, Native American cultural history, and similar topics.

The Restoration Site Plan identifies an overlook with signage on the south side of the estuary. This area is a suitable location for an Ocean Awareness Center building, if such a facility were to be proposed sometime in the future. Such a project would likely be funded by private donations and would be designed and reviewed by the Planning Commission as a separate project; however, it is not part of the currently proposed Project.

Multi-Modal Mobility Hub

The Restoration Site Plan includes a Multi-Modal Mobility Hub designed to function as a transportation node that will enhance public access to the site and mobility to and from other locations in Laguna Beach. The plan features an enhanced Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) bus stop, shuttle service and micro-transit stops, facilities for e-bikes and conventional bicycles, signage and access to the California Coastal Trail, and a coastal connection for a future Mountains to the Sea Trail. The Multi-Modal Mobility Hub implements strategies of the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Strategy adopted by the City in 2023, and visitor management policies of the City's General Plan and Local Coastal Plan (Land Use Element Goal 4) to promote park-once strategies that emphasize satellite parking outside the City or in peripheral areas to accommodate visitors during peak periods, coupled with heightened mobility through shuttles and mini-transit systems and fewer cars entering the city. The Restoration Site Plan provides 22 parking spaces and 2 shuttle spaces on the inland side and approximately 20 new spaces on the beachside (through restriping and minor reconfiguration).

Utilities Planning

Several utility easements exist in and adjacent to the restoration and park areas of the Project site. These include infrastructure owned by the City of Laguna Beach, SCWD, South Orange County Waste Water Authority (SOCWA), Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), Cox, Frontier, and Southern California Edison (SoCal Edison). The Restoration Site Plan includes a Concept Utility Modification Plan that identifies the subsurface and above ground utilities at the site, including many water, recycled water and wastewater pipelines, manholes vaults, storm drains and other pipelines and facilities. The Concept Utility Modification Plan was developed in close coordination with staffs of SCWD, SOCWA, and the City of Laguna Beach. The proposed Restoration Site Plan has been designed to avoid, protect or in some cases realign existing utilities. The siting, configuration and dimensions of proposed features and site modifications (e.g., grading, channel and bank armoring, restored habitats, restroom, pathways, parking, landscaping, etc.) were designed based on a detailed study of easements, utilities and utility maintenance and access requirements with the goal of ensuring that existing utilities and their future operational and maintenance requirements are uninhibited by the restoration and its long-term operation and management. Proposed methods for avoiding, modifying and/or protection in place individual utility features within the footprint of the proposed disturbance area are itemized in the Utility Modification Plan. Minor improvements (e.g., landscaping, pedestrian trails, and viewing areas) proposed off-site in the property to the north owned by SCWD are consistent with the land use plan approved by the City and California Coastal Commission (CCC) for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Project (State Clearinghouse [SCH] No. 2021020470).

Play Area and Tot Lot

The Restoration Site Plan proposes to restore the estuary’s natural connection to the ocean, in part by widening the channel on the beach side of the Coast Highway Bridge. To achieve this, the Restoration Site Plan proposes reconfiguring the existing rock revetment and children’s play area immediately south of the channel. The rip-rap barrier would be re-engineered and realigned to the south to open up the channel. The play area would conform to the City’s adopted Playground Master Plan.

Elements of Proposed Restoration Site Plan

The Restoration Site Plan includes multiple sheets illustrating individual site plan elements.

- Site Survey and Record of Survey
- Existing Condition Plan
- Site Plan Layout
- Illustrative Site Plan
- Site Sections
- Site Renderings
- Open space Calculations
- Landscape and Habitat Plan
- Fire Department Site Access Plan
- Service and Maintenance Access Plan
- Tree Disposition and Planting Plan
- Understory Planting Plan
- Hardscape Plan
- Lighting Plan

- Site Furnishing Plan
- Pedestrian Bridge Plan
- Restroom Plans
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Site Utilities Plan

Project Phases

The project consists of five phases described in further detail below:

- Phase I. Conceptual Restoration Plan (Feasibility Plan) (Complete)
- Phase II. Refined Restoration Site Plan and Environmental Review
- Phase III. 30-Percent Design & Permit Applications
- Phase IV. Final Design & Construction
- Phase V. Monitoring & Management

Phase I. Conceptual Restoration Plan (Feasibility Plan)

Phase I, preparation of the Conceptual Restoration Plan, was completed in 2018. The proposed Project is currently in Phase II, Refined Conceptual Restoration Plan and Environmental Review. Following approval of the refined Conceptual Site Plan, the approval for the proposed Project must be obtained from several permitting agencies in Phase III. The permit review process will require site design at the 30-percent level. Phase IV includes preparation of Final Design and Construction level documents. Phase V is the long-term management of the restored estuary through implementation of the Adaptive Management Plan, compliance with permits issued by the City and regulatory agencies, and other implementation agreements.

Phase II. Refined Restoration Site Plan and Environmental Review

The current phase includes two major tasks:

- **Task 1 – Refine Conceptual Restoration Plan.** Task 1 involved the planning and design process necessary to refine the Conceptual Restoration Plan and to address issues raised by landowners, public agencies and public service providers who own or maintain utilities, and other facilities in and around the restoration area, residents, the general public, local Native American Tribes, and other stakeholders. Task 1 has been ongoing for nearly 2 years and has involved extended, detailed one-on-one discussions with owners of land and facilities adjacent to or within the restoration area, particularly SCWD, SOCWA and The Ranch. With the benefit of the input and extended dialogue with these agencies and landowners, the Conceptual Site Plan has been refined to resolve potential conflicts with existing and future infrastructure and activities in and around the restoration site. Task 1 included a preliminary review of the Refined Site Plan by City of Laguna Beach Planning Staff and Concept Design Review by the City's Planning Commission. The Restoration Planning and Design Team has had multiple discussions to gain input from City Staff and members of the Planning Commission.

Task 1 involved the preparation of technical studies to support the design effort to refine the Conceptual Restoration, and to develop additional information about the site, its constraints and resources and the project's effects on site conditions to inform the analysis of the project's potential environmental impacts. This task also involved the preparation of additional technical studies necessary to support the EIR, and the CEQA process itself.

- **Task 2 – CEQA and City Design Review.** Task 2 involves the environmental and public review process. The proposed Restoration Site Plan is subject to design review and approval by the City of Laguna Beach Planning Commission through the Design Review Process. The Planning Commission's design review and approval of the Conceptual Site Plan is a discretionary action that triggers the need for environmental review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15040[a]). The environmental review will identify potential environmental impacts of the Restoration Site Plan and its implementation.

  The City will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with CEQA to identify potential environmental effects of the project. The EIR will include studies prepared by technical experts on a wide range of topics, such as geologic hazards, noise, air emissions, flood hazards, impacts to coastal processes and natural resources. The purpose of the EIR process is full public disclosure and review of project impacts. The EIR will be overseen by the City and will include several steps for soliciting public input, beginning at the earliest stage before the Draft EIR is prepared for public review. With the issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and the Initial Study (IS), the public is invited to comment on the scope of environmental issues the Draft EIR should address. The Draft EIR will then be prepared and shared with the public for a 45-day period to allow for public review. During this time, the public will be asked to comment on the technical adequacy of the Draft EIR's assessment of impacts and findings. Before the proposed Project is considered for approval, the Draft EIR will be revised to incorporate public comments and address any deficiencies identified by the public or reviewing agencies to ensure it meets legal requirements for the full disclosure of impacts. The City's Planning Commission must certify that the Final EIR satisfies State and local requirements prior to taking formal action on the project.

Phase III. 30% Design & Permit Applications

Following certification of the Final EIR and approval of the Restoration Site Plan by the City's Planning Commission, the proposed Project would undergo more detailed design to achieve the 30-percent complete design level. During this stage, the Restoration Design Team would interact with the City to ensure project implementation is consistent with the Restoration Site Plan approval and the City's final design review process. Several technical studies would be prepared to support detailed design.

- Civil Engineering (30 percent)
- Utility modifications design and cost estimate (30 percent)
- Detailed Public Use Plan (e.g., parking, storm water best management practices [BMPs], etc.)
- Water Level and Data Collection
- Structural Engineering – Public Access Bridge
- Detailed Ecology and Revegetation Plan
- Detailed Landscape Plan

The proposed Project would require permits from several agencies:

- California Coastal Commission – CDP
- USACE – Section 404 and possible Section 10 Permit
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Section 7 or 10 Consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act
- Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) – Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- CDFW – Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

The California State Coastal Conservancy has established a Coordinated Permitting Process with the Federal and State agencies who have permitting authority over the restoration project: California Coastal Commission, USACE, USFWS, Santa Ana RWQCB, and CDFW. Participating agencies met with the Restoration Planning Team to discuss their agency's needs in terms of technical information and design documents to facilitate their permit review process. The Coordinated Permitting Process would enable permitting agencies to review the technical adequacy of technical studies germane to their permit authority, prior to their finalization.

Phase IV Final Design and Construction

Following completion of 30-percent design and submittal of permits with the permitting agencies, the Design Team would proceed with detailed design to the 60-, 90-, and 100-percent complete levels.

- 60-percent complete engineering and landscape architecture design plans, specifications, and estimates

- 60-percent complete utility modifications design and estimates (potentially to be performed/contracted by owning agencies)

- 90-percent complete engineering and landscape architecture design plans, specifications, and estimates

- 90-percent complete utility modifications design and estimates (potentially to be performed/contracted by owning agencies)

- 100-percent complete engineering and landscape architecture design plans, specifications, and estimates

- 100-perceent complete utility modifications design and estimates (potentially to be performed/contracted by owning agencies)

During the Final Design Phase, the Restoration and Design Team would collaborate with City staff to develop a Construction Management Plan that identifies:

- Detailed construction schedule and timing of activities by phase;

- Designated construction entrance(s) at the Project site;
- Haul routes and queuing areas to be used during asphalt removal, soil excavation and export, materials delivery, concrete truck deliveries;
- City-approved plans for re-routing vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians as well as required signage and/or construction flaggers;
- Construction equipment and materials laydown area(s) and other staging area(s); and,
- On- and/or off-site construction worker parking area(s).

Phase IV Construction and Construction Phasing

Construction would occur in three overlapping tasks over a 5-month period.

- **Task 1. Site Preparation.** Installation of protective fencing, placement of environmental protection and other site controls (e.g., erosion control and storm water pollution prevention plan [SWPPP]), grubbing of existing vegetation, tree removal (including boxing of trees to be relocated), demolition of restroom, asphalt and other hardscape, light fixtures, etc. Revetment material would be salvaged for reuse on-site. Several utilities modifications and removals would begin during the demolition phase and relocation and construction of new utilities would take place in sequence with related/adjacent project elements as needed.
- **Task 2. Site grading and armoring.** Removal of previously imported fill material from the site, resulting in approximately 33,000 cubic yards (cy) of excavated cut material, approximately 29,000 cy of which would be exported, with 4,000 cy placed as fill on-site. Export of cut material is estimated to be completed with 45 round-trip truck trips (in/out) over a 40 day period. Armoring of the realigned and enlarged estuary would occur during this phase, including modification of the rip-rap revetment immediately downstream of the Coast Highway Bridge, south bank armoring at transitions into and out of the new marshplain, armoring for protected utilities, potential armoring along the north bank of the creek, and placement of engineered streambed material to address channel scour potential.
- **Task 3. Finish Grading and Installation of Landscape Features.** Installation of hardscape and other ground surface materials would occur concurrent with finish grading, including, landscape planting, restoration planting, completion of the loop trail, rest room, surface parking on the inland park, trolley stop, bicycle facilities, enhanced OCTA bus stops, signage, and other features of the multi-modal transportation center. The Pedestrian Bridge would be constructed (assembled in place) prior to finish grading of the interpretive trail approach on both sides of the bridge.

Phase V Monitoring and Management

Long-term management and monitoring of the restored estuary would be overseen by a multi-disciplinary team directed by a Restoration Manager. The Restoration Planning and Design Team envisions an entity composed of multiple stakeholders with key interests in the Estuary's management, with Laguna Ocean Foundation playing a lead organizational role.

The principal tasks of the Estuary Management Team are to implement the restored estuary's Adaptive Management Plan and to report to the City and other permitting agencies and verify compliance with permit requirements, conditions of approval and mitigation measures applied to the Project. Management operations would include outreach to the public and other stakeholders about the restored estuary, its status, management practices and the benefits of its ecosystem. The Estuary Management Team would include the SAT at its core, whose role is to ensure that the restoration and management actions succeed in achieving restoration objectives through metrics identified in the Adaptive Management Plan. The Management Team would also include public education specialists charged with developing programs and tools for educating the public about the estuary ecosystem and its important role relative to the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, Laguna Beach SMCA, and the other diverse ecosystems of the Laguna Coast. Monitoring and management of the Aliso Estuary is expected to continue for many years. A self-sustained entity, the Management Team is envisioned to include a coalition of stakeholders in a variety of roles (advisors, docents, public agency liaisons), participating in their various respective capacities, united in the goal of cultivating long-lasting community engagement and appreciation of the living estuary as a public resource.

Funding Plan

Phases I, II and III have been funded principally by grants from California State Coastal Conservancy, USFWS, and the State Wildlife Conservation Board, with participation from the City of Laguna Beach and other sources. Phases IV and V are expected to be funded principally through future grants through the USFWS and California State Coastal Conservancy in partnership with the project's local sponsors (Laguna Ocean Foundation and others).

Implementation Plan

The Restoration Planning and Design Team, in collaboration with City of Laguna Beach staff and the City Council's Liaison for the proposed Project, have developed a Preliminary Implementation Plan for Property and Land Use Issues that identifies various implementing agreements to enable the project to move forward (e.g., leases, easements and other forms of agreement). Project implementation is anticipated to require agreements with landowners (including the City) and owners of public utilities along with Laguna Ocean Foundation as the party responsible for project implementation.

The Preliminary Implementation Plan provides a framework for project implementation and a preliminary list of issues to be addressed. Its purposes are to: (1) establish a close collaborative relationship between the City and Restoration Management Team in order to provide a smooth path to implementation; and (2) develop appropriate collaborative agreements that will facilitate implementation of Restoration Plan objectives, future conditions of approval of the Proposed Site Plan and pertinent mitigation measures that emerge from the CEQA process.

Although the Restoration Site Plan would not affect ownership and title of parcels, project implementation will require agreements coordinating the various uses and interests at the Project site. In addition to the standard discretionary and ministerial approvals, the proposed Project would require agreements to allow construction and long-term operations within City-owned property (Aliso Beach Park). The City's property is constrained by public utilities and easements owned by other public agencies and purveyors of public utilities and services. Provisions for the restoration and its long-term management in the context of ownership, title, access and use, maintenance and management responsibilities, and short- and long-term funding, must all be addressed in a suite of agreements that are conceived through a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive implementation plan.

The Preliminary Implementation Plan anticipates agreements that achieve these objectives:

- Establish a collaborative process with adjacent landowners and public agencies to facilitate implementation of the Restoration Plan.
- Establish habitat restoration, management and associated conservation related activities (e.g., education and research) as exclusive conservation uses within a Long-Term Conservation Area.
- Provide the Estuary Management Entity the exclusive right to conduct habitat restoration (construction and implementation) and related activities within the designated Restoration Area.
- Enable implementation of the Restoration Site Plan's Utilities Protection Plan to ensure that Estuary restoration and future management actions are compatible with the needs of public utility and service providers and the permitted land uses of the underlying landowners.
- Enable public access and public use of parking, trails and other Park facilities on SCWD property north of the City-owned portion of the estuary.
- Define respective roles and responsibilities of the City and the Management Team specifically related to management of the restored estuary and roles and responsibilities related to the operation and maintenance of other park facilities identified in the Restoration Site Plan.
- Ensure that title, ownerships and easements within any State trust tidelands in the proposed Estuary Restoration Area and the park are well-defined and enable the estuary restoration and its long-term management operations to proceed and address the needs of park and public utility operations.

Implementing Actions

The implementing actions presented below address the desired outcomes of the Preliminary Implementation Plan:

- Through a collaborative process involving the Restoration Planning Team, City of Laguna Beach and other permitting agencies, major restoration and implementation funders, and other stakeholders, define and establish a suitable entity responsible for the long-term management of the restored estuary, its habitat, ecosystem functions and processes, educational and interpretive activities, compliance with the conditions of approval associated with all permits and entitlements, and implementation of mitigation measures.
- The City and Laguna Ocean Foundation would collaborate to define the terms of a

conservation easement (or similar instrument) for the Long-Term Conservation Area to be held by the Management Team.

- Working with the Restoration and Design Team and other parties, the City would develop a map that depicts locations and boundaries of property ownership, easements and land use of the Estuary Restoration Area and its surroundings as the desired outcomes and conditions that facilitate implementation of the Restoration Site Plan.

- The City and the Restoration Team would collaborate with the participating agencies of the Coordinated Permitting Program (CCC, USACE, USFWS, Santa Ana RWQCB, and CDFW) established by the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project and California State Coastal Conservancy and direct their coordinated efforts toward an efficient, integrated permitting program for the estuary restoration and its management activities.

- If necessary, the City, working with the Restoration and Design Team and owners of utilities, will develop separate easements, modifications or agreements that specify locations of utilities and standards for their protection, prescribe restoration design parameters and maintenance and operations procedures for utilities in legally established easements for utilities, access, flood control and other entitled land uses within the Restoration Area.

- Through a collaborative process with SCWD and The Ranch, the City and SCWD would jointly develop and enter into agreements to implement the underlying Recreation (REC) zoning for the SCWD property and Special Condition No. 2 of SCWD's CDP for Lift Station No. 2, by allowing public access and use of enhanced public improvements on the SCWD property north of the Estuary as shown in the Restoration Plan.

- The City and Restoration team would jointly develop a management agreement to coordinate the City's operation and maintenance of the park and its facilities and the Management Team entity's management of the Long-Term Conservation Area.

Following approval of the Restoration Site Plan, the Preliminary Implementation Plan would be finalized as a Final Implementation Plan for Property and Land Use Issues.

Regional Planning Context

Restoration of the Aliso Creek Estuary is supported by the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP), a partnership of 18 State and Federal agencies, chaired by the California Natural Resources Agency and supported by the State Coastal Conservancy. The WRP includes public agencies, scientists, and local communities working cooperatively to conserve and restore wetlands. WRP's work is guided by its Work Plan and Regional Strategy 2018. Restoration of the Aliso Creek Estuary is identified as a priority in the WRP Work Plan and the WRP Regional Strategy. The 18 agencies are:

State Partners

- California Coastal Commission
- California Natural Resources Agency
- California State Coastal Conservancy

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California State Lands Commission
- Wildlife Conservation Board
- California Environmental Protection Agency
- State Water Resources Control Board
- Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

Federal Partners

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Region 9)
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Environmental Resource Areas Potentially Affected

The proposed Project could potentially result in significant environmental impacts to the following environmental resource area(s) checked below. The following Initial Study (IS) provides a more though discussion and analyses of each of the environmental resource areas.

☒ Aesthetics
☐ Agricultural 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
☐ Wildfire
☒ Utilities and Service Systems
☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by Lead Agency)

On the basis of this Initial Study:

☐ 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, no further environmental documentation is required.

Signature	Date
Printed Name	For

Environmental Checklist

Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. 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 building within a state scenic highway?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) 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

Photograph 7. *The existing view of Aliso Creek as seen from the Coast Highway Bridge.*

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** While the Project site is not a designated viewpoint or a scenic vista, the City's General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element generally describes the importance and value of hillside and coastal visual resources, particularly undeveloped areas of open space (City of Laguna Beach 2018a). Additionally, Coast Highway is identified as a "Viewscape Corridor" in the City's Open Space and Conservation Element and in the County of Orange Scenic Highway Plan (City of Laguna Beach 2018a; County of Orange 2005). According to the City's Landscape and Scenic Highways Resources Document (City of Laguna Beach 2018b), Coast Highway has 14 character zones from North Laguna to South Laguna. The Project site is located within Zone I, Aliso Creek to south end of Aliso Beach, which is characterized by "stunning views of the beach and shoreline" as well as inland "views of Aliso Canyon, Aliso Creek, rocky cliffs, and natural vegetation" (City of Laguna Beach 2018b). Views of the Project site to the east from Coast Highway (i.e., upstream) primarily consist of Aliso Creek, existing vegetation along the creek banks, the grass area and trees south of Aliso Creek, limited views of the existing beach overflow parking lot, and background views of the canyon and hills. Views of the Project site from Coast Highway to the west (i.e., downstream) include the picnic/playground area south of the mouth of Aliso Creek as well as the lagoon and beach. Implementation of the proposed Project would alter views of the Project site from Coast Highway by removing existing vegetation along the creek banks, removing the existing beach overflow parking lot, reconfiguring park facilities, and revegetating the proposed restoration areas with native wetland and riparian habitats and coastal sage scrub. Initial restoration activities, including vegetation removal and grading, would result in temporary, short-term modifications to scenic views from Coast Highway, including inland views of the Project site. However, these adverse effects would be of short duration (approximately 5 months), due to the nature of the proposed restoration activities. After the restored areas within the Project site have established and grown in, the proposed Project would enhance the scenic value of the estuary over the long-term. Further, the park facilities, including the construction of trails/pathways, pedestrian bridge, and viewing areas, would provide new public viewpoints of the restored estuary in the natural setting of a wilderness park. The aesthetics and visual resources analysis provided in the EIR will address potential impacts to scenic vistas and will rely on photographs to set the visual context as well as illustrative drawings provided by the Restoration and Design Team to describe potential impacts to views from the public realm surrounding the Project site.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project encompasses a segment of Coast Highway and areas immediately adjacent to the highway. Based on a review of the Caltrans List of Scenic Highways, the Project site is not located in the vicinity of a designated State Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2018). However, Coast Highway is designated as an “eligible” state scenic highway (Caltrans 2018). Additionally, as previously described, Coast Highway is designated as a “Viewscape Corridor” in the City’s Landscape and Scenic Highways Element and the County of Orange Scenic Highway Plan (City of Laguna Beach 2018a; County of Orange 2005). Of the known historical resources in the vicinity of the Project site (see Section V, *Cultural Resources*), the two that contribute to the visual environment are the pedestrian overcrossing at Coast Highway as well as the Coast Highway Bridge. Implementation of the proposed Project would alter the visual character of the Project site as seen from Coast Highway. While the proposed Project would result in short-term, temporary, effects to visual character, over the long-term it would restore and enhance the scenic value of the estuary with the restoration. These impacts to scenic resources along Coast Highway will be discussed further in the EIR.

c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The Project site is located in an urbanized area surrounded by both high- and low-density residential development to the north and south, a commercial hotel to the east, and open space recreational uses (i.e., Aliso Beach) to the west. Applicable regulations governing scenic quality include the Open Space and Conservation Element (City of Laguna Beach 2005) and Landscape and Scenic Highways Element of the City of Laguna Beach General Plan (City of Laguna Beach 2018), the City’s Landscape and Scenic Highways Resources Document (City of Laguna Beach 2018), and the City of Laguna Beach Municipal Code. The Project site is also located within the Coastal Zone; therefore, the proposed Project would be subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. For example, Coastal Act Policy 30251 states that “[p]ermitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.”

The implementation of the proposed restoration activities would require the use of heavy construction equipment and storage of equipment and materials within the Project site. The Project site would be fenced during vegetation removal, demolition and grading activities, utility modifications, and revegetation. This would result in short-term, temporary changes to the existing visual character and quality of the area.

Following the completion of restoration, the proposed Project would change the existing visual character of the Project site from a channelized watercourse with minimal native vegetation along its steep banks to a more natural, restored estuary with expansive native habitat that could support a range of estuarine species.

The EIR will identify existing visual resources (e.g., as described in the City's Landscape and Scenic Highways Resources Document) and illustrate how the proposed restoration would affect the visual character of the Project site from Coast Highway, sidewalks, Aliso Beach, etc. Additionally, the EIR will discuss issues related to conformance with the Laguna Beach Municipal Code (LBMC), City of Laguna Beach General Plan, and other related local and state regulations governing scenic quality.

d) **No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed restoration activities would occur during daylight hours and would not require nighttime lighting. Implementation of the proposed Project would involve the installation of lighting (e.g., trail lighting, tree uplights, safety/security lighting, etc.) according to the proposed lighting plan. All lighting would comply with the City of Laguna's Good Neighbor Outdoor Lighting (Chapter 7.70). Further, the proposed Project would result in the removal of the beach overflow parking lot and therefore would be expected to result in an overall reduction in nighttime lighting associated with vehicle headlights. Similarly, there are no existing sources of glare (e.g., highly reflective materials) on-site and no new additional glare sources would be created by the proposed Project. Therefore, the proposed Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area, either during construction or operation. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Agricultural and Forest Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. 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 forest 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, Farmland of Statewide Importance as depicted on 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 [PRC] Section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104[g])?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) **No Impact.** The Project site is located in a developed area and is zoned for Recreation (REC). Surrounding land uses include residential uses to the north and south, a hotel to the east, and recreational uses to the west. The City of Laguna Beach contains no designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (California Department of Conservation 2016). Because there is no farmland on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the Project site, the proposed Project would not cause direct or indirect impacts related to the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **No Impact.** A Williamson Act Contract allows private landowners to voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural land and compatible open space uses. In return, the private landowners' property is taxed based on actual use, rather than potential market value. As previously described, the Project site is zoned for Recreation (REC) and the Project site does not include agricultural uses or land enrolled in Williamson Act Contracts (California Department of Conservation 2016). Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning or a Williamson Act Contract. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

c, d) **No Impact.** The Project site does not contain any forestland, timberland, or Timberland Production zones. The proposed Project would not involve any changes to current General Plan land use or zoning designations for forest land, or timberland. Additionally, there are no timberland zoned production areas within the Project site. Therefore, no conflicts would occur, and rezoning would not be required as a result of implementation of the proposed Project. Further, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use because the Project site does not include any forest lands. Therefore, there would be no impacts to forest or timber production and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

e) **No Impact.** As previously described, there is no farmland on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project. As such, the proposed Project would not cause direct or indirect impacts related to the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. 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 nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The Project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which consists of the urbanized areas of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Orange Counties. Due to the combined air pollution sources from over 15 million people and meteorological and geographical effects that limit the dispersion of these pollutants, the SCAB can experience high concentrations of air pollutants. As a result, the region is currently in nonattainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone (O_3), lead (Pb), and fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$) and is designated as a maintenance area for fine particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). In addition, Orange County is in nonattainment of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$. The County is in maintenance for CO, NO_2, and PM_{10} (USEPA 2025).

The proposed Project would generate criteria air pollutant emissions during the implementation of the proposed restoration activities (e.g., during vegetation removal, removal of the existing beach overflow parking lot, grading, etc.). In addition, although the net change in operational emissions has not yet been calculated, long-term activities associated with the proposed Project (e.g., implementation of the Adaptive Management Plan activities as well as energy-related emissions) have some potential to result in minor increases in long-term criteria air pollutant emissions. Therefore, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR, including a comprehensive air emissions analysis using CalEEMod version 2022.1.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, the proposed implementation of restoration activities would result in a short-term, temporary increase in criteria air pollutant emissions. In addition, although the net change in operational emissions has not yet been calculated, long-term activities associated with the proposed Project have some potential to result in minor increases in long-term criteria air pollutant emissions. Due to the elevated concentrations of air pollutants that currently occur in the SCAB, when combined with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area, the net increase of criteria pollutants could cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment of NAAQS and/or CAAQS for criteria pollutants in Orange County, including O_3, CO, $PM_{2.5}$, $PM_{10,}$ and NO_2. It has not yet been determined if generation of these compounds during and following the completion of the proposed restoration would exceed the Federal and State standards for such emissions (including quantitative thresholds for O_3 precursors). Therefore, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Sensitive receptors are defined as locations where uses or activities result in increased exposure of persons more sensitive to the unhealthful effects of emissions (e.g., children and elderly residences, etc.). Examples of land uses that are normally classified as sensitive receptors include residences, schools, daycare centers, parks, recreational areas, medical facilities, rest homes, and convalescent care facilities. Existing sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the Project site include the adjacent residential uses to the north and south of the Project site and recreational uses at Aliso Beach. Other potential sensitive receptors would include residences along heavy haul truck routes, located as close as 20 feet from the paved roadway width. Development of the proposed Project may have the potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TACs) as a result of emissions generated during construction.

The EIR will quantify construction emissions (including mobile emissions from heavy haul trucks and other construction activities) as well as operational emissions (e.g., implementation of the Adaptive Management Plan activities as well as energy-related emissions) using CalEEMod version 2022.1. The EIR will evaluate the potential for nearby sensitive receptors to be impacted by criteria air pollutants and TACs generated by the proposed Project.

d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The SCAQMD Air Quality Handbook (1993) identifies the following uses as having potential odor issues: wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, agricultural uses, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass moldings. Odors generated by new and existing non-residential land uses are required to be in compliance with SCAQMD Rule 402 to prevent odor nuisances on sensitive land uses.

The implementation of the proposed restoration activities, including construction equipment exhaust and application of asphalt and architectural coatings, may generate short-term, temporary odors. While the recreational uses at the Project site are not typically associated with odor emissions impacts (SCAQMD 1993), over the long-term, retention of standing water within an estuary has the potential to result in eutrophication and associated odors. Therefore, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. 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 the 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 tree preservation policy/ordinance?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** In its current condition, the Project site is entirely disturbed and/or developed with very little remaining natural habitat. Small lawns and other landscaped species are located along the creek and/or beach overflow parking lot. According to the Biological Technical Report prepared for the adjacent SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project and a separate California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) records search conducted for the proposed Project, the following special status species are known to occur within or in the vicinity of the Project site:

Photograph 8. *While the areas immediately adjacent to the watercourse provide some limited habitat and a few native trees occur on-site, the inland side of the park is almost entirely non-native, ornamental vegetation manicured lawn.*

- Eight special status birds –

including coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) – have the potential to occur as transients but are not likely to breed within the Project site;
  - The federal candidate monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) has been observed, but no known roosts occur within the Project site;
  - CDFW species of special concern western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*) is known to occur upstream but has not been observed within the Project site;
  - Thirty other special status plants and wildlife species have a moderate potential to occur within the Project site; and
  - The federally endangered tidewater goby and the Southern California Distinct Population Segment of steelhead have historically occurred within the Project site.

The implementation of the proposed restoration activities, including vegetation removal, removal of the existing beach overflow parking lot, and grading, could result in impacts to sensitive plant and wildlife species and their habitats. Therefore, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR, which will be informed by a Biological Resources Assessment. Following the completion of the proposed restoration activities, the estuary ecosystem would be expected to support native estuary plants as well as native fish and wildlife species. The potential long-term impacts on sensitive plant and wildlife species and their habitats will also be assessed further in the EIR.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact**. Despite its degraded habitat quality, the Project site encompasses riparian areas along Aliso Creek. The proposed restoration activities would indirectly affect these riparian areas through noise and other kinds of disturbance (e.g., fugitive dust). Therefore, there is a potential for short-term, temporary impacts on riparian habitat and/or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the USFWS or CDFW. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR, which will be informed by a Biological Resources Assessment. Over the long-term the proposed restoration activities, would restore the estuary's basic ecosystem functions, principally by restoring habitat and the conditions that govern the intermittently open condition of the mouth. The potential long-term impacts on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities will also be assessed further in the EIR.

c) **Potentially Significant Impact**. Portions of the Project site are located within tidelands and/or jurisdictional wetlands under the jurisdiction of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). A jurisdictional wetland determination is under preparation for the proposed Project. Any alterations to jurisdictional areas as a result of the proposed Project would require approval by the permitting agencies with jurisdictional authority over wetlands pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the California Department of Fish and Game Code. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The surrounding area supports "Very High Value Habitat," as designated under the City's General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element, in the form of the open water of Aliso Creek; however, wildlife movement through the survey area is likely to be minimal due to current disturbed and developed conditions within and adjacent to the survey area. Wildlife movement corridors are defined on both a regional and on a local scale. Regionally, the Project site is not located within a designated wildlife movement corridor. Nevertheless, despite its degraded habitat quality, some migratory birds may use the Project site and vicinity for breeding, nesting, and foraging, or as transient rest sites during migration flights. The creek could also be used by aquatic species to move up or downstream during periods of high flow. The implementation of restoration activities along the banks of Aliso Creek could result in short-term, temporary impacts related to the movement of fish and wildlife species that may use this corridor. However, the proposed Project would restore habitat connectivity along the Aliso Creek corridor, from the inland habitat in Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, which is located within the Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) central and coastal subregion reserve known as the Nature Reserve of Orange County (NROC), to the estuary and Laguna SMCA at the intertidal interface. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR, which will be informed by a Biological Resources Assessment.

e) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The City's General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element focuses on preservation of natural resources, managed protection of resources, outdoor recreation, public health and safety, and the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. The General Plan describes robust vegetation and wildlife in the City's open space and undeveloped areas, including threatened or endangered species that are known to occur in the City. The General Plan targets "High Value" and "Very High Value" areas for protection and areas bordering those areas for special study of potential impacts from development on the high value areas. The proposed Project would be required to comply with the applicable policies of the City's General Plan, including Open Space and Conservation Element.

The proposed Project would remove multiple trees, including a small number of native species, turf, and ornamental shrubs. These activities would be required to comply with the City's municipal code protecting heritage trees. Section 12.08.020 of the City's municipal code defines the Heritage Tree Criteria which states:

> *"[T]he tree or trees shall have one of the following criteria in order to be eligible for placement on a heritage tree list as established in Section 12.08.040:*
>
> *(a) A tree or stand of trees which is of historical significance and is older than fifty years;*
>
> *(b) A tree or stand of trees which has distinctive characteristics of form, size or shape;*
>
> *(c) A tree or stand of trees associated with a person or an event of communitywide significance;*
>
> *(d) A large tree or stand of trees remaining from an original native stand of California Live Oaks, Sycamores and Toyons: or*
>
> *(e) A tree or stand of trees that is scenically prominent from public view corridors. (Ord. 1344 §1, 1998)."*

These issues regarding local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources will be assessed further in the EIR, which will be informed by a Biological Resources Assessment as well as an Arborist Report.

f) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, the Project site is mapped within the Coastal Subregion of the County of Orange (OC) NCCP/HCP and would therefore be subject to the provisions of the NCCP/HCP (County of Orange 1996). Aliso Beach is also part of the Laguna Beach SMCA and the California Coastal National Monument, which is located along the entire coastline of California. (The California Coastal National Monument ensures the protection of all islets, reefs and rock outcroppings along the coast of California within 12 nautical miles of shore.) While the implementation of the proposed restoration activities may have the potential to affect sensitive species and habitats, these impacts would be short-term and temporary. Over the long-term the proposed restoration activities, would restore the estuary's basic ecosystem functions and would be expected support native estuary plants as well as native fish and wildlife species. The EIR will address any potential inconsistencies with the NCCP/HCP, SMCA, or the California Coastal National Monument.

Photograph 9. *Revegetation of the Aliso Creek restoration area would be limited to planting and seeding of native species, such as tule.*

Cultural Resources

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

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** A records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) conducted in October 2016 for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project determined that a total of 20 cultural resources studies have been conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the lift station site adjacent to the north of the Project site across Country Club Drive. These surveys recorded six cultural resources within the immediate vicinity of the Project site including three prehistoric sites consisting of shell middens, a burial, and a rock shelter, as well as two historic-period sites consisting of the Coast Highway Bridge and an interceptor sewer and tunnel.

***Photograph 10.** The Coast Highway Bridge over Aliso Creek, originally constructed in 1926, is a historic architectural resource.*

Additionally, a Historic Resources Report was prepared for the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project (ESA 2021). The Historic Resources Assessment identified the Aliso Creek Coast Highway Bridge (Bridge #55-0003, originally constructed in 1926) and the Aliso Pedestrian Overcrossing (Bridge #55-27, originally constructed in 1929) as historic resources found in the Built Environment Resource Directory as maintained by the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). However, the Historic Resources Assessment only addressed potential impacts associated with the proposed replacement of existing SCWD facilities, which were determined not to be significant.

No additional resources are known to exist within the boundaries of the Project site. However, the results of the SCCIC records search indicate that the Project site is considered highly sensitive for the presence of buried unknown archaeological resources that could qualify as historic archaeological resources. Project-related ground disturbance has the potential to uncover subsurface archaeological resources that could qualify as historical resources and the proposed Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resources as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Impacts to historical resources will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings of a Phase I Cultural Resources Survey involving an updated records search and a pedestrian field survey.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously discussed, no archaeological resources have been identified within the Project site; however, the background research conducted for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project indicates that the Project site is considered highly sensitive for the presence of buried unknown archaeological resources. Since the proposed Project includes ground-disturbing activities, the proposed Project may encounter subsurface archaeological resources that may qualify as unique archaeological resources, and the proposed Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. It is likely that previous ground-disturbing activities on-site (e.g., import of fill material and grading), have disturbed the original soils such that any subsurface prehistoric resources that were present would have been destroyed. However, additional background research on the Project site, including a records search at the SCCIC, review of historic topographic maps and aerial photographs, California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search, and Native American correspondence, will be conducted in preparation of the EIR. In addition, an archaeological review will be conducted to identify the potential for subsurface archaeological resources. Impacts to archaeological resources will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings of a Phase I Cultural Resources Survey.

c) **No Impact.** There are no known human remains within the Project site and the surrounding vicinity. The Project site is not part of a formal cemetery and is not known to have been used for disposal of human remains. In addition, the majority of the Project site (e.g., beach overflow parking lot, landscaped grass area north of Aliso Way, graded parking and staging area north of Aliso Creek, picnic and playground area at Aliso Beach Park) has been previously disturbed by construction of existing land uses. Thus, human remains are not expected to be encountered during construction of the proposed Project.

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains, there shall be no further excavation until the coroner has made recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains to the person responsible. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact the NAHC within 24 hours. Implementation of the proposed Project would comply with provisions of State law regarding discovery of human remains. This issue will not be assessed further in the EIR.

Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. 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

a) **No Impact.** During the implementation of the proposed restoration activities, temporary consumption of energy resources would be required for the use of heavy construction equipment. However, vegetation removal, asphalt removal, grading, and revegetation activities would be similar in character to the activities necessary for any typical restoration project. Further, the construction-related activities associated with the proposed Project would be less energy consumptive than a traditional development project (e.g., urban infill). Compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations (e.g., limit engine idling times, require the recycling of demolition debris, etc.) would reduce short-term energy demand during the implementation of the proposed Project to the maximum extent feasible, and the implementation of the proposed restoration activities would not be anticipated to result in wasteful or inefficient use of energy. Following the completion of the proposed restoration activities, the proposed Project would require minimal energy for operation (e.g., restrooms). Therefore, there would be no impact to energy, and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **No Impact.** The proposed Project would not obstruct the use of renewable energy in that it would not present any barrier to the use or development of renewable energy resources. It also would not displace any existing renewable energy facilities. In addition, vehicles and equipment used during construction would be required to conform to applicable Federal and State fuel efficiency requirements. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. 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, 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-site 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 1994 UBC, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion

a.i) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Act is to regulate development and prohibit construction on or near active fault traces to reduce hazards associated with fault rupture. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are the regulatory zones that include surface traces of active faults. As defined by the California Geological Survey (CGS), active faults are faults that have ruptured within approximately the last 11,000 years, or within Holocene time. Potentially active faults are those that show evidence of movement during Quaternary time, or within approximately the last 1.6 million years. Inactive faults are faults that have not ruptured in the last approximately 1.6 million years. There are no known active faults crossing the Project site, and the site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (CGS 2020; Ninyo & Moore 2020; ESA 2023). The nearest active faults to the Project site are the Newport-Inglewood Fault located approximately 2 miles offshore from the Project site and the Elsinore Fault, located 25 miles northeast of the site. Because there are no known active faults on or adjacent to the Project site and the proposed Project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zone, the proposed Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects resulting from rupture of a known earthquake fault. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in any impacts in relation to a rupture of a known earthquake fault as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. Nevertheless, given the infrastructure associated with the proposed Project (e.g., the pedestrian bridge, restrooms, etc.), this issue will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

a.ii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The Project site, as with all of Southern California, is located in a seismically active area, with the potential for strong seismic ground shaking. Given the infrastructure associated with the proposed Project (e.g., the restrooms and pedestrian bridge), this issue will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

a.iii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Liquefaction is a phenomenon where unconsolidated and/or near saturated soils lose cohesion and are converted to a fluid state as a result of severe vibratory motion. The relatively rapid loss of soil during strong earthquake shaking results in the temporary fluid-like behavior of the soil. Factors known to influence liquefaction potential include composition and thickness of soil layers, grain size, relative density, groundwater level, degree of saturation, and both intensity and duration of ground shaking. The Project site is located in an area mapped as potentially liquefiable by the California Department of Conservation (California Department of Conservation 2022). Additionally, based on the Geotechnical Evaluation conducted for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project, the Project site contains alluvial soils overlying bedrock that are potentially liquefiable (Ninyo & Moore 2020). This was confirmed in a subsequent Geotechnical Study prepared for the proposed Project (ESA 2023). A liquefaction analysis was prepared for the site based on the National Center for Earthquake Engineering Research procedure using the computer program LiquefyPro. The analysis indicated that in the event of a large earthquake with a high acceleration of seismic shaking, the potential for liquefaction exists. Given this potential, if liquefiable soils are not taken into consideration in the design of proposed infrastructure and during construction site preparation activities, liquefiable soils could have the potential to impact the infrastructure associated with the proposed Project (e.g., the pedestrian bridge and the restrooms). Therefore, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

a.iv) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Landslides and other slope failures are secondary seismic effects that are common during or soon after earthquakes. Areas that are most susceptible to earthquake induced landslides are steep slopes underlain by loose, weak soils, and areas on or adjacent to existing landslide deposits. The adjacent ascending slope north of the Project site is located within an area depicted on the State of California Seismic Hazards Zones Map subject to seismically induced landslide hazards (CGS 2020). The issues will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Erosion is the movement of rock and soil from place to place and is a natural process commonly resulting from wind and flowing water. The rate of erosion can be increased substantially during earthmoving activities if erosion-control measures are not properly implemented. The implementation of the proposed restoration activities including demolition of the existing beach overflow parking lot would have the potential to result in erosion and/or topsoil loss. The proposed Project would be required to adhere to the City's Grading Manual, which includes measures to address and control erosion and siltation. Given the scale of earthmoving activities, impacts are considered potentially significant, and will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Soils that are potentially unstable can fail when a new load is placed atop the soil, such as the construction of a new building. Subsidence including differential settlement can damage structures built on the soil over time. Lateral spreading is the downslope movement of surface sediment due to liquefaction in a subsurface layer. Such movement can occur on slope gradients of as little as one degree but is more common in areas that contain an exposed slope. The potential for these hazards at the Project site will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Expansive soils shrink or swell as the moisture content decreases or increases. Volumetric changes associated with the shrinking or swelling can, over long periods of time, shift, crack or break structures or foundations built atop such soils. Based on the Geotechnical Evaluation prepared for the IS/MND for the SCWD Lift Station No. 2 Replacement Project and a subsequent Geotechnical Study prepared for the proposed Project, the soils in the area should be suitable for re-use as general fill and trench backfill once moisture conditioned to near optimum moisture content (Converse Consultants 2016; ESA 2023). This issue will be assessed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the Geotechnical Study prepared for the Project site.

e) **No Impact.** The Project site and the surrounding vicinity is served by an existing sewer system; septic tanks would not be installed for the proposed Project. All development associated with the proposed Project would connect to and be served by the existing public sewer system for wastewater discharge and treatment. No impacts related to septic systems would occur as a result of the proposed Project, and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

f) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Within the Project site, the areas encompassing the existing beach overflow parking lot and the existing picnic/playground area have been previously disturbed. Additionally, based on exploratory borings the Project site is generally underlain by fill and channel deposited alluvial soils. The fill soils were encountered to depths of up to approximately 9 feet and generally consisted of moist, medium dense, clayey sand with gravel, silty sand, and stiff, lean clay with silt and sand (ESA 2023). Therefore, there is low potential to encounter paleontological resources within the Project site. However, other grading activities within the Project site to a depth of 9 feet or greater would still have the potential to encounter and disturb paleontological resources. The unanticipated discovery of paleontological resources, while rare, is considered potentially significant and will be further assessed in the EIR.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed restoration activities would involve the use of construction vehicles and equipment, demolition of portions of the Project site (i.e., existing beach overflow parking lot), extensive grading, revegetation, and reconfiguration of the existing park facilities. These activities would result in temporary greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Following the completion of the proposed restoration activities, operational GHG emissions would result from implementation of the Adaptive Management Plan activities as well as energy-related emissions. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR, including a comprehensive GHG emissions analysis using CalEEMod version 2022.1.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32; California Health and Safety Code Division 25.5, Sections 38500, et seq.), which requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to design and implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures, such that feasible and cost-effective statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 1990 levels by 2020 (representing an approximate 25 percent reduction in emissions). The EIR will assess the applicable plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the reduction of GHG emissions (e.g., the City's Climate Protection Action Plan) and assess whether the proposed Project would have the potential to conflict with AB 32 and other regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. 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 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 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

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** A hazardous material is defined as any material that, due to its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the environment.

The use of heavy construction equipment would involve the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials such as paints, solvents, oils, grease, and caulking. Hazardous materials would also be needed for fueling and servicing construction equipment on the Project site. Additionally, herbicides, pesticides, and other hazardous materials may be used during planting and long-term maintenance activities. While these types of hazardous materials are not acutely hazardous, all storage, handling, use, and disposal of these materials are regulated by Federal, State, and local regulations. Nevertheless, this issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, limited quantities of hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel, oils, and lubricants would be required to operate heavy construction equipment. Hazardous materials would also be needed for fueling and servicing construction equipment on the Project site. Additionally, herbicides, pesticides, and other hazardous materials may be used during planting and long-term maintenance activities. Use, storage, and handling hazardous substances used during construction would be required to comply with existing Federal, State, and local regulations regarding the use and disposal of these materials. Additionally, the proper use and maintenance construction of equipment, along with the use of standard construction BMPs, would greatly reduce the potential risk of spills and releases that could result in impacts to soil and/or groundwater. In the event of an accidental release containment and clean up would be in accordance with existing applicable regulatory requirements. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

c) **No Impact.** The Sunshine School is a preschool located approximately 0.15 miles northeast of the Project site at 21632 Wesley Drive, Laguna Beach, CA 92651. Additionally, Anneliese Schools – Aliso Campus is a preschool located approximately 0.20 miles northeast of the Project site at 21542 Wesley Drive. As previously described, limited quantities of hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel, oils, and lubricants may be required to operate the construction equipment and no acutely hazardous materials are expected to be used during the initial construction activities associated with the proposed Project. Hazardous materials would also be needed for fueling and servicing construction equipment on the Project site. Additionally, herbicides, pesticides, and other hazardous materials may be used during planting and long-term maintenance activities. The hazardous substances used during construction would be required to comply with existing Federal, State, and local regulations regarding the use and disposal of these materials. In the event of an accidental release containment and clean up would occur in accordance with existing applicable regulatory requirements and would not result in substantial impacts to school attendees. The Sunshine School and Anneliese Schools – Aliso Campus are both situated at a substantially higher elevation than the Project site. Due to the topography of the Project site and the surrounding vicinity, the potential for hazardous substances used during construction to reach the schools is considered extremely low. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

d) **No Impact.** A review of the Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC's) Hazardous Waste and Substances List – Site Cleanup (Cortese List) indicates that identified hazardous material sites are not located within the Project site (DTSC 2020). In addition, a review of the DTSC EnviroStor and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker online databases did not indicate any open cleanup sites or hazardous waste facilities within the vicinity of the Project site (DTSC 2020). Therefore, since the Project site is not located on a list associated with hazardous materials, this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

e) **No Impact.** The proposed Project is not located within an airport land use plan, nor within 2 miles of a public or public use airport. The nearest airport to the Project site is John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana, located 14 miles from the Project site. Therefore, no impacts related to a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing near or working in the Project site would result. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

f) **No Impact.** A review of the City of Laguna Beach General Plan Safety Element indicates the City has considered emergency access issues throughout its jurisdiction and has developed programs and mechanisms to address this (e.g., access planning, upgrading roadway deficiencies, no parking zones, public access easements) (City of Laguna Beach 2021a). The Construction Management Plan for the proposed Project – which will identify potential haul routes and queuing area(s), construction entrance(s), construction equipment and materials laydown and staging area(s), etc. – will be described and assessed as a part of the transportation analysis in the EIR. Additionally, the proposed Project would be required to adhere to traffic safety requirements, including a Traffic Management Plan, as required by the City. Access along Coast Highway, a City designated evacuation route, would be maintained for the duration of construction.

Following the completion of construction activities, the proposed ingress/egress points along Aliso Way would remain unchanged. The proposed Project would be required to meet fire access requirements in Section 503 of the California Fire Code (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Part 9). The proposed Project does not propose any features that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation. The implementation of the proposed Project would not affect an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

g) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Based on the City of Laguna Beach's General Plan, several factors affect the hazard potential one can expect from a wildland fire in any given area. These factors include topography, vegetation, climate, development patterns, access and firefighting capabilities to the area. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps and the City of Laguna Beach Environmental Constraints map, the proposed Project is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CAL FIRE 2022; City of Laguna Beach 1995). The Project site is also in proximity to the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park to the northwest. Portions of the Project site are located within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) zone as mapped by CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP). There is a potential for an increased exposure to wildfire hazards due to the operation of heavy construction equipment during the implementation of the proposed restoration activities. However, construction equipment would normally be equipped with spark arrestors and other safety features to reduce the potential for fire. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

The City has adopted special building requirements in the WUI zone that exceed the Uniform Building Code (UBC) requirements, implemented a fuel management program for vegetation and brush, and restricted the use of certain plant species (e.g., pine, cypress, cedar, junipers, acacia, bougainvillea, and eucalyptus). Combined, these measures have assisted the City in reducing the potential for impacts due to wildfire. This issue will also be assessed further in the EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. 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 stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, result in 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) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The implementation of the proposed restoration activities could potentially degrade water quality and could lead to a potential violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. During vegetation removal, asphalt removal, grading, revegetation, and re-configuration of the existing park facilities, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required pursuant to the General Construction Permit issued by the SWRCB. The SWPPP would specify BMPs to be implemented during construction-related activities order to minimize or avoid water pollution. Nevertheless, given the scale of vegetation removal and grading activities along Aliso Creek, construction-related impacts associated with water quality will be assessed further in the EIR, which will be informed by a number of technical studies including the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) prepared for the proposed Project.

Following the completion of the restoration activities, the Project site would experience a decrease in the area of asphalt parking surfaces and a corresponding increase in native vegetation and natural impervious surfaces. This would have the effect of increasing infiltration on-site, which would decrease the amount of pollutants that are carried by stormwater runoff. Long-term impacts to water quality will be further assessed in the EIR based on the WQMP prepared for the proposed Project.

b) **No Impact.** The Project site is located within the Aliso Basin of the Orange County watershed of Orange County (County of Orange 2018), which is located along the coast, and has a surface area of approximately 70 square miles with 828 miles of waterways. SCWD supplies water to the Project site. The EIR will include a quantification of the water supplies needed for the proposed Project (e.g., for vegetation establishment as well as long-term operation of the restrooms); however, water demand associated with the proposed Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies. Additionally, the proposed Project would result in a net decrease in impervious surface at the Project site. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed Project would not affect groundwater supplies or recharge. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

c.i) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, there is a potential for erosion during construction activities given that the proposed Project would involve substantial vegetation removal and grading activities along the creek bank. However, construction activities would comply with the requirements of the General Construction Permit and the SWPPP, which would minimize the amount of runoff from the Project site and the potential for substantial erosion and siltation. Over the long-term the proposed Project would restore the hydromorphology within the Aliso Creek Estuary. A Coastal Processes and Sea Level Rise Study is being prepared for the proposed Project to address potential effects of the restoration on the beach, sand movement, sedimentation and erosion, beach profile, etc. The potential impacts associated with the proposed Project will be assessed further in the EIR.

c.ii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, the proposed Project would substantially decrease the area of impervious surfaces on the Project site and is likely to reduce the overall stormwater runoff from the Project site. These issues will be discussed further in the EIR based on the findings and recommendations of the WQMP prepared for the proposed Project.

c.iii) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, the proposed Project would decrease the area of impervious surfaces on the Project site and is likely to reduce the overall stormwater runoff from the Project site. Additionally, the existing recreational land use at the Project site would be substantially similar to existing conditions; therefore, the proposed Project would not be likely to introduce new or substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Potential impacts related to surface runoff and storm drainage systems are expected to be less than significant. Nevertheless, these issues will be assessed further in the EIR based on the Flood Modeling Study and findings and recommendations of the WQMP prepared for the proposed Project.

c.iv) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project involves the restoration of an estuary. Due to the nature of the Project, stormwater runoff is expected to be minimized by increasing infiltration on-site with a functioning estuary. Implementation of the proposed Project would change the hydromorphology of the Aliso Creek Estuary and would affect the frequency and duration with which the estuary mouth is open. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR and will be informed by Hydrodynamic Modelling used to inform the understanding of the existing and proposed hydromorphology of the Aliso Creek Estuary. Further, the EIR will address the potential for the configuration of the estuary and the pedestrian bridge to impede flows. A 100-year floodplain analysis will be prepared to support the conclusions.

The EIR will also discuss long-term impacts associated with sea level rise. This will include an assessment of sea-level rise effects on the proposed restoration and the restoration's ability to accommodate sea-level rise. The EIR will incorporate the findings of the Coastal Process and Sea Level Rise Study prepared for the proposed Project, which will draw on regionally specific sea level rise modeling data.

d) **No Impact.** The Project site is designated AE Zone which is an area subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood event (City of Laguna Beach 2021b). As previously described, the wetlands associated with the Aliso Creek Estuary were filled in and developed, destroying habitat and leaving a channelized watercourse with minimal native vegetation along its steep banks. The proposed Project would restore the function of the estuary ecosystem by expanding and deepening the channelized estuary and creating new wetland habitats.

A seiche is the sloshing of a closed body of water from earthquake shaking (U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] 2020a). Seiches are of concern relative to water storage facilities because inundation from a seiche can occur if the wave overflows a containment wall, such as the wall of a reservoir, water storage tank, dam, or other artificial body of water. The nearest enclosed body of water is the Laguna Niguel Lake located approximately 4.5 miles upstream from the Project site (County of Orange 2019). Based on the distance from Laguna Niguel Lake, inundation from a seiche is not expected to result in substantial water reaching the Project site. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

A tsunami is a sea wave of local or distant origin that results from large-scale seafloor displacements associated with earthquakes, major submarine slides or exploding volcanic islands (USGS 2020b). An event such as an earthquake creates a large displacement of water resulting in a rise or mounding at the ocean surface that moves away from this center as a sea wave. The CGS has created maximum tsunami inundation maps to assist cities in the development of emergency response plans if such an event were to occur. Based on the tsunami inundation map, the Project site is located within the tsunami risk zone. No flood elevations are assigned to the mapped inundation line. The proposed Project would not substantially increase the potential for loss of life or property associated with a tsunami. Additionally, the proposed Project would not affect existing evacuation routes. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project includes the restoration of an existing estuary and redesign of the existing park. The proposed Project would be required to comply with all requirements regarding water quality within the Santa Ana RWQCB. While there would be a potential for temporary, construction-related impacts to water quality, implementation of the proposed restoration would be expected to improve water quality within the Aliso Creek Estuary over the long-term. Nevertheless, redesign of the park to accommodate restoration would require the development of a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to address potential runoff and water quality issues. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR.

Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. 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) **No Impact.** The proposed Project would involve any action that could divide an established community. The physical division of an established community generally refers to the construction of a feature such as an interstate highway or railroad tracks, or removal of a means of access, such as a local road or bridge that would impact mobility within an existing community or between a community and outlying area. The Project site is surrounded by the SCWD maintenance facilities, The Ranch, and open space and recreational uses. The proposed Project would not have any effect on existing residential or residential-serving commercial uses.

The proposed restoration and public use amenities would not result in dividing an established community. Therefore, the proposed Project would have no impact and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The City of Laguna Beach General Plan Land Use designation for the existing Project site is REC (Public Recreation and Parks) and the zoning designation is REC (Recreation) (City of Laguna Beach 2012b, 2012c). The REC designation allows active or passive recreational activity and the REC zoning permits the following uses: pathways, walkways, and trails; public and private parks and gardens; beach areas; and picnic grounds. The proposed Project would be consistent with the existing City of Laguna Beach General Plan land use designations and zoning because it would consist of restored open space habitat with pedestrian trails/pathways, viewing areas, etc. The proposed Project would be subject to the policies of the City of Laguna Beach General Plan and other existing adopted plans and regulations. The Project site is located within the Coastal Zone; therefore, the Laguna Beach Local Coastal Plan (LCP) is also applicable to the proposed Project (City of Laguna Beach 2022). Land use compatibility will be assessed further in the EIR as it relates to consistency with applicable City, regional, or state plans or policies pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d).

Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. 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) **No Impact.** The Project site is not located within an area with active or known mining operations. The City does not have any active mining or mineral extraction operations, nor land designated for PCC-Grade aggregate (CGS 2015). The Project site is located within the Orange County-Temescal Valley Production-Consumption Region and has not been categorized as a Mineral Resource Zone; it is not subject to mineral land classification studies by the State Geologist. In addition, according to the State of California Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, no oil well exists on the Project site. Therefore, the proposed Project would not cause a loss of availability of known mineral resources valuable to the region or the state. No impact would occur, and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **No Impact.** The City's General Plan has no designated mining sites or mineral resource zones within the Project site. Therefore, the proposed Project would have no impact on locally-important mineral resource recovery sites and this issue will not be further assessed in the EIR.

Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. 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

a, b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The operation of heavy construction equipment during the proposed restoration activities would generate noise both on- and off-site. Given the proximity of surrounding residential areas as well as proximity of residences along potential haul truck routes (i.e., as close as 20 feet from the existing paved roadway width), the noise generation during construction activities could result in potentially significant impacts. For example, the existing overflow beach parking lot, which would be demolished to support restoration of the south creek bank, is located approximately 100 feet from the nearest residence along Monterey Street to the south. Temporary construction noise impacts would vary because the noise generated from construction equipment ranges widely as a function of the equipment used and its activity level. Although noise levels from construction could create a perceived nuisance, increases in noise levels from construction activity would be temporary. All construction activities at the Project site would also be limited by conditions on construction permits requiring compliance with the City’s Noise Ordinance. Allowable hours of construction are between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. No work is permitted on Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal Holidays.

The use of heavy construction equipment, particularly along the margins of the Project site, could also result in groundborne vibration impacts. However, given the topography at the Project site and the distance to sensitive receptors these impacts are anticipated to be less than significant. Nevertheless, heavy haul trucks and/or materials delivery trucks could result in off-site noise and groundborne vibration impacts along haul routes.

Following the completion of restoration activities, the predominant source of long-term operational noise would be associated with the multi-modal mobility hub, pedestrian activity along the trails, and intermittent noise associated with the implementation of Adaptive Management Plan activities.

In summary, the implementation of the proposed Project could have potentially significant impacts on on-site, adjacent, and off-site sensitive receptors. The EIR will use the Construction Management Plan to describe the construction equipment fleet mix and usage factors and will quantify temporary increases in noise associated with construction using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Traffic Noise Model (TNM) version 2.5. The EIR will also identify the number of haul truck trips, vendor truck trips, concrete truck trips, and construction worker commute trips and will assess off-site construction related roadway noise.

c) **No Impact.** As previously described, the nearest airport to the Project site is John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana, located 14 miles from the Project site. Therefore, the Project site is not within an airport land use plan and is not within 2 miles of a public airport. In addition, the proposed Project site is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, no impact would result, and this issue will not be further assessed in the EIR.

Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. 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) **No Impact**. The Project site is located in an area immediately adjacent to urban development with existing infrastructure. The proposed Project would not involve development of residential land uses. No significant new infrastructure (e.g., expanded utilities or roads) would be required for the proposed Project. The proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly, beyond that already contemplated per the City's General Plan. Therefore, no impact would result, and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **No Impact.** The Project site is developed with existing open space and recreation facilities, and the proposed Project would not displace any existing housing. Therefore, no impacts would result, and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES. 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:				
a. Fire Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Police Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) **No Impact.** Local fire protection and prevention services (and paramedic services) within the City are provided by the Laguna Beach Fire Department (LBFD) (City of Laguna Beach 2021a). The LBFD maintains four fire stations in the City and has approximately 40 employees. The nearest station to the Project site is Station No. 4 located approximately 0.75 miles south of the Project site at 31646 2nd Avenue. Structures associated with the proposed Project (e.g., restrooms) would be designed to meet modern fire safety standards, including emergency access requirements, as well as fire suppression and emergency response systems. In addition, the LBFD would check and review site design plans for compliance with appropriate safety standards prior to initiation of any construction activities. Over the long-term, the proposed Project would not result in increased demand for fire protection and emergency medical services as it would not result in an increase in employees or population. Therefore, the proposed Project would not substantially increase the need for new fire department staff or new facilities. Therefore, this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

b) **No Impact.** The Laguna Beach Police Department (LBPD) provides police protection and emergency services to the City, including the Project site and the surrounding area. LBPD has approximately 96 full time employees, 52 sworn and 44 civilian positions. The Department handles close to 45,000 calls for service annually. The police station is located 2.85 miles north of the Project site at 505 Forest Avenue. The proposed Project does not include new homes or businesses that would require any additional services or extended response times for police protection services beyond those required with the existing recreational uses. Additionally, with improvements to the Project site, including the trails/pathways, pedestrian bridge, and viewing areas, the increased activity at the Project site may serve to deter crime in the area. The LBPD would not be required to expand or construct new police stations to serve the proposed Project. Environmental impacts associated with police services from the implementation of the proposed Project will not be discussed further in the EIR.

c) **No Impact.** The Laguna Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) is responsible for providing public K-12 school services in the City. The proposed Project would not result in a change in student generation rates or local school enrollment. No school facilities would be impacted by the proposed Project. Therefore, increases in student population would not be anticipated and this issue will not be discussed further in the EIR.

d) **No Impact.** Recreational facilities and programs in the City of Laguna Beach are provided by the Recreation and Community Services Department which manages the City's parkland and recreation facilities and programs, and the Public Works Department maintains City parks and facilities. The Project site is zoned for recreation and currently provides open space an overflow beach parking lot, and a picnic and playground area. Implementation of the proposed Project would remove the picnic and playground area as well as the existing overflow parking lot to support restoration of riparian and coastal sage scrub habitat along the banks of Aliso Creek. The Restoration Site Plan proposes new, upgraded park facilities designed to provide public opportunities to experience the restored ecosystem in a wilderness park setting. These features include an interpretive loop trail around the restored estuary with seating and viewing areas, a pedestrian bridge over the restored wetland habitat, and an overlook area suitable for guided educational visits. The proposed Project would not require new or physically altered recreational facilities. Nevertheless, potential impacts related to recreation will be assessed further in the *Recreation* discussion of the EIR (see Section XVI, *Recreation*).

e) **No Impact.** The Laguna Beach Public Library provides services to the City of Laguna Beach. The proposed Project would not generate a new residential population; therefore, the proposed Project would not result in an increased need for library services, resources, or facilities and this issue will not be further assessed in the EIR.

Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. 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, b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would not generate new residents (or otherwise increase the location population), and therefore, create a resulting demand for new parks and recreational facilities. However, the proposed Project could result in potentially significant impacts to recreational facilities. The proposed Project would involve the restoration of an existing estuary through the removal of existing asphalt parking surfaces and the expansion of the channelized watercourse and the creation of new functional wetland habitats. The proposed Project would reconfigure the existing picnic and playground area south of the Aliso Creek mouth. However, the proposed Project would provide several public use amenities, such as, multi-modal mobility hub, restrooms, and new pedestrian trails as well as a pedestrian bridge across Aliso Creek.

In addition to issues related to coastal access parking, the EIR will also identify potential impacts to recreational uses. This will include an assessment of potential short-term and long-term impacts related to the potential relocation of the children's play structure as well as impacts on existing recreational uses including skimming and surfing, swimming as well as walking, picnicking.

Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporate	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VXII. 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. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would result in short-term construction-related transportation impact as well as long-term impacts associated with the new multi-modal mobility hub at Aliso Beach Park. As previously described in Section XI, *Land Use and Planning* the EIR will assess any potential inconsistencies as they related to applicable plans, ordinances, or policies related to these potential impacts – including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. in terms of safety and hazards on roads.

b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** CEQA Guidelines 15064.3(b) provides direction on determining the significance of transportation impacts. According to the CEQA Guidelines, the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts is the use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The proposed Project would involve the demolition of the existing overflow parking lot and picnic and playground area to support restoration and revegetation of the Aliso Creek Estuary. The proposed Project would also provide new pedestrian trails/pathways, a pedestrian bridge, and viewing areas. Additionally, the proposed Project would develop a multi-modal mobility hub, including improved OCTA bus stops, a trolley turnaround, bicycle facility (e.g., bicycle parking and repair station), a visitor drop-off area, and access to the proposed new pedestrian trails/pathways.

According to a technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts from the State of California Governor's Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation (LCI), "[a]bsent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact" (LCI 2018). Operation of the proposed Project would result in vehicle trips associated with visitors to the Project site as well as monitoring and maintenance activities associated with the proposed restoration. However, it is anticipated that the proposed Project would not result in more than 110 net new daily trips. Nevertheless, the EIR will provide a detailed assessment of operational transportation impacts utilizing the VMT criteria identified in CEQA Guidelines 15064.3(b).

c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, implementation of the proposed restoration activities would require use of construction worker vehicles, heavy haul trucks, and construction materials deliveries. Therefore, construction-related activities associated with the proposed Project would result in a temporary increase in vehicle traffic at the Project site and in the immediate vicinity. The proposed restoration activities may also require temporary lane closures, sidewalk closures, and or potential conflicts with motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Additionally, given the proximity of Coast Highway and recreationalists at Aliso Beach, heavy haul truck trips required for export from the Project site and/or materials delivery to the Project site could result in potentially hazardous conditions off-site as well.

The proposed Project would reconfigure some existing facilities to provide for a multi-modal mobility hub. These impacts are not expected to result in any impacts relative to design features or incompatible use but will be further discussed in the EIR.

d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would not interfere with emergency access to surrounding residential properties to the north and south of the Project site. Though the proposed Project would include routes and curb space designated for emergency vehicles, temporary road closures may impact the adequacy of emergency access to the Project site. This potential impact will be assessed further in the EIR.

Operationally, the existing ingress/egress at Aliso Way would remain unchanged. The proposed Project would not interfere with emergency access to surrounding properties. The proposed Project would be required to meet fire access requirements provided in Section 503 of the California Fire Code (Title 14, CCR Part 9). Section 503 of the California Fire Code requires approved access roads for fire service apparatus (e.g., fire-engines, ladder trucks, etc.) and specifies the width, surface type, load capacity, vertical clearance, etc. Nevertheless, the potential operational impact on emergency access will be addressed further in the EIR.

Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. 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 Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As previously described, the majority of the Project site has been subject to soil disturbances associated with previous construction activities. No recorded prehistoric archaeological sites are located within the Project site. Nevertheless, ground disturbing activities, such as excavation and grading, could uncover previously unidentified subsurface prehistoric archaeological materials that could be considered tribal cultural resources. Therefore, significant impacts on tribal resources could occur. Additional background research on the Project site, including consultation (pursuant to Assembly Bill [AB] 52) with Native Americans who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project, a records search at the SCCIC, review of historic topographic maps and aerial photographs, and a NAHC SLF search, will be conducted in preparation of the EIR. In addition, an archaeological review will be conducted to identify the potential for buried tribal cultural resources. This issue will be assessed further in the EIR.

Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX.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) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would involve the restoration of the Aliso Creek Estuary and does not include the construction of new residential or residential-serving commercial uses. Therefore, the proposed Project would not require substantial expansion of water, wastewater treatment, electric power, natural gas or communication facilities to serve these uses. However, the relocated restroom facilities would require connections to the existing water, sewer, electrical, and natural gas lines on-site. Additionally, several buried utilities cross the Project site, including sewer pipelines owned by the City of Laguna Beach, SCWD, and SOCWA; SOCWA metering station located within the existing parking lot; domestic pressurized water main owned by SCWD at the Aliso Creek Bridge; recycled pressurized water main; and Cox fiber cables. Approximately 5 to 20 feet of excavation is proposed to restore the existing surface parking lot to functional wetland habitat. The EIR will include a detailed assessment of short-term impacts to utilities during construction-related activities as well as any long-term impacts related to relocation of the utilities (e.g., access for maintenance, etc.). This analysis will rely on a detailed utilities study that is currently under preparation for the proposed Project.

b) **No Impact.** During construction, domestic water would be used during excavation and construction for dust control measures, cement mixing, drilling, and other construction activities. Domestic water would also be used to establish native plants as a part of the restoration effort. Revegetation would not utilize large quantities of water as planting and seeding would occur in early winter to take advantage of natural rain. Temporary irrigation would be installed and used only to the extent necessary as over-irrigation may lead to plants growing less extensive root systems. Irrigation would be removed after plants are established (1 to 3 years). The proposed restrooms would not require substantially more water than the existing restrooms on-site. Therefore, the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact on water supplies, and this issue will not be further discussed in the EIR.

Photograph 11. *SCWD's maintenance facilities are located to the north of the Project site along Country Club Drive.*

c) **No Impact**. The proposed Project does not include the construction of residential or commercial uses. The proposed restrooms would not generate substantially more wastewater than the existing restrooms on-site. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this issue will not be further discussed in the EIR.

d, e) **No Impact.** During construction, the proposed Project would generate solid waste associated with demolition of the existing overflow parking lot and the picnic/playground area. Additionally, the use of construction-related materials may also generate solid waste during construction; however, the amount of waste generated during construction would be minor and would not be beyond the capacity of local landfills. In addition, the proposed Project would be required to adhere to State and local construction-related debris recycling and waste diversion and disposal requirements as part of permit approvals. These requirements would assist in reducing the amount of construction-related solid waste being transported to area landfills. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur. Impacts to solid waste reduction will not be further discussed in the EIR.

Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. 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) **Less Than Significant Impact.** A review of the City of Laguna Beach General Plan Safety Element indicates the City has considered emergency access issues throughout its jurisdiction and has developed programs and mechanisms to address this (e.g., access planning, upgrading roadway deficiencies, no parking zones, public access easements) (City of Laguna Beach 2021a). The proposed Project would be required to adhere to traffic safety requirements, including a Construction Management Plan and a related Traffic Management Plan, if required by the City. Access along Coast Highway, a City designated evacuation route, would be maintained for the duration of construction. Additionally, the proposed Project does not propose any features that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation. Based upon the analysis above, the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact and this issue will not be further discussed in the EIR.

b-d) **Less Than Significant**. The proposed Project is located in an area identified by CAL FIRE and the City of Laguna Beach's General Plan Environmental Constraints map as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CAL FIRE 2022; City of Laguna Beach 1995). The Project site is also in proximity to the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park to the northwest. Portions of the Project site are located within the WUI zone as mapped by CAL FIRE's FRAP. However, the proposed Project is located within a primarily urbanized environment and does not contain highly flammable fuels.

As described in Section IX, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, there is a potential for an increased exposure to wildfire hazards due to the operation of construction equipment during short-term construction activities. Construction equipment would be normally equipped with spark arrestors and other safety features to reduce the potential for fire. With implementation of BMPs and mitigation measures for fire safety during construction activities, construction-related impacts to wildfire would be less than significant. Nevertheless, potential impacts related to wildfire will be assessed further in the *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* discussion of the EIR (refer to Section IX, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*).

The City has adopted special building requirements in the WUI zone that exceed the UBC requirements, implemented a fuel management program for vegetation and brush, and restricted the use of certain plant species (e.g., pine, cypress, cedar, junipers, acacia, bougainvillea, eucalyptus). Combined, these measures have assisted the City in reducing the potential for impacts due to wildfire. Potential operational impacts related to wildfire will be assessed further in the *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* discussion of the EIR (refer to Section IX, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*).

Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE. Would the project:				
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 decrease 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 major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable ("Cumulatively considerable" means the project's incremental effects are considerable when compared to the past, present, and future effects of other projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Does the project have environmental effects which will have substantial adverse effects on human beings, directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** As described in Section IV, *Biological Resources*, construction of the proposed Project could result in significant impacts to sensitive plant and wildlife species and their habitats. Coordination and consultation with all appropriate agencies, including the USFWS and CDFW, and implementation of mitigation would ensure potentially adverse impacts to special-status plant and wildlife species would be less than significant. Further, as described in Section V, *Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources*, subsurface construction activities associated with the proposed Project could potentially damage or destroy previously undiscovered archaeological resources. These impacts will be assessed further in the EIR.

b) **Less than Significant Impact.** As described throughout the IS, the proposed Project has the potential to result in short-term, temporary impacts; however, the proposed restoration of the Aliso Creek Estuary would result in long-term improvements and would generally advance the environmental goals described in the relevant long-range planning documents. This issue will be assessed further in the Land Use and Planning discussion of the EIR (refer to Section XI, *Land Use and Planning*).

c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project is located immediately adjacent to the existing SCWD maintenance facilities. As previously described, the SCWD recently received approvals for the replacement of the existing Lift Station No. 2. Other similar cumulative projects may also occur within the immediate vicinity of the Project site during construction-related activities associated with the proposed Project. The potential for cumulative effects – particularly construction-related effects – will be analyzed for each of the resource areas carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIR.

d) **Less Than Significant Impact**. No environmental factors or effects were found to cause a substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. However, this issue will be assessed further for each of the resource areas carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIR, as necessary.

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