

Notice of Exemption**Appendix E**

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: San Diego

1600 Pacific Coast Highway Suite 260

San Diego, CA 91201

From: (Public Agency): Encina Wastewater Authority
6200 Avenida Encinas
Carlsbad, CA 92011

(Address)

Project Title: EWPCF Cogeneration Low Emissions Augmentation and Retrofit (CLEAR) Project

Project Applicant: Encina Wastewater Authority

Project Location - Specific:

6200 Avenida Encinas, Carlsbad / APNs 211-03-008; 211-03-006, 214-01-095

Project Location - City: Carlsbad

Project Location - County: San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose is to maximize beneficial use of digester biogas and reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from an existing combined heat and power (CHP) source at the existing Encina Water Pollution Control Facility (EWPCF). The project includes retrofit of existing cogeneration engines with oxidation catalyst emissions controls, construction of new blowers in the existing blower room, a new 0.99 MW linear generator facility, a new digester biogas conditioning facility, and new 2 MWh battery storage capacity. The project will deliver a reliable, resilient solution to managing energy resources (power, heat and biogas) at the EWPCF.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Encina Wastewater Authority

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Encina Wastewater Authority

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Existing Facilities 15301; Cogeneration at Existing Facilities 15329
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 exempts projects that involve negligible expansion of an existing use. The Project would implement low emissions technology at the existing EWPCF; there would be no expansion of biogas production. There would be a minimal increase in building footprint within the EWPCF site for the new linear generator, battery storage, and biogas conditioning facilities. Section 15329 exempts installation of cogeneration equipment with a capacity of 50 MW or less at existing facilities that result in no net increases in air emissions and comply with air quality laws. The site does not meet any Exceptions under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 See Attachment A for additional Project information and supporting environmental documentation.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Scott McClelland Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 760-438-3941

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Title: _____

▪ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Attachment A



**Environmental Documentation
for
Encina Water Pollution Control Facility
Cogeneration Low Emissions Augmentation
and Retrofit (CLEAR) Project
Notice of Exemption**

Prepared by:

Encina Wastewater Authority
6200 Avenida Encinas
Carlsbad, CA 92011

With Assistance From:



530 Technology Drive, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92618
949.420.5300

December 2024

0012839.00

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
1. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION	1-3
1.1 Project Location and Existing Facilities	1-3
1.2 Project Goals.....	1-4
1.3 Description of Proposed Facilities	1-4
Proposed Engine Emission Control Retrofit.....	1-4
Proposed Linear Generators	1-5
Proposed Digester Biogas Conditioning	1-7
Proposed Battery Backup.....	1-7
Proposed High-speed Turbo Blowers	1-8
Proposed Integration and Potential for Expansion	1-8
1.4 Construction Area.....	1-8
1.5 Construction Schedule.....	1-8
2. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	2-1
2.1 Applicability of Class 1 Categorical Exemption.....	2-1
2.2 Absence of Exceptions that Would Preclude Use of a Categorical Exemption.....	2-1
2.3 Analysis of Environmental Effects	2-2
2.3.1 Aesthetics	2-2
2.3.2 Agricultural Resources	2-3
2.3.3 Air Quality.....	2-5
2.3.4 Biological Resources.....	2-7
2.3.5 Cultural Resources.....	2-9
2.3.6 Energy.....	2-10
2.3.7 Geology and Soils.....	2-11
2.3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	2-13
2.3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	2-15
2.3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality	2-18
2.3.11 Land Use and Planning.....	2-20
2.3.12 Mineral Resources	2-21
2.3.13 Noise	2-22
2.3.14 Population and Housing	2-24
2.3.15 Public Services	2-25
2.3.16 Recreation	2-26
2.3.17 Transportation	2-26

2.3.18	Tribal Cultural Resources	2-28
2.3.19	Utilities and Service Systems	2-29
2.3.20	Wildfire	2-31
2.3.21	Cumulative Impacts and Findings of Significance	2-32
3.	REFERENCES.....	3-1

FIGURES

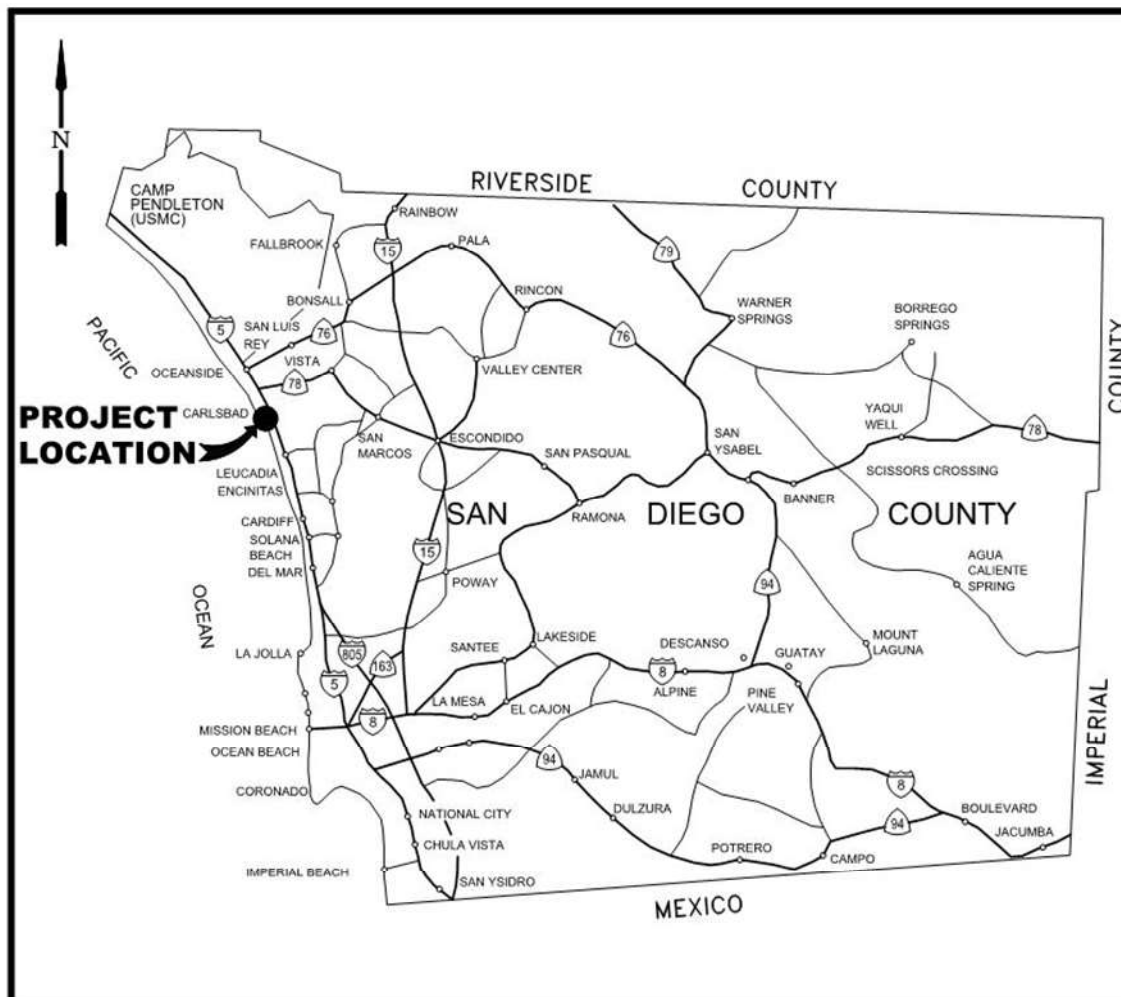
Figure 1 - Vicinity Map.....	1-3
Figure 2 - Site Layout on Aerial Map	1-6

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

1.1 Project Location and Existing Facilities

Encina Wastewater Authority (Encina) operates the Encina Water Pollution Control Facility (EWPCF) located at 6200 Avenida Encinas in Carlsbad, just west of Interstate 5 (I-5) Freeway (**Figure 1**). The EWPCF is a secondary activated sludge treatment facility with an existing liquid design capacity of 40.5 million gallons per day (MGD), and solids capacity of 43.5 MGD. The existing EWPCF energy management facilities were initially constructed in 1982 and were rehabilitated in 2009 to include a combined heat and power (CHP) system consisting of four 750-kilowatt (kW) reciprocating engines for power generation with a heat recovery system that provides heat for the digesters and other facilities at the EWPCF. The existing CHP system currently meets most of the EWPCF power demand, meets EWPCF heat demands, and uses most of the biogas produced in the anaerobic digesters.

Figure 1 - Vicinity Map



San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) regulations require upgrades to the existing anaerobic digestion, biogas generation, and CHP system to meet emissions regulations. Encina is subject to air quality rules and regulations enforced by the SDAPCD for particulate matter, oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), and toxic air contaminants. Due to degradation of the air quality in the San Diego Air Basin, the SDAPCD permitting regulations have become more stringent for NO_x and VOC pollutants. Furthermore, in 2023 SDAPCD notified Encina that it should develop a health risk reduction plan to reduce cancer and acute health risks to less than the public notification and risk reduction levels in SDAPCD Rule 1210 (Toxic Air Contaminant Health Risks). Therefore, Encina is proposing biogas fueled low emission power generation with linear generators that contributes emissions in compliance with current and potential future SDAPCD requirements.

1.2 Project Goals

Encina intends to continue to source power and heat for the EWPCF by maximizing beneficial use of the digester biogas generated at the EWPCF by installing emission controls on the existing cogeneration engines and supplementing these internal combustion (IC) engines with a new low emissions cogeneration technology (linear generators). Encina's goals are:

1. Implement biogas conditioning and emissions controls on the existing engines in combination with and new on-site low emissions linear generators to comply with current and potential SDAPCD requirements and provide resiliency for future air emissions regulations.
2. Maximize beneficial use and the economic value of Encina's digester biogas through the existing reciprocating engines and the new linear generators.
3. Generate on-site low emissions power to provide a defined base load supply of the EWPCF power demand and facilitate greater independence from the utility power grid.
4. Deliver a reliable, resilient and cost-effective solution to manage energy resources (power, heat and biogas) at the EWPCF, including a battery backup power source.

Encina proposes implementation of linear generators, biogas conditioning, and backup battery that would provide a portion of the power demand for operation of the EWPCF. Encina proposes to install a biogas treatment facility for conditioning digester biogas so that it can continue to be used for power generation at the EWPCF site. Encina intends to maintain the existing CHP facilities for backup power and the existing EWPCF biogas flares would continue to serve for emergency biogas management.

1.3 Description of Proposed Facilities

Proposed Engine Emission Control Retrofit

Encina proposes to retrofit the existing cogeneration engines by implementing oxidation catalyst emission controls. The emission controls would limit formaldehyde emissions from all the power

generation equipment to below 1,500 pounds per year. The existing cogeneration engines with emission controls will continue operation to provide power for the EWPCF as new low-emission power generation equipment is phased in. Once the new linear generators are in service, the existing engines will provide remaining power supply not met by the linear generators, as needed.

Proposed Linear Generators

The proposed linear generators would operate as a base load power supply of 0.99 megawatt (MW) of power generation. The retrofitted existing cogeneration engines would continue to operate to provide the additional load to the EWPCF up to the maximum allowed under the current SDAPCD permit to operate and emissions limits. Power demand that cannot be met by the linear generators and retrofitted existing cogeneration engines would be obtained from San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) through the power grid. Encina would maintain the existing CHP facilities for partial power demand, backup power, and heat demand. The majority of power generated is expected to be consumed on-site, with the potential to export a small amount to the grid. f The proposed linear generator power supply would include:

- a) Guaranteed Base Load Power Supply for the EWPCF: 0.99 MW, 480 V 3-phase
- b) Guaranteed availability of 0.99 MW power 95% of the time

The proposed project would include the ability to install future linear generators to provide a total installed power supply of 3,000 kW for the EWPCF.

Encina would allocate space within the current EWPCF footprint for the power generation facility. The linear generator facility would be located at the northeastern portion of the EWPCF on a graded asphalt area that is currently used for parking and miscellaneous storage. Construction of the facility would be above ground and would be located entirely within the existing EWPCF footprint. **Figure 2** shows the proposed location of the new linear generator facility.

Figure 2 - Site Layout on Aerial Map



© 2024 Microsoft Corporation, © 2024 Maxar, ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS, © 2024 TomTom | Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Proposed Digester Biogas Conditioning

The proposed biogas conditioning facility would involve conditioning digester biogas to continue use for fuel for power generation at the EWPCF site. Digester biogas contaminants would be removed to upgrade the biogas to the linear generator fuel specification. Existing biogas treatment includes particulate and moisture removal equipment. The biogas treatment facility would supply the following:

- Biogas treatment and management: daily average of 680 standard cubic feet per minute (scfm)
- Biogas treatment and management rated nameplate capacity¹: 750 scfm
- Biogas treatment and management turndown: 50 percent of nameplate capacity.

Space on the site would remain for future expansion to provide a rated nameplate capacity of 1,500 scfm and an average capacity of 1,360 scfm, with required equipment and redundancy to provide the rated capacity 98 percent of the time. The existing EWPCF biogas flares would be used for emergency biogas management.

Encina would allocate space within the current EWPCF footprint for the digester biogas conditioning facility. Construction of the facility would be above ground and would be located entirely within the existing EWPCF footprint. The proposed biogas facility would be constructed near the northeast corner of the EWPCF as shown in **Figure 2**. The existing maintenance annex building currently used for storage of miscellaneous equipment would be demolished and would be replaced with the new biogas treatment facility (**Figure 2**).

Proposed Battery Backup

A power storage strategy through battery equipment would provide two functions. The first is to provide peak power demand to reduce power draw from the grid during peak usage, where the battery is charged by on-site generation during low power usage times and provides energy storage for peak usage. The second is to provide peak power supply capacity when the EWPCF power usage exceeds the on-site generation capacity during a grid outage. In this scenario it is anticipated that the battery backup would provide up to two hours of peaking capacity to allow EWPCF to transition to a reduced power load operation without the plant-wide power system shutting down, as currently occurs during grid outages. The Project would provide 2 MWh of

¹ Nameplate capacity is the intended full-load sustained output of a facility and the theoretical output registered with authorities for classifying the unit.

battery storage capacity. However, the battery size may be reconsidered in the future in combination with the microgrid controls system and on-site power generation equipment reliability to manage peak loads and prevent plant power shutdowns in the event of a grid outage.

The power generation (retrofitted existing engines and new linear generator) and battery facility would be sized to be capable of providing the amperage to cover start-up of Encina's two 500-hp blowers in sequence, while also covering other equipment with significant power load, such as the thermal dryer.

Proposed High-speed Turbo Blowers

The Project may include a high-speed turbo blower system, including variable frequency drives, to replace the existing constant speed aeration blowers at the EWPCF. The new blower system would be installed within the existing blower room (see Figure 2). It would provide a firm capacity (with the largest blower unit out of service) of 36,500 scfm.

Proposed Integration and Potential for Expansion

Switchgear and new power supply equipment would be required for the facility, along with storage for operations and maintenance (O&M) requirements including supply of chemicals, media, membranes or other components required during the life of the Project. In addition, the Project would include the ability to install future linear generators to provide a total power supply of 3,000 kW for the EWPCF; and include a space for a future increase of the total guaranteed critical heat supply to 2,000 kW (thermal).

1.4 Construction Area

The Project would impact approximately 9,200 square feet within the boundaries of the EWPCF, not including construction storage, staging and laydown areas. The existing maintenance annex building near the northeast corner of the EWPCF would be demolished to make room for the biogas facility. The proposed linear generator and battery storage facility would be constructed on a graded asphalt area that formerly housed a maintenance building. The maintenance building was demolished for use as storage and parking. The primary construction laydown area and construction crew parking would be located at the northeast corner of the site. Additional storage or laydown area would be located in the southern portion of the existing EWPCF South parking lot. **Figure 2** shows the construction site laydown areas for the northern and southern portions of the site, respectively.

1.5 Construction Schedule

Construction of the proposed Project is expected to be completed within approximately 12-14 months.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

2.1 Applicability of Class 1 Categorical Exemption

The State CEQA Guidelines present the Class 1 Categorical Exemption, which would apply to the proposed Project. Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Examples of the types of "existing facilities" are listed below. The key consideration when applying this Categorical Exemption is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use.

- Interior or exterior alterations involving such things as interior partitions, plumbing, and electrical conveyances.
- Existing facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services.
- Additions to existing structures provided that the addition will not result in an increase of more than 50 percent of the floor area of the structures before the addition, or 2,500 square feet, whichever is less; or, 10,000 square feet if the project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for maximum development permissible in the General Plan and the area in which the project is located is not environmentally sensitive.

2.2 Absence of Exceptions that Would Preclude Use of a Categorical Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 lists a number of exceptions that would preclude the use of a Class 1 Categorical Exemption.

- Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.
- Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.
- Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

As explained below, none of the exceptions are applicable to the proposed engine retrofit, linear generator, battery storage, and biogas conditioning project.

2.3 Analysis of Environmental Effects

2.3.1 Aesthetics

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
--	---------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------	------------------

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-----|

Discussion

The proposed facilities would be constructed within the existing EWPCF and within the height of existing structures. The site is adjacent on the east to the I-5 freeway, and topographically at a lower elevation than the I-5 freeway. Land uses on the east side of the I-5 freeway are commercial, industrial and some residential with limited views of the site. Adjacent land uses on the north and south include commercial and industrial land uses. The primary visual resource in the project area is the Pacific Ocean, which is approximately one quarter mile west of the EWPCF site. The I-5 Freeway is not a designated scenic highway and there are no designated scenic highways in the vicinity of the EWPCF.

No scenic vistas or scenic resources would be impacted by the proposed Project. The Project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views. The Project is located within the existing EWPCF and would not result in a conflict with zoning regulations governing scenic quality, as the proposed facilities would visually blend in with existing EWPCF facilities.

Construction activities would occur during daytime and no nighttime work would be required. While daytime construction would temporarily create a minor new source of light and glare from construction equipment, impacts would be considered less than significant because construction would be temporary, and equipment would be removed once construction is completed.

After construction, the Project would include limited lighting for security purposes and would be directed downward, avoiding light spillage on adjacent properties and would not be a substantial source of light or glare. Impacts to daytime or nighttime views in the area would be less than significant.

2.3.2 Agricultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>

Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|

the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

The Project would be located entirely within the existing paved areas of the EWPCF. The proposed Project area is not located within or adjacent to any land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, Williamson Act land, forest land or timberland. Therefore, the proposed Project would not impact or result in the conversion of any farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use and would not involve other changes in the existing environment. There would be no impact.

2.3.3 Air Quality

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non- attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors or adversely affecting a substantial number of people?)	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

The proposed Project at the EWPCF is located in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB) under the jurisdiction of the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD), subject to the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS). The RAQS contains a comprehensive list of pollution control strategies directed at reducing emissions and achieving ambient air quality standards. The emission inventories and emission projections in the RAQS reflect the impact of all emission sources and all control measures in the air basin. SDAPCD is responsible for reflecting federal, State, and local measures in a single plan to achieve State ozone standards in San Diego County. The emission inventories and emission projections in the RAQS are based, in part, on projections originating with county and city general plans. Because the proposed Project is consistent with the Carlsbad General Plan, it is considered consistent with the applicable air quality plan, the RAQS. As such, Project-related emissions, which are discussed below, are accounted for in the

RAQS, and implementation of the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the RAQS.

The proposed Project involves constructing new linear generators, battery storage, and biogas conditioning facilities at the existing EWPCF. Limited construction activities would be required to install the linear generators and battery storage. Similarly, the biogas facility would entail limited construction. All new facilities would be installed above ground, requiring minimal grading and excavation, thus fugitive dust would be minimal. Nevertheless, construction would comply with mandatory rules, including California Air Resource Board's (CARB) In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations and SDAPCD fugitive dust regulations, as applicable. With these requirements and given the small size of the Project, construction emissions would not be expected to result in an exceedance of an SDAPCD criteria air pollutant emission threshold. Impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed Project would involve minor emissions of sulfur compounds from use of oil and diesel fuel during construction, and from temporary outages of odor reduction facilities during construction, which would potentially result in unpleasant odors. Construction would be temporary and odorous emissions from construction equipment tend to dissipate quickly within short distances from construction sites, and would not be expected to affect nearby land uses.

Operation of the proposed Project would reduce emissions of air toxics and criteria air pollutants at the EWPCF by incorporating low emissions technology for critical power supply. The existing EWPCF biogas flares would continue to be used in an emergency for biogas management. Thus, operation of the proposed Project would result in reduced air emissions and would benefit air quality in the SDAB.

There are no sensitive land uses (i.e., schools, hospitals, day care centers or convalescent homes) located adjacent to the EWPCF. The closest sensitive receptors are in a residential area west of the Amtrak/NCTD railroad tracks, located almost 600 feet from the proposed Project facilities, and healthcare offices located on the other side of the Interstate 5 freeway from the EWPCF, approximately 350 feet from the proposed Project. As noted above, operational emissions of criteria pollutants would be minimal. Additionally, operation of the Project would not result in an increase in odorous emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

2.3.4 Biological Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

-
- | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 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? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| 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? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |

Discussion

The proposed Project would be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the existing EWPCF on existing paved areas. There is only non-native landscape screening vegetation along the east side of the EWCPF (adjacent to the I-5 Freeway) and along the northern property boundary. No impacts to sensitive species, potential habitat for sensitive species, sensitive vegetation communities, wildlife migratory corridors, critical habitat, and jurisdictional aquatic resources would be expected. Additionally, no tree removal would be needed for installation of proposed facilities.

The EWPCF lies within the North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Program, a subregional plan of the San Diego region (SANDAG 2003). The EWPCF site lies within an area categorized as developed, carrying no habitat or conservation value. Sensitive biological species preservation and protection in the Project area are guided by the Habitat Management Plan of the City of Carlsbad (City of Carlsbad 2004), which was developed in cooperation with federal and state wildlife agencies. The EWPCF site is not located within the boundaries of the preserve system established through the Habitat Management Plan. The preserve system management unit closest to the Project site is the Poinsettia/Aviara management unit, which is separated from the Project site by I-5 Freeway. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in impacts to the MHCP.

2.3.5 Cultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Project would be located within the existing EWPCF site which has been previously developed, graded, and compacted. Based on a cultural resources record search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) database, no cultural resources are known to exist within the boundaries of the EWPCF (Rincon 2018). The record search included a review of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), the California Points of Historical Interest list, the California Historical Landmarks list, the Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility list, and the California State Historic Resources Inventory list, and the EWPCF was not identified as a significant historical or cultural resource nor included in a local, state, or federal register of historical resources (Rincon 2018). As a result, the proposed Project would not impact California historical resources.

The Project would be constructed entirely on an existing paved area within the EWPCF, including staging areas, and would not require excavation that could uncover unknown archaeological resources. The Project would require the removal of existing buildings, but these buildings are not considered a historic resource. The existing EWPCF energy management facilities were initially constructed in 1982, and a major rehabilitation was completed in 2009. No impacts to cultural or historic resources are expected.

2.3.6 Energy

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

Construction of the proposed Project would involve standard construction practices that would require fossil fuel consumption typically associated with operation of diesel-powered construction equipment and vehicles used to transport workers and haul and deliver materials. The Project would not require unusual or excessive construction equipment or practices that would result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy compared to projects of similar type and size. In addition, the construction fleet contracted for the proposed Project would be required to comply with the CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations (CARB 2011), which would limit vehicle idling time to five minutes, restrict adding vehicles to construction fleets with older-tier engines, and establish a schedule for retiring older, less fuel-efficient engines from the construction fleet.

The Project would not result in new development that would increase energy demand. In fact, operation of the proposed linear generator facility would provide a portion of the power demands (0.99 MW, 480 V 3-phase) required to operate the EWPCF that would otherwise be provided by the local SDG&E power grid. Thus, there would be no substantial increase in energy consumption.

Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and impacts would be less than significant. Thus, the Project would not conflict with state and local plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

2.3.7 Geology and Soils

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	[]	[]	[X]	[]
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iv) Landslides?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of top soil?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

-
- | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| 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? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |

Discussion

The Project is located in southern California, a seismically active region. A review of the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Map (California Department of Conservation 2024) found that the proposed Project is not located within a United States Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle where Alquist-Priolo fault zones occur, nor is the Project area located within landslide and liquefaction zones. Thus, there would be no impact associated with surface rupture. While no faults have been identified within the Project area, the Project site is located in a seismically active region. Faults located outside of the area, such as the Rose Canyon, Elsinore, and San Andreas Faults, may pose a seismic threat to the Project site through significant ground shaking. The potential for liquefaction, landslides, and seismic settlement are low. The Project is not expected to expose people or property to a substantial risk of adverse effects from seismic hazards, including ground shaking. Impacts would be less than significant.

Liquefaction is the process in which poorly consolidated, sandy soils take on the properties of a liquid when subjected to strong ground shaking. The potential for liquefaction is considered to be negligible; impacts would be less than significant.

The existing EWPCF site is situated on a relatively flat developed parcel, with no source of a landslide in the immediate proximity. According to landslide maps from the California Department of Conservation (1995), the EWPCF site is located within an area that is marginally susceptible to landslides. Material is considered unlikely to remobilize under natural conditions. No impact associated with landslides would be expected.

Construction of proposed facilities would occur on existing paved areas of the EWPCF requiring minor excavation of soil, and thus, no substantial erosion or loss of topsoil would be expected.

The potential for liquefaction is considered negligible as noted above. There would be no impacts related to unstable or expansive soils.

The proposed Project does not include the use of septic tanks or other on-site subsurface disposal systems not associated with municipal sewer collection and disposal systems. Therefore, no impacts would occur related to soils incapable of adequately supporting septic or other alternative wastewater disposal systems.

Lastly, because the proposed Project would be constructed above ground with minor soil excavation required for slab foundation and pipe support fittings, duct banks and piping systems, there would be no impacts to paleontological resources.

2.3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are pollutants that are known to increase the greenhouse effect in the Earth's atmosphere thereby adding to global climate change impacts. Several pollutants have been identified as GHGs, and the State of California definition in the Health and Safety Code, Section 38505(g) includes carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride (CARB 2024). Water vapor is also identified as a GHG; however, it is short lived, and concentrations are largely determined by natural processes such as evaporation. Other GHGs such as fluorinated gases are created and emitted through anthropogenic sources. The most common anthropogenic GHGs are CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O.

In 2005, the California Governor issued Executive Order (EO) S-3-05, which set GHG emission reduction targets:

- 2010 should have 2000 levels;
- 2020 should have 1990 levels; and
- GHG emissions should be 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Senate Bill (SB) 32, passed in 2016, required that the CARB include in its next update to the Assembly Bill (AB) 32 Scoping Plan, “ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide GHG emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030.” (EO) B-55 set a GHG emission reduction target for California to be carbon neutral by 2045.

The CARB has adopted three Climate Change Scoping Plans with the purpose of establishing specific GHG reduction targets. The 2008 Scoping Plan’s target was to meet 1990 levels by 2020; the 2017 Scoping Plan Update’s target was to meet a more aggressive target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030; and the 2022 Scoping Plan Update’s target is reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. AB 1279 requires CARB to ensure that Scoping Plan updates identify and recommend measures to achieve carbon neutrality, and to identify and implement policies and strategies that enable CO₂ removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies (CARB 2022).

The City of Carlsbad adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) as part of its General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in September 2015 (and revised most recently in November 2024), with the intention to reduce the City’s GHG emissions and streamline environmental review of future development projects in the city. The CAP includes local GHG emissions inventory, forecasts for future GHG emissions, and a comprehensive set of measures and actions for the City to reduce GHG emissions and achieve global climate change emissions targets in 2035 and 2045. The CAP is designed to reduce Carlsbad’s GHG emissions and streamline environmental review of future development projects in the city in accordance with CEQA. The CAP’s GHG emission targets are based on meeting the goals set in Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 and Assembly Bill (AB) 32.

The proposed Project would generate limited amounts of GHG emissions during construction, which is anticipated to last approximately 12-14 months. Construction impacts would result from short-term construction activities which would require the use of construction equipment with internal combustion engines, and offsite vehicles to transport construction workers, deliver materials to the site, and haul materials off-site.

In addition to the limited generation of GHG emissions during construction, the Project would adhere to existing energy efficiency requirements during construction, including CARB’s In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations that limit vehicle idling time to five minutes, restrict adding vehicles to construction fleets that have older engines, and establish a schedule for retiring less fuel-efficient engines (CARB 2011). Construction-related GHG impacts would be less than significant.

With regard to operational emissions of GHGs, the proposed Project would incorporate low emissions technology to meet existing and future SDAPCD permit requirements and meet local and state air toxics and criteria air pollutant thresholds and standards. Biogas produced at the EWPCF would be treated at the proposed biogas treatment facility to meet linear generator fuel specifications. With the proposed Project, releases of biogas through the existing flares would be reduced as compared to existing conditions and would be expected infrequently for emergency biogas management. Furthermore, operation of the proposed facilities would not be expected to induce a net increase in vehicle trips to or from EWPCF for employee commutes or materials transport because O&M activities would be incorporated into existing EWPCF O&M activities. Any new security lighting would incorporate LED fixtures consistent with the City's CAP GHG reductions measures. Overall, operation of the proposed linear generator and battery storage facility and biogas facility would not be expected to generate a net increase in operational GHG emissions. The Project would not be expected to conflict with goals set out in Senate Bill (SB)-32 and the California Air Resources Board 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with and does not conflict with an existing state or local plan, policy or regulation developed for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Furthermore, the State of California has set targets for renewable energy from the energy sector through the Renewable Portfolio Standard. The Renewable Portfolio Standard directs energy utilities to source half of their electricity sales from renewable sources by 2030 (CEC 2017). Implementation of the proposed Project would contribute toward SDG&E's renewable energy portfolio by meeting the power demands of the EWPCF with biogas most of the time. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct this target, and impacts would be less than significant.

2.3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through	[]	[]	[X]	[]

reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| 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? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| e) For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | [] | [] | [] | [X] |

Discussion

Typical hazardous materials that may be used during construction and operation including routine O&M activities include gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and lubricants. The use of these materials for their intended purpose would not pose a significant risk to the public or environment. Hazardous and non-hazardous waste accumulated during construction activities would be

handled, documented, and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. New hazardous materials or hazardous wastes that may be stored at the new facilities during operation would be done so in accordance with applicable permits and regulations. Likewise, the proposed battery storage facility would be installed and operated in accordance with applicable permits. It is unlikely that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The existing storage building that would be demolished prior to construction of the new facility contains asbestos and lead based paint. A full assessment of building materials was conducted in 2018 and found minor quantities of asbestos and lead (Converse Consultants 2018). Encina's demolition contractor would be required to follow applicable local, state and federal regulations for the demolition, containment, and off-site removal and disposal of any asbestos-containing materials and materials containing lead-based paint. Impacts would be less than significant.

To minimize the risks of exposure to hazardous materials from routine use or accidents, federal, state, and local regulations have been put into place to regulate hazardous material use, storage, transportation, and handling. Encina and its contractors would be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to hazardous materials. Conformance with these regulations would require implementation of storm water pollution controls to address the potential storm water discharge of contaminants (including construction-related hazardous materials) through appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs).

There are no existing or proposed schools within one-quarter mile of the proposed Project area. Therefore, the Project would not be expected to impact schools through an accidental release of hazardous materials during construction.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database is a data management system for tracking DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination or sites where there may be reasons to investigate further. A regulatory records search of the Envirostor database was performed for the proposed Project area on October 14, 2024. The Project is not included on a list of recent or currently active clean-up or hazardous materials sites per Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, construction and operation of the proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the release of existing materials associated with a listed hazardous materials site. There would be no impact.

The EWPCF is located within approximately 2.25 miles of the nearest public airport, the McClellan-Palomar Airport. There has been no conflict with the existing EWPCF and the McClellan-Palomar Airport and it is not anticipated that proposed facilities would result in related safety hazards for people residing or working in the Project area. There would be no impact.

Major potential evacuation routes are located along major highways and major roads. The proposed Project would be located within the boundaries of the existing EWCPF. Construction activities would take place within the footprint of the EWPCF and would not result in construction

traffic congestion on local roads. Construction is not anticipated to create significant interference to potential emergency roadways. Construction vehicles have the potential to use the same routes as first response vehicles, however this impact would be temporary, and the local City of Carlsbad Fire Department would be notified of construction schedules and access routes prior to construction. Construction and operation of the proposed Project is not anticipated to affect the activities of emergency first response services in the long-term, nor would proposed Project activities and facilities have the potential to permanently impact emergency evacuation or response plans. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

The EWPCF site is not located in a high fire hazard severity zone (Cal Fire 2007) and does not share an interface with wildlands that could be prone to fires although some vegetation, including landscaping, exists along the perimeter of the facility site. Given these site characteristics, Project activities and facilities are not anticipated to increase risk associated with wildland fires. There would be no impact.

2.3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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; | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| 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 | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| iv) impede or redirect flood flows? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |

Discussion

Construction of the proposed Project may disturb an area of approximately one-quarter acre in size. Encina has an existing drainage plan (Encina Wastewater Authority 2024) for the EWPCF site. Encina’s construction contractor would be required to adhere to the EWPCF drainage plan, which identifies BMPs and drainage infrastructure so that runoff is collected and conveyed to the wastewater treatment system for appropriate treatment. The EWPCF drainage plan controls any potential for erosion and sediment and other construction-related pollutants in stormwater discharges. Contractors would be required to comply throughout construction. Construction dewatering is not anticipated, and all disturbed areas would be returned to pre-construction conditions. Compliance with the EWPCF drainage plan would ensure construction of the Project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor significantly degrade surface water or groundwater quality. Construction impacts on surface water quality would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed Project would not be expected to impact groundwater quality through proper implementation of BMPs and state and local water quality control requirements. Additionally, the Project would not require extraction or recharge of groundwater, and there would be no change in impervious surface area affecting groundwater recharge. Impacts to groundwater quality and groundwater supplies would be less than significant. No impacts to applicable water quality control plans or sustainable groundwater management plans would be expected.

The proposed Project would be constructed on the existing paved EWPCF, with no change in impervious surface area. Thus, implementation of the Project is not expected to change the site runoff characteristics, nor impact the capacity of existing stormwater systems. Furthermore, the Project is not expected to result in a substantial change to drainage patterns that could lead to erosion, siltation, or impeded or redirect flood flows.

The Project is not located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year flood plain and the nearest 100-year flood zone is associated with the coastline, which lies approximately one quarter mile from the Project site. Although the EWPCF is located less than a mile from the coast, past wave heights and run-up elevations from tsunamis have fallen within normal tide ranges, and the EWPCF is located at an average elevation about 30 feet above mean sea level. The Project site is thus not expected to be affected by tsunamis. There are no other nearby water bodies that could subject the site to seiches. Therefore, the Project site is unlikely to become inundated and the potential for release of pollutants is low. Impacts would be less than significant.

2.3.11 Land Use and Planning

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Project would be constructed entirely within the footprint of the EWPCF and would thus not divide an established community, nor would it result in increased capacity for wastewater treatment to serve new housing and population growth.

The Project area is located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Carlsbad and would be consistent with the Public Utilities land use and zoning designations identified in the City of Carlsbad General Plan. The Project area is also located within the Coastal Zone, as designated under the California Coastal Act, and subject to the policies of City of Carlsbad Local Coastal Plan. The site is not located in an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area of the Local Coastal Plan nor other designated sensitive, scenic, or hazard-prone area. The proposed Project would be consistent with the LCP-2-P.9 of the 2021 Final Draft Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan which encourages development of sustainable energy sources and emerging technologies on developable land to help meet the community needs. The proposed Project would not conflict with the plans and policies of the currently adopted and proposed General Plan and Local Coastal Plans. Additionally, as discussed in Section 1.4, Biological Resources, the proposed Project would not result in a conflict with the MHCP. No impact would occur.

2.3.12 Mineral Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Project would construct the proposed facilities on current EWPCF land and would not result in the loss of a known mineral resource. Additionally, the EWPCF is not located in a designated

mineral resource zone per City of Carlsbad General Plan, Open Space and Conservation Element (City of Carlsbad 2015). No impact would occur.

2.3.13 Noise

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Noise Guidelines Manual of the City of Carlsbad identifies compatible exterior noise levels for various land use types. Community noise exposure levels at residential land uses are considered normally acceptable up to 60 dBA CNEL. Planned Industrial uses are considered normally acceptable up to 65 dBA CNEL and conditionally acceptable up to 75 dBA CNEL. Utilities and general industrial land uses are normally acceptable up to 70 dBA CNEL and conditionally acceptable up to 80 dBA CNEL (City of Carlsbad 2013). City of Carlsbad Municipal Code limits construction noise by limiting hours of construction. Construction activities are allowed to occur

Monday through Friday between the hours of 7 a.m. to sunset, and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to sunset. No construction is allowed on Sundays or on legal holidays.

Ambient noise in the Project area is dominated by traffic on the I-5 Freeway, while other sources of ambient noise in the EWPCF vicinity include traffic on Avenida Encinas and Palomar Airport Road, aircraft traffic from McClellan-Palomar Airport, and trains along the Amtrak/NCTD railroad tracks.

The proposed Project would generate a minor increase in noise during construction to install the linear generators, switchgear and motor control centers, batteries, retrofit the existing engines, and install the biogas conditioning facility (slab on grade skid mounted system with pressure vessels, pumps, gas compressors, and four to six filtration units), as well as to demolish the existing storage building and associated hauling of debris off-site. Minor excavation would occur, and no drilling or pile driving would occur. Construction would require typical construction equipment and would likely include material delivery trucks, cement mixer, forklift, loader, crane and haul trucks. None of the expected equipment typically create substantial groundborne vibration (FTA 2018).

The nearest noise sensitive receptors are residences which are located approximately 600 feet from the Project site. Given that typical sound levels attenuate at the rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance (FTA 2018), noise from construction equipment at the nearest off-site residential receptor is not expected to result in an exceedance of the normally acceptable 60 dBA CNEL threshold for residential areas. In addition, construction would be limited to daytime hours, as permitted by the City of Carlsbad Municipal Code. Construction noise and vibration impacts are expected to be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed facility would generate minimal noise from operation of the linear generators and motor control centers housed in sound enclosures. The proposed biogas facility would generate noise from operation of blowers, pumps and gas compressors, but anticipated noise would not exceed the ambient noise levels of the Project site and adjacent areas. The proposed biogas treatment facility would replace existing EWPCF buildings and equipment, thus the net change in ambient noise conditions is expected to be negligible. The proposed biogas conditioning facility would operate around the clock but would generate similar noise levels to the existing biogas facilities at EWPCF. As stated previously, the closest sensitive noise receptors are 600 feet from the site; they are unlikely to experience a noticeable change in noise levels due to their distance from the Project. Operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

The EWPCF is located approximately 2.25 miles west of the McLellan-Palomar Airport, but the proposed Project would not expose the public to airport noise. The Project site is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. There would be no impacts.

2.3.14 Population and Housing

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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)?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The proposed Project would not include the construction of new homes or businesses. The Project consists of improving energy efficiency and maximizing biogas for beneficial reuse. The Project would not expand wastewater treatment infrastructure in a manner that would induce unplanned growth. The proposed Project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth. There would be no impact.

Additionally, the proposed Project would be constructed and operated within the existing boundaries of the EWPCF and would not displace people or housing or require additional land. There would be no impact related to population and housing.

2.3.15 Public Services

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
--	---	--	---	----------------------

Would the Project:

a) 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 following public services:

i) Fire protection?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
ii) Police protection?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
iii) Schools?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
iv) Parks?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
v) Other public facilities?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The proposed Project would not change existing land uses, cause an increase in the number of residential units or an increase in population, nor otherwise create activities that would increase demand for public services. The Project consists of improving energy efficiency and maximizing biogas for beneficial reuse. The proposed battery storage facility would be installed and operated in accordance with applicable permits and is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Because the proposed Project would not induce or accommodate growth, the demand for fire and police protection, schools, parks or other facilities would not be affected and thus, no new facilities would be required to be constructed that could cause adverse environmental impacts. There would be no impacts to public services.

2.3.16 Recreation

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The proposed Project consists of implementing low emissions technology for power as well as upgrading biogas treatment to maximize beneficial reuse. The proposed Project would not increase the use of existing parks or recreational facilities and would not result in demand for construction or expansion of new recreational facilities. There would be no impact on recreation facilities.

2.3.17 Transportation

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit,	[]	[]	[]	[X]

roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

- | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |

Discussion

Access to the EWPCF is provided by the I-5 Freeway, Palomar Airport Road and Avenida Encinas. Construction of the proposed Project would generate a minor increase in traffic primarily from worker vehicles to and from the site and limited numbers of truck trips for material deliveries and hauling of demolition debris. The Project would generate a minor increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (as per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3) for construction worker vehicles traveling to and from the site, but Project would be expected to generate less than 110 construction worker vehicle trips per day. According to OPR Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact (OPR 2018). Therefore, construction of the Project would not result in a considerable increase in VMT and not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 Impacts would be less than significant.

Construction traffic would not be expected to impair emergency access nor increase road hazards. The local City of Carlsbad Fire Department would be notified of construction schedules and access routes prior to construction of the Project, which would minimize any potential hazards associated with construction equipment on surrounding roadways. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed Project is not expected to require additional worker trips to and from the site as the operation of the proposed facilities would be incorporated into existing O&M activities at the EWPCF. Thus, the Project would not be expected to increase VMT in the Project area and thus not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. Impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, no conflicts with plans and policies addressing circulation system would be expected.

2.3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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.	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

According to a May 2018 search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), the Project site is not listed or eligible for listing as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k) (Rincon 2018). Construction of the proposed Project would take place entirely within above-ground areas of the paved EWPCF and would require only minor excavation of soil for slab foundation and pipe support fittings, duct banks and piping systems. No impacts to tribal cultural resources are expected.

Nevertheless, in the unexpected event that tribal-cultural resources are identified during construction, they would be treated in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5 (f), halting ground disturbance in the immediate area of the find until they can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor. If human remains are discovered, the Project would comply with applicable California Health and Safety Code and Public Resource Code sections.

2.3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it	[]	[]	[]	[X]

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? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |

Discussion

The proposed Project would not require the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. The Project would construct new on-site facilities in existing paved areas to improve energy efficiency at the existing EWPCF, as well as maximize digester biogas for beneficial reuse as a power source for the new linear generator facility. The proposed Project would not induce or accommodate population growth, and therefore, there would be no increased demand for utility services and no new facilities would be required to be constructed that could cause adverse environmental impacts. Additionally, the Project would not affect water supply availability or wastewater treatment capacity. There would be no impacts related to utility systems.

Construction of the proposed Project would generate minor amounts of construction-related waste during installation of proposed facilities, including some demolition waste for demolition of the existing storage building. The Project would comply with mandatory construction waste diversion and recycling requirements as well as other local, state, and federal regulations related to solid waste, including hazardous and non-hazardous waste such as asbestos containing materials and lead based paint (See also discussion in Section 1.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials). Solid waste would not be generated in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local landfills, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

Operation of the proposed Project is not anticipated to generate solid waste in the long-term. Therefore, solid waste generation would be limited to temporary construction activities and would not affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. Impacts to local infrastructure capacity would be less than significant.

2.3.20 Wildfire

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The EWPCF is not located in a state responsibility area or very high fire hazard severity zone (Cal Fire 2024). There would be no impacts.

2.3.21 Cumulative Impacts and Findings of Significance

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

Discussion

The Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment. The site is paved and there is limited landscape vegetation. There would be no impacts to habitat resources for fish or wildlife species. No cultural or historical resources are known to exist within the boundaries of the Project site, and the Project requires minor excavation that is unlikely to uncover buried archaeological or paleontological resources.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not result in individually limited, but cumulatively considerable significant impacts. All resource topics associated with the Project have been analyzed in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines and were found to have no impacts or less than significant impacts. The Project does not have a reasonable possibility of a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The scale of the Project is small, would not be cumulatively considerable with other projects in the area and is not associated with successive projects of the same type in the same place that could lead to cumulative impacts.

Construction of the Project would result in minor changes in ambient noise, traffic and air quality. However, compliance with existing regulations would result in less than significant impacts. Consequently, the Project would not result in any environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings directly or indirectly.

3. REFERENCES

- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2011. Final Regulation Order – Regulation For In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets. Available online at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-03/finalregorder-dec2011.pdf>. Accessed October 3, 2024.
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2018. Community Air Protection Blueprint. Available online at https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-10/final_community_air_protection_blueprint_october_2018.pdf. Accessed October 3, 2024.
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2022. 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality. Available online at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/2022-sp.pdf>. Accessed October 3, 2024.
- California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2024. GHGs Descriptions & Sources in California. Available online at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ghg-descriptions-sources>. Accessed October 3, 2024.
- California Department of Conservation (CDOC). 2024. EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application. Accessed on October 2, 2024. Available online at [EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application](#)
- California Department of Conservation (CDOC). 2024. *Fault Activity Map of California*. Accessed October 2, 2024. Available online at <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/>.
- California Department of Conservation (CDOC). 2022a. California Important Farmland Finder (CIFF). Accessed September 27, 2024 at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>
- California Department of Conservation (CDOC). 2022b. *Compilation of Quaternary Surficial Deposits*. Accessed November 7, 2023 at <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/QSD/>.
- California Department of Conservation (CDOC). 2024. California Williamson Act Enrollment Finder. Accessed on October 3, 2024 at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/App/index.html>
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2007. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map 2007*. Accessed November 9, 2023 at <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/wildfire-preparedness/fire-hazard-severity-zones/fire-hazard-severity-zone-maps/>
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CAL FIRE). 2023. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map 2022*. Accessed September 26, 2024 at <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fire-hazard-severity-zone-maps-2022/>.
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2024. *Envirostor*. Accessed October 14, 2024 at <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>.

-
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2023. State Scenic Highway Map. Accessed November 3, 2023. Available online at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>.
- California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2018. *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. Accessed October 1, 2024 at https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf.
- City of Carlsbad. 2013. *Noise Guidelines Manual*.
- City of Carlsbad. 2015. *General Plan*.
- City of Carlsbad. 2015. *Climate Action Plan*. Revised November 2024. Available at: <https://www.carlsbadca.gov/departments/environmental-sustainability/climate-action-plan>.
- Converse Consultants. 2018. *Asbestos and Lead-Base Paint Survey: Maintenance Annex Building & Old Maintenance Building at 6200 Avenida Encinas Carlsbad*. September 7.
- Encina Wastewater Authority, with support from Woodard & Curran. 2024. *Plant Drainage Map*. October.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2021. *National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) Viewer*. Accessed October 2, 2024 at <https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd>
- Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2018. Cultural Resources Technical Letter: Encina Wastewater Authority Plant Expansion Project, Carlsbad, San Diego County, California. May 25.
- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). 2003. *Multiple Habitat Conservation Program*. Accessed September 25, 2024. Available at: <http://www.sandag.org/?projectid=97&fuseaction=projects.detail>
- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District. 2022. Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS). Accessed October 3, 2024. Available online at <https://www.sdapcd.org/content/dam/sdapcd/documents/grants/planning/Att.%20A%20-%202022%20RAQS.pdf>
- San Diego County. 2010. Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Accessed September 25, 2024. Available online at https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/oes/emergency_management/oes_jl_mitplan.html,
- United States Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA). 2018. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*. Accessed October 14, 2024 at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-report-0123>