

Initial Study for the
Nipomo High School Agriculture
Buffer Reevaluation Project,
Nipomo, San Luis Obispo County,
California

MAY 2026

PREPARED FOR

Lucia Mar Unified School District

PREPARED BY

SWCA Environmental Consultants

**INITIAL STUDY
FOR THE
NIPOMO HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE BUFFER
REEVALUATION PROJECT,
NIPOMO, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA**

Prepared for

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1 INTRODUCTION

Lucia Mar Unified School District (LMUSD) certified the *Lucia Mar Unified School District High School #2 Environmental Impact Report* in 1998 (1998 EIR) (Firma Consultants 1998) and approved the development of Nipomo High School (approved project) in the community of Nipomo, San Luis Obispo County, California. Construction of Nipomo High School began soon after the document was certified. The 1998 EIR determined that school-related activities associated with the approved project could adversely affect adjacent agricultural operations through issues such as litter, trespassing, and reduced ability to perform necessary agricultural practices (e.g., pesticide spraying, due to perceived or real health effects). Mitigation Measure A1 required the establishment of a buffer between any proposed on-site school development and off-site agricultural uses that ranged between 300 and 600 feet to address potential land use conflicts between school activities and adjacent agricultural operations (herein referred to as the agricultural buffer) and installation of fencing and a “dense planted hedge of trees” along the project site’s northern boundary. The proposed Nipomo High School Agriculture Buffer Reevaluation Project (project) would reduce the required agricultural buffer established under Mitigation Measure A1 to 50 feet. Based on the results of this Initial Study, LMUSD has determined that a Supplemental (SEIR) is necessary to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project.

1.1 Project Location

The project site is located on a 77-acre parcel (Assessor Parcel Number [APN] 090-151-017) and encompasses the existing Nipomo High School campus in the unincorporated community of Nipomo, San Luis Obispo County, California (Figure 1). The project site is just north of the Nipomo Urban Reserve Line (URL) and east of U.S. Route 101 (US 101). The project site is surrounded by agricultural fields to the north, east, and south; Nipomo Creek to the west; and single-family residential uses to the southeast (Figure 2).

1.2 Environmental Setting

The Nipomo High School campus includes classrooms, an indoor gymnasium, parking lots, and recreational facilities, including a pool, track, tennis courts, and two baseball fields. Existing school buildings are generally set back approximately 500 feet from the north, south, and east project site property lines. The northern agricultural buffer area is developed with 3.17 acres of solar panels that connect to the greater energy grid and provide energy to Nipomo High School. To the east of the project site, the Nipomo High School campus is bounded by North Thompson Avenue and private property with residential units. There is currently development within the buffer along Cardinal Drive, which runs east–west along the eastern side of the project site about 500 feet from North Thompson Avenue. This development is made up of four buildings that serve as the classrooms for the campus agricultural education program and storage facilities.

The south side of the project site is bounded by agricultural fields, one of which is used as an orchard. Beyond the agricultural fields is a residential neighborhood. The western 1,000 feet of the south side of the project site consists of approximately 25 acres of recreational sports fields. The west side of the project site is bounded by open space and a small agricultural field that leads down into Nipomo Creek. The west side of the project site consists of recreational sports fields. Consistent with Mitigation Measure A1, a 600-foot building setback is required along the western property line, along with a 400-foot parking and/or sports facility setback at the northwest corner. The project site lies within a rural and urbanized area and has a land use designation of Agriculture according to the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan* land use map.

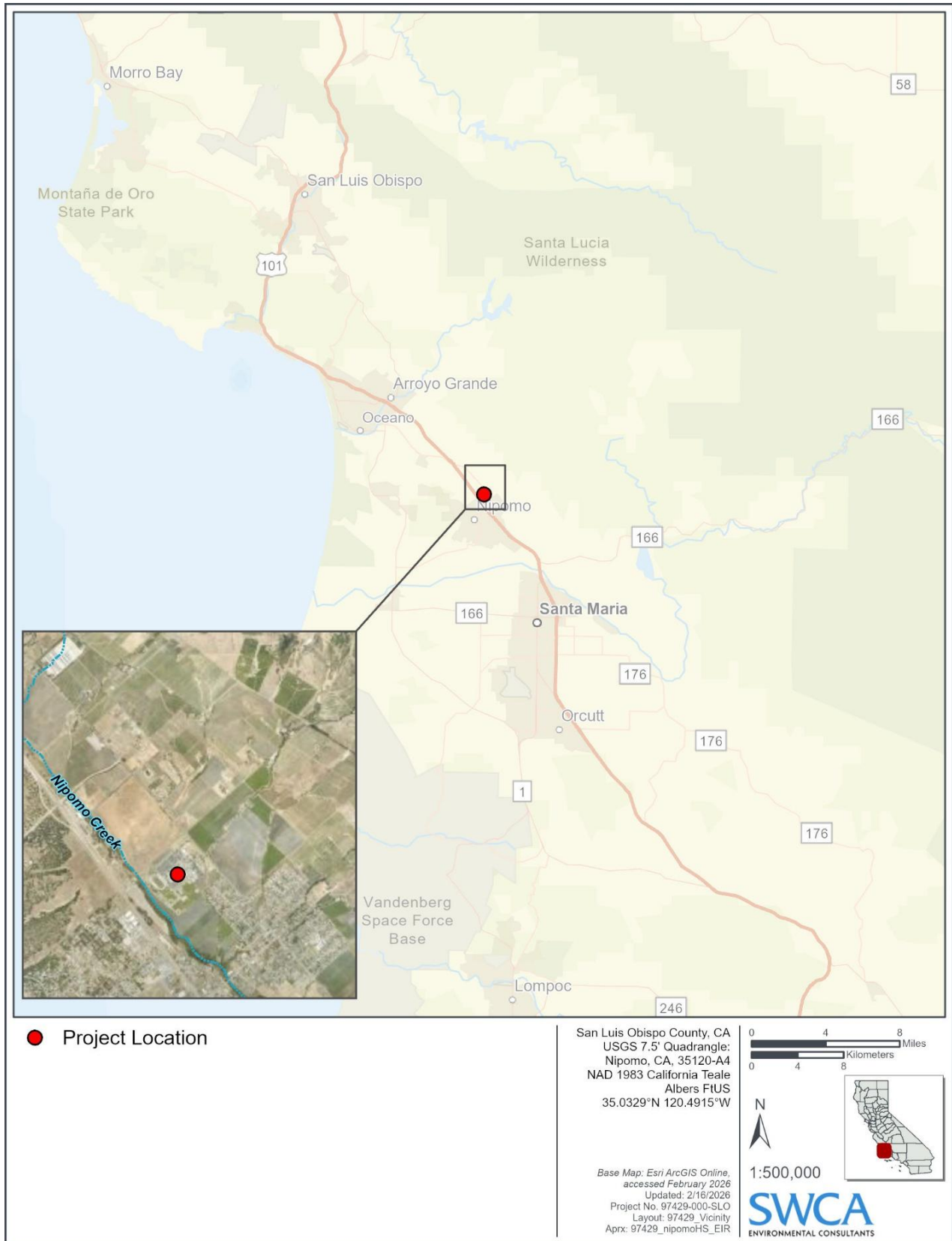


Figure 1. Project vicinity map.



Figure 2. Project location map.

1.3 Project Description

The proposed project would include the reduction of the required agricultural buffer on the Nipomo High School campus to 50 feet on the north, south, and west sides of the project site. No agricultural buffer was previously required for the southeast portion of the campus along the east side of the parcel, where development was permitted under the 1998 EIR. This modification would provide the LMUSD with increased flexibility to locate and site future educational facilities, buildings, and infrastructure within the existing Nipomo High School campus, including within areas that are currently restricted by the agricultural buffer.

Within the 50-foot agricultural buffer, no future development, including parking areas or recreational facilities, would be permitted beyond maintenance of the existing solar panels on the northwest side of the project site. Reduction of the buffer would allow relocation of existing uses (e.g., portable classrooms) and would enable future development, uses, or activities within currently restricted areas of the campus, which could reasonably include additional classroom buildings, athletic or recreational facilities, parking areas, and associated infrastructure. It is important to note that there are no specific development plans for these areas proposed at this time. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to evaluate the environmental effects of allowing for the future development of these areas and determine whether allowing for future development in these areas would have the potential to result in any impacts that are more severe than those, or were not previously, identified in the 1998 EIR.

1.3.1 Project Background

The LMUSD certified the 1998 EIR and approved the development of the approved project in 1998, and construction of Nipomo High School began soon after the 1998 EIR was certified. The 1998 EIR determined that school-related activities associated with the approved project could adversely affect adjacent agricultural operations through issues such as litter, trespassing, and reduced ability to perform necessary agricultural practices (e.g., pesticide spraying, due to perceived or real health effects). The existing agricultural buffer on the project site, established by Mitigation Measure A1 of the 1998 EIR, was originally identified to address potential land use conflicts between school activities and adjacent agricultural operations. The 1998 EIR determined that school uses, particularly parking lots, classrooms, and recreational facilities near active or potential agricultural lands, could indirectly result in litter, trespassing, property damage, and/or constraints on agricultural practices such as pesticide application due to real or perceived health concerns. The 1998 EIR concluded that these adverse effects could interfere with off-site farming operations and, if sufficiently severe, could disincentivize the continued use of adjacent lands for agricultural production, resulting in a potentially significant impact. Mitigation Measure A1 states that:

To mitigate potential land use conflicts which could cause disincentives to continue agricultural production on land next to the project site (impacts A1 and A2), the site plan shall establish a minimum building setback from the north and east property lines of 500 feet and a parking lot setback of 300 feet; and establish a minimum building setback from the west property line of 600 feet, and a parking and/or sport facility setback of 400 feet from the northwest property corner nearest to C&M Nursery. The north property line shall have a dense planted hedge of trees and shrubs and a fence along its length.

Figure 3 depicts the agricultural buffer established by Mitigation Measure A1, as well as the proposed 50-foot agricultural buffer.

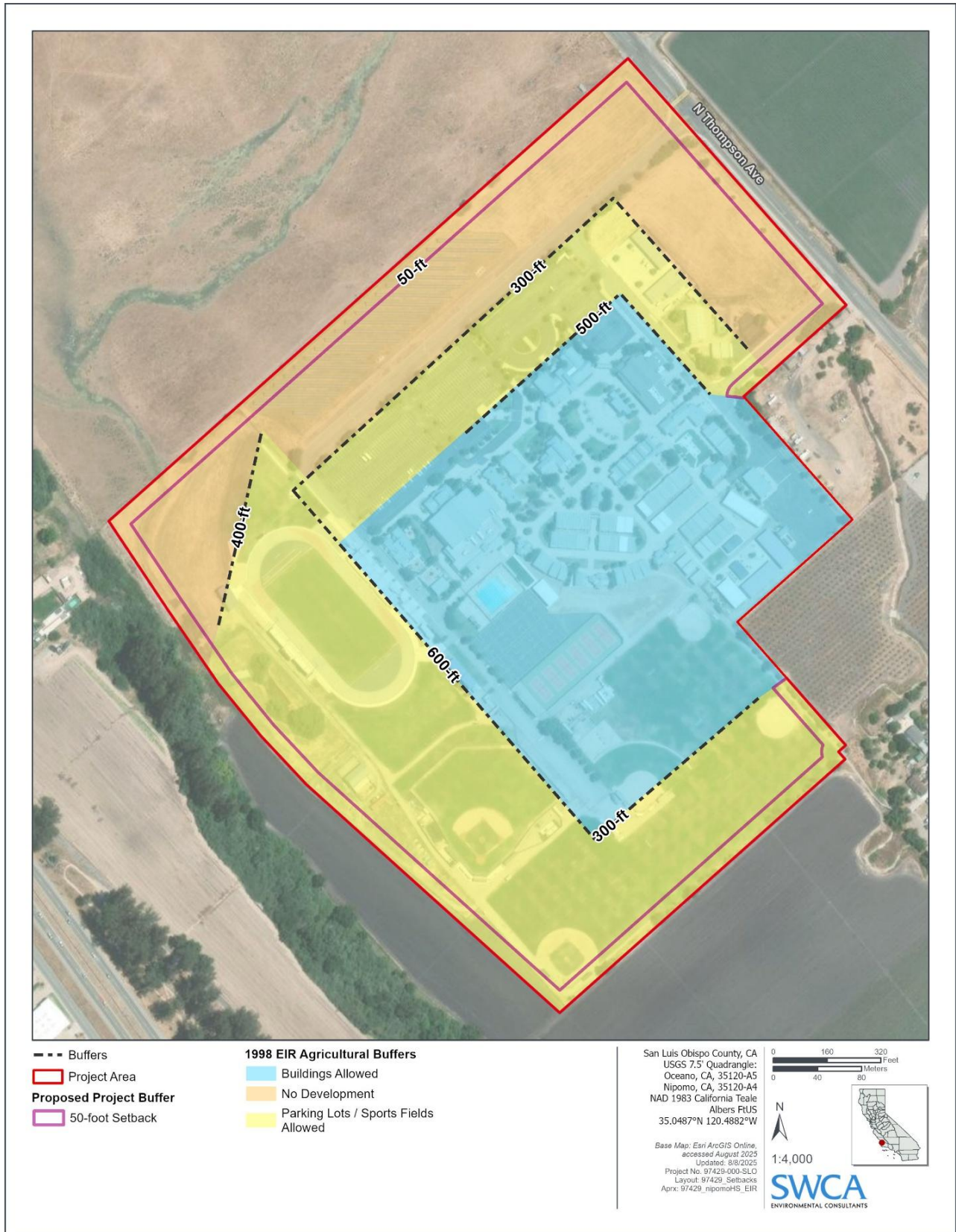


Figure 3. Existing and proposed agricultural buffers.

1.4 Required Discretionary Approvals

The LMUSD, as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is responsible for administering the preparation of the SEIR and certifying the Final SEIR. Lead Agency decision-makers would use the Final SEIR as an informational document to assist in the decision-making process, ultimately resulting in the approval, denial, or assignment of conditions to the proposed project. The LMUSD would be responsible for ensuring compliance with mitigation measures identified in the SEIR.

Implementation of the project would not involve any actions that would require permits or other discretionary actions from other public agencies.

1.5 Intended Uses of this Document

This Initial Study (IS) analyzes the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and determines which resource issue areas necessitate further analysis in the SEIR.

This Initial Study/Notice of Preparation (IS/NOP) has been prepared in accordance with CEQA Section 15082(a) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines 15063(c)(3), this IS/NOP is intended to:

- Focus the SEIR on the effects determined to be significant,
- Identify the effects determined not to be significant,
- Explain the reasons for determining that potentially significant effects would not be significant, and
- Identify whether a program EIR, tiering, or another appropriate process can be used for analysis of the project's environmental effects.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact,” as indicated by the environmental resource area evaluations in this Initial Study.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

Environmental Determination

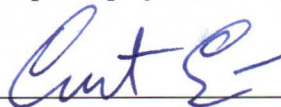
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there would 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 would 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 measure based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Date:

5/1/2026

Signed:



I. Aesthetics

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:</i>				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The unincorporated community of Nipomo is located along US 101, between the cities of Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria, approximately 6 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. The regional landscape can be broadly defined as an ancient marine terrace between the coast and the Temettate and Newsome Ridges to the east. Sand dune complexes along the beach transition to wide mesas inland. Creeks and drainages in the region often have an east–west orientation on their way to the ocean. The Santa Maria River generally bounds the region to the south. The native landscape primarily includes coast live oak woodland and coastal sage chaparral with riparian corridors along the drainageways. Eucalyptus trees were introduced into the area as a forest crop and have since become established over much of the Nipomo Mesa. The large stature of eucalyptus groves creates a dominant visual element throughout the area landscape and along the skyline.

The Nipomo region has a generally rural/suburban visual character, with agriculture, open space, and residential areas making up much of the land use. The community of Nipomo serves as a commercial center between Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria. In the past decade or so, the Nipomo area has been recognized as one of the faster-growing areas of San Luis Obispo County. Several residential subdivisions, including large golf resorts, have been constructed west of Nipomo. This increased development has had an incremental effect on the rural appearance of the region. Although the region is becoming somewhat more urbanized, the area still maintains a well-vegetated visual character, due in large part to the mature eucalyptus trees and the native oaks scattered throughout the area.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. Scenic vistas are generally defined as high-quality views displaying good aesthetic and compositional value that can be seen from public viewpoints. Vistas are inherently expansive views, usually from an open area or an elevated point. Some scenic vistas are officially or informally designated by public agencies or other organizations. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista would occur if the

proposed project would significantly degrade the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads or other public areas. A proposed project's potential effect on a scenic vista is largely dependent on the degree to which it would complement or contrast with the natural setting, the degree to which it would be noticeable in the existing environment, and whether it detracts from or complements the scenic vista.

The 1998 EIR determined that the project site and surrounding area are characterized by a rural visual setting, with views that include open agricultural fields, tree lines along Nipomo Creek, the Nipomo Mesa west of US 101, and distant ridgelines. The 1998 EIR concluded that no designated scenic vistas or visually unique features, as defined by *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element*, were present on the project site itself, and that the project site is not located within a designated scenic highway corridor or other protected scenic resource area. Accordingly, the 1998 EIR concluded that the approved project would not result in impacts related to a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer to 50 feet, allowing future school development to be located within perimeter areas of the project site. Consistent with the conditions reflected in the 1998 EIR, the project site is not located within an officially designated scenic vista or otherwise located within an area that provides expansive views with high scenic quality. Therefore, the proposed project would not create new or more severe impacts to scenic vistas than the impacts previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is located approximately 0.2 mile east of US 101. In this area, US 101 is identified by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway, but it is not officially designated. The 1998 EIR evaluated visual impacts associated with US 101 in accordance with the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element*, which identifies the highway corridor as visually sensitive and establishes development standards for projects within 300 feet of the roadway, as well as design standards for designated community gateway areas. The project site is located outside the 300-foot visually sensitive corridor and is not within a designated gateway area; therefore, these standards do not apply.

The project site is not visible from any officially designated State Scenic Highway and occupies the same location as the site evaluated in the 1998 EIR. Accordingly, the proposed project would not create new or more severe impacts to scenic resources than were previously analyzed in the EIR, impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project site is located in a non-urbanized area, as defined by the State CEQA Guidelines. The 1998 EIR evaluated the approved project in this rural context and determined that development of Nipomo High School could substantially alter the visual character of the surrounding area if school buildings did not conform to the architectural vision for Old Town Nipomo. This impact was identified as potentially significant; however, implementation of Mitigation Measure K1,

which requires school buildings to conform to the general guidelines of the Design Plan for Old Town Nipomo, reduced impacts to visual character to less than significant.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer and would allow for future development within the perimeter areas of the project site. Any such development would be subject to Mitigation Measure K1 and be required to conform with the guidelines of the Design Plan for Old Town Nipomo, which was prepared jointly by the County of San Luis Obispo (County) and the Olde Towne Nipomo Association in 1999. At this time, the proposed project does not include any specific development plans. Therefore, the proposed project would not create any new or more severe impacts to visual character than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is in an area with limited outdoor lighting, consisting of lighting along US 101 and suburban development to the south and east. The 1998 EIR evaluated the approved project in this setting and determined that development of Nipomo High School would introduce new sources of light, including illuminated parking areas, exterior building lighting, security lighting, and a lighted athletic stadium. Lighting along the south and east boundaries of the project site had the potential to affect nearby residences and surrounding land uses. Implementation of Mitigation Measure K2, which required the use of shielded, cutoff-type luminaires for parking and exterior lighting, reduced glare impacts from these sources to less than significant. Stadium lighting was identified as an unavoidable significant impact due to the height and design requirements of the luminaires; however, Mitigation Measure K3 required the stadium to be located as far as feasible from the east and south property boundaries and incorporated tall-growing trees to block lines of sight from nearby residences and public streets.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the required agricultural buffer on the Nipomo High School campus to 50 feet on all sides of the project site except for the area on the east side of the parcel where no previous buffer was required and development was permitted in the 1998 EIR. Reduction of the agricultural buffer on the southern portion of the project site would allow for future development to be located in closer proximity to off-site residential uses located southeast of the project site in comparison to the 1998 EIR; however, future development on the Nipomo High School campus would be subject to the outdoor lighting shielding and cut-off requirements set forth by Mitigation Measure K2 of the 1998 EIR and would be subject to review under CEQA. Therefore, reduction of the agricultural buffer alone would not result in any new or more severe impacts than what was previously evaluated in the 1998 EIR, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with aesthetics would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe visual impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p><i>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 Dept. 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:</i></p>				
(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The California Department of Conservation (CDOC) classifies and maps agricultural lands in the state in the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The FMMP identifies five farmland categories—Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Farmland of Local Potential. The project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land, Farmland of Local Importance, and Other by the FMMP Map. A very small sliver of land in the southwest corner of the project site is designated as Prime Farmland; however, this land has not been farmed since the approved project was constructed in 2002. The project site has Prime Farmland to the north and east, Built-Up Land to the east and south, and Farmland of Local Importance to the west (CDOC 2022). No forestry resources are in or immediately adjacent to the project site.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential impacts associated with agricultural resources based on consistency with the goals and policies set forth in the *County of San Luis Obispo Agricultural and Open Space Element*, as well as the State CEQA Guidelines adopted at the time. The 1998 EIR determined that the approved project would result in the conversion of 76.8 acres of non-prime agricultural land that would otherwise be suitable for dryland farming to non-agricultural use. The 1998 EIR concluded that this loss of potential agricultural land constituted a potentially significant impact (Impact A3) and would contribute to potentially significant cumulative impacts on agricultural resources (Impact A4) when considered in the context of countywide farmland conversion trends documented by the FMMP. No feasible mitigation measures were identified to reduce or avoid these impacts, and they were determined to be significant and unavoidable.

The project site for the approved project, which was evaluated in the 1998 EIR, and the project site for the proposed project are the same. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer on the project site to 50 feet on most sides of the project site, and these areas are currently mapped as Urban and Built Up Land, Other Land, or Farmland of Local Potential by the FMMP. As a result, the proposed project would not result in any additional or more severe impacts associated with conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use beyond what was previously analyzed and approved in the 1998 EIR, nor would it increase the acreage of agricultural land removed from production.

Therefore, although the approved project resulted in a significant and unavoidable impact related to the conversion of agricultural land, the proposed project would not result in new or more severe impacts to farmland or agricultural resources than those disclosed in the 1998 EIR, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The project site is within the Agricultural land use designation (County of San Luis Obispo 2026); however, the project site is on land that is under the jurisdiction of the LMUSD and is not subject to the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan* or the Land Use Ordinance pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094.

The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract; the nearest land under an active Williamson Act Contract is directly across North Thompson Avenue, approximately 100 feet from the project site (CDOC 2022). Accordingly, the proposed project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning or any Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, no new or more severe impacts to farmland or agricultural resources beyond those previously analyzed, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The project site is not in or adjacent to any land zoned for forest land or timberland and would not conflict with any such zoning designation. Therefore, no impact would occur and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The project site is not in or around any forest land and would not convert any forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Potentially Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR determined that school-related activities associated with the approved project could adversely affect adjacent agricultural operations through issues such as litter, trespassing, and reduced ability to perform necessary agricultural practices (e.g., pesticide spraying, due to perceived or real health effects; Impact A1). The 1998 EIR identified Mitigation Measure A1, which required the establishment of a buffer between any proposed on-site school development and off-site agricultural uses that ranged between 300 and 600 feet to address potential land use conflicts between school activities and adjacent agricultural operations (herein referred to as the agricultural buffer), and required installation of fencing and a “dense planted hedge of trees” along the project site’s northern boundary. The 1998 EIR concluded that with implementation of Mitigation Measure A1, Impact A1 would be reduced to less than significant.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer to 50 feet and would allow for future development of educational facilities within an area previously designated as buffer. While the proposed project would not directly convert farmland to non-agricultural use, reducing the buffer would modify a mitigation measure identified in the 1998 EIR to reduce land use conflicts with adjacent agricultural operations. As a result, the buffer reduction could increase the potential for conflicts that were previously mitigated. Accordingly, this topic will be analyzed further in the SEIR to determine whether the reduction in buffer would result in new or more severe impacts than those previously determined by the 1998 EIR.

Conclusion

The proposed project would have the potential to result in new or more severe impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources than were previously analyzed in the EIR; therefore, this resource will be analyzed in the SEIR.

III. Air Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>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:</i>				
(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Nipomo is located within the South-Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB), which includes San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Air quality within the SCCAB is regulated by several jurisdictions, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD) (SLOAPCD 2025).

For the protection of public health and welfare, the Clean Air Act (CAA) required that the USEPA establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for various pollutants. These pollutants are referred to as “criteria” pollutants because the USEPA publishes criteria documents to justify the choice of standards. These standards define the maximum amount of air pollutants that can be present in ambient air without harm to the public’s health.

San Luis Obispo County is currently designated as “non-attainment” for the state standards for ground-level ozone, partial nonattainment for federal ambient standards for ground-level ozone, and nonattainment for the state standards for particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or smaller (PM₁₀). Air pollutants that create ozone when combined in the air are called ozone precursors, and these include reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).

SLOAPCD’s 2001 Clean Air Plan (2001 CAP) addresses the attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The 2001 CAP outlines SLOAPCD’s strategies to reduce ozone-precursor pollutants (i.e., ROG and NO_x) from a wide variety of sources. The 2001 CAP includes a stationary-source control program, which includes control measures for permitted stationary sources, as well as transportation and land use management strategies to reduce motor vehicle emissions and use. The stationary-source control program is administered by the SLOAPCD. Transportation and land use control measures are implemented at the regional or local level by promoting and facilitating the use of alternative transportation options, increased pedestrian access and accessibility to community services and local destinations, reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and promotion of congestion management efforts (SLOAPCD 2002).

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. CARB has identified the following groups who are most likely to be affected by air pollution (i.e., sensitive receptors): children under 14, the elderly over 65 years of age, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases (CARB 2025). The project site is on the Nipomo High School Campus, which contains sensitive receptors, as there are many students under the age of 14 that are present and recreating on the campus.

Asbestos is the common name for a group of naturally occurring fibrous silicate minerals that can separate into thin but strong and durable fibers. Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) has been identified as a toxic air contaminant (TAC) by the CARB. Any ground disturbance proposed in an area identified as having the potential to contain NOA must comply with the CARB Airborne Toxics Control Measure (ATCM) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations. The SLOAPCD NOA Map indicates that the project site is not within an area identified as having potential for NOA to occur (SLOAPCD 2018).

Environmental Evaluation

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

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated consistency with the applicable regional air quality plan based on population and land use projections derived from the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan* and the SLOAPCD Clean Air Plan. The 1998 EIR concluded that although the project site is located outside the existing URL and is therefore technically inconsistent with the Clean Air Plan, the project site designated by the General Plan is similarly located outside the urban boundary and contiguous to the URL. The 1998 EIR further determined that development of the high school would not change population growth in the project area or exceed the projections included in the regional air quality plan, as students would be drawn from existing population growth and would otherwise continue traveling to Arroyo Grande High School.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer to 50 feet and would allow for future development of educational facilities within an area previously designated as buffer. The proposed project does not directly include development of any new uses and would not alter the underlying assumptions regarding population growth, student enrollment, or regional travel patterns that formed the basis of the 1998 EIR consistency determination. Future expansion of educational facilities on-site would be subject to review under CEQA and be evaluated for their potential consistency with the 2001 CAP. Therefore, impacts would remain less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR evaluated air quality impacts associated with development of the Nipomo High School campus based on an assumed enrollment capacity of approximately 1,800 students serving the existing and planned student population within the LMUSD and considered both construction-related and long-term operational emissions. The 1998 EIR concluded that the approved project would not alter regional population growth or travel patterns and that operational emissions, including vehicle trips, would not exceed applicable thresholds.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer to 50 feet and would allow for future development of educational facilities within an area previously designated as buffer. The proposed project does not directly include development of any new uses; however, future construction of educational facilities that may be facilitated by the proposed project would have the potential to generate criteria pollutants such as PM₁₀ for which the project area is in non-attainment. The 1998 EIR identified Mitigation Measure F1 to reduce construction emissions and fugitive dust emissions. With implementation of Mitigation Measure F1, impacts of the proposed project would be reduced to less than significant.

Although the proposed project would eliminate a barrier for future development of education facilities on-site, it would not, by itself, result in the increase of student enrollment beyond the level previously evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which analyzed a campus capacity of approximately 1,800 students serving the existing and planned student population within the LMUSD. As a result, the proposed project would not result in a long-term increase in operational emissions, including vehicle trips, beyond those previously analyzed.

If future development would increase campus capacity beyond that previously analyzed, such expansion would constitute a separate project and would be subject to additional environmental review pursuant to CEQA, as appropriate. With continued implementation of Mitigation Measure F1, construction-related emissions would be temporary and less than cumulatively considerable. Accordingly, the proposed project would not result in any new or more severe impacts than what was evaluated in the 1998 EIR, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR evaluated carbon monoxide (CO) emissions generated by project-related traffic under existing, startup, and buildout conditions using the CALINE4 air quality model. The analysis determined that projected 1-hour and 8-hour CO concentrations at nearby intersections would remain well below the NAAQS and CAAQS under all scenarios, that increases attributable to the proposed project would be minimal, and that no CO hot spots would occur. Accordingly, the 1998 EIR concluded that the proposed project would not result in significant local air quality impacts, would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to unhealthy pollutant concentrations, and would not require mitigation for operational air quality effects.

The project site is located on the Nipomo High School campus, which is in proximity to on- and off-site sensitive receptors, including the existing school uses on-site and residences located immediately adjacent to the project site to the southeast and approximately 0.25 mile to the west. Any construction of future educational facilities on-site within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptor location would be required to implement SLOAPCD's expanded list of fugitive dust mitigation measures. In addition, future development on-site would be subject to Mitigation Measure F1 from the 1998 EIR to reduce construction emissions and fugitive dust. Mitigation Measure F1 requires implementation of SLOAPCD fugitive dust control measures, including minimizing disturbed areas, regular watering or use of reclaimed water, application of soil binders, stabilization or revegetation of exposed soils, covering haul trucks, limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces, installing wheel washers, and street sweeping as needed. Therefore, reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer would not expose on-site or off-site sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential air quality impacts associated with development of the approved project, including construction-related emissions from grading, equipment exhaust, and fugitive dust, as well as long-term operational emissions from project-related vehicular trips. The 1998 EIR concluded that construction activities would generate temporary emissions, and that fugitive dust could result in potentially significant impacts without mitigation, while all other construction-related emissions would be less than significant with implementation of required dust suppression measures. Impacts were considered less than significant with the implementation of Mitigation Measure F1.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer to 50 feet and would allow for future development of educational facilities within an area previously designated as buffer. While reduction of the agricultural buffer would allow for the future development of school facilities closer to off-site uses, reduction of the buffer would not inherently result in other emissions, such as odors, adversely affecting a substantial number of people. The proposed project would not directly result in any development and any development that may occur after the proposed project within the previously established agricultural buffer areas would be subject to all CEQA compliance for air quality standards.

Further, the project site is not located in an area with known potential for NOA, and any future construction activities would not have the potential to expose workers, or surrounding land uses to harmful levels of NOA. The proposed project would not include any demolition activities that could disturb asbestos-containing material (ACM) or lead-based paint (LBP). The proposed project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with air quality would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe air quality impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed in the SEIR.

IV. Biological Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project site consists of the largely developed Nipomo High School parcel. The Mitigation Measure A1 agricultural buffer around the outer perimeter of the developed high school campus is largely open space with grasses that are regularly mowed. The project site is adjacent to Nipomo Creek and its surrounding riparian area, which runs along the west side of the project site. Deleissigues Creek also flows by the northeast corner of the project site. The project site does not support any documented sensitive natural communities.

Nipomo Creek is adjacent to the western edge of the project site and Deleissigues Creek is adjacent to the eastern edge of the project site. Nipomo Creek is a meandering, heavily shaded, perennial creek with a riparian corridor of approximately 5 meters on each side. There are abundant aquatic invertebrates present in Nipomo Creek, including mosquito larvae (*Aedes* spp.) and water striders (*Gerris remigis*). The observed high-water marks indicates that high flows do occur in the stream. Stream substrates are boulders with some cobbles. The stream banks are very steep (in some places 90% slope) and unstable. Deleissigues Creek is a small, ephemeral creek with little riparian or instream vegetation and gravel and sand substrates. Due to the size of the creek and the lack of riparian vegetation, the wildlife habitats are of low quality.

The project site supports an active high school campus that includes classrooms, an indoor gymnasium, parking areas, and recreational facilities, including a pool, track, tennis courts, and two baseball fields.

Environmental Evaluation

- (a) **Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR evaluated biological resource impacts associated with the approved project, including potential direct and indirect effects on wildlife and habitat within and adjacent to the project site, with particular consideration of the Nipomo Creek corridor. The 1998 EIR identified the following special-status species as having potential to occur on or near the project site:

- Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
- Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)
- Prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)
- San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*)
- Southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*)
- Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*)
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

The 1998 EIR identified the potential for the approved project to result in indirect impacts associated with increased human activity near Nipomo Creek, which would be potentially significant without mitigation. To address these potential impacts, the 1998 EIR identified Mitigation Measure J1, which required installation of temporary and permanent fencing to preclude construction activities and limit access during school operation within a minimum buffer of 100 feet from the edge of riparian vegetation or the property line, whichever is greater. With implementation of Mitigation Measure J1 and applicable erosion control measures, indirect and cumulative impacts to wildlife and special-status species using the Nipomo Creek corridor were reduced to less than significant.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer to 50 feet and would allow future development within perimeter areas of the project site. The perimeter fencing that was installed in compliance with Mitigation Measure J1 of the 1998 EIR would not be altered for the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any new or more severe impacts to special-status species or their habitats in comparison to the approved project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR determined that the project site consists of previously disturbed agricultural land dominated by nonnative vegetation and does not contain riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. While Nipomo Creek and its associated riparian corridor are located adjacent to the western edge of the project site, and Deleissigues Creek occurs along the eastern edge of the project site with limited riparian value, no direct disturbance to these habitats would occur as a result of the approved project. The 1998 EIR identified the potential for indirect impacts to riparian habitat from increased human access to the Nipomo Creek corridor, which could be potentially significant without mitigation. To address these impacts, Mitigation Measure J1 was identified, as described under *Impact Discussion IV(a)*. In addition, Mitigation Measure B2 was identified to reduce impacts related to erosion and water quality of the Nipomo Creek corridor. Upon implementation of Mitigation Measures J1 and B2, the 1998 EIR concluded that potential impacts to riparian habitats (or other sensitive natural communities) would be reduced to less than significant.

Any future construction within the perimeter areas of the project site that may be facilitated by the proposed project would be required to demonstrate compliance with Mitigation Measures J1 and B2, which require implementation of applicable erosion control measures, and comply with all relevant regulations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Accordingly, although riparian habitat is present adjacent to the project site, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly result in substantial adverse effects on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, nor would it introduce new or more severe impacts beyond those previously analyzed. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The project site does not support any wetlands. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact to state or federally protected wetlands, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR identified the potential for the approved project to result in indirect impacts associated with increased human activity near Nipomo Creek. Construction of the approved project was determined to have no direct effects on Monarch butterflies or other wildlife species; however, indirect impacts could be significant without mitigation. With implementation of Mitigation Measures J1 and B2, indirect and cumulative impacts to wildlife using the Nipomo Creek corridor would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new or more severe impacts than those previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. Development projects undertaken by the LMUSD on property owned by the LMUSD are not subject to the land use development policies and regulations set forth by local municipal governments, pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094. School districts are considered agencies of the state and are entitled to immunity from local land use regulations. Accordingly, while the project site is in an unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County, the County’s policies are not binding on the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. The project site is not within an area under an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other approved state, regional, or local HCP. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP or NCCP, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with biological resources would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures identified in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe biological resource impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

V. Cultural Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project site is located in an area historically occupied by two Native American tribes—the northernmost subdivision of the Chumash, the Obispeño (after Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa), and the Salinan. However, the precise location of the boundary between the Chumashan-speaking Obispeño Chumash and their northern neighbors, the Hokaan-speaking Playanos Salinan, is currently the subject of debate, as those boundaries may have changed over time.

San Luis Obispo County possesses a rich and diverse cultural heritage and therefore has a wealth of historic and prehistoric resources, including sites and buildings associated with Native American habitation, Spanish missionaries, immigrant settlers, and military branches of the United States.

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); or,
2. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

Pursuant to CEQA, a resource included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in a historical resource survey shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant. Prior to the development of Nipomo High School in 2002, the project site was historically dry farmed for many years.

Environmental Evaluation

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR identified remnants of the Pacific Coast Railway trestle at Nipomo Creek as a historically significant off-site resource that could be subject to disturbance from school construction activities if not properly protected. The 1998 EIR determined that impacts to the trestle remnants could occur due to excavation, staging, erosion control, or other earth-disturbing activities near the historic resource. To address these potential impacts, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measure H2, which required minimization of potential disturbance of these off-site resources through project design, minimization of excavation and ground disturbance near the resource, and consultation with a qualified archaeologist. Mitigation Measure H2 includes a preconstruction orientation for construction personnel and staking of the most sensitive cultural areas (specifically the metal and wooden structure of trestle) to ensure protection of the historic resource during construction activities. With implementation of this measure, the 1998 EIR concluded that potential impacts to historic resources would be reduced to less than significant.

The proposed project includes reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site, which would allow for future development of structures in closer proximity to the off-site historic resources described in the 1998 EIR. Mitigation Measure H2 would effectively require that future development proposed in proximity to the off-site resource minimize potential disturbance through design and implementation of protection measures. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new or more severe impacts to historic resources than those previously analyzed in the EIR, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Based on the 1998 EIR, no previously recorded archaeological sites have been recorded on the project site and no prehistoric or historic cultural materials were identified during a pedestrian survey of the site conducted to inform the 1998 EIR analysis. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential impacts of the approved project (located on the project site), as well as the potential impacts of several alternatives, including alternative project sites. The records search for one of the alternative project sites (referred to as the “Dana parcel”) identified a nearby previous discovery of an isolated sandstone cobble adjacent to a tributary of Deleissigues Creek. The 1998 EIR determined that based on the project site’s proximity to Deleissigues Creek, the project site was located within an archaeologically sensitive area and identified Mitigation Measure H1, which required the presence of a qualified archaeological monitor during initial grubbing and grading in archaeologically sensitive areas (original parcels 6 and 11) near Thompson Creek and mandated that construction activities cease in the vicinity of any cultural materials encountered until they are evaluated and appropriate measures are implemented in accordance with CEQA. With implementation of Mitigation Measure H1, the 1998 EIR concluded that potential impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

The proposed project includes reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site, which would allow for future development of structures in archaeologically sensitive areas described in the 1998 EIR. Mitigation Measure H1 would effectively require future development that is proposed in archaeologically sensitive areas to minimize potential impacts of previously unidentified resources through monitoring of initial grubbing and grading activities and implementation of halt work protocol in the event a resource is found. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any new or more severe impacts than what was previously evaluated, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer established on the project site and does not include any development. Future development located within the perimeter areas of the project site would be required to comply with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, which identifies the proper protocol in the event of inadvertent discovery of human remains, including the cessation of work within the vicinity of the discovery, identification of human remains by a qualified coroner, and if the remains are identified to be of Native American descent, contact with the Native American Heritage Council (NAHC). Therefore, the impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with cultural resources would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures identified in the 1998 EIR and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

VI. Energy

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Energy sources for Nipomo are served primarily by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and Central Coast Community Energy (3CE). In 2024 PG&E energy generation was supplied with approximately 98% greenhouse gas (GHG)-free electricity to its customers, including energy from renewable energy sources, nuclear energy, and large hydroelectric power (PG&E 2026). Participation in PG&E as an electricity provider is mandatory. 3CE is a locally controlled public agency supplying clean and renewable electricity for residents and businesses in Monterey, San Benito, parts of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz Counties. 3CE is based on a local energy model called Community Choice Energy that partners with the local utility (i.e., PG&E), which continues to provide consolidated billing, electricity transmission and distribution, customer service and grid maintenance services. 3CE provides customers with a choice for clean and renewable energy and community reinvestment through rate benefits and local GHG-reducing energy programs for residential, commercial, and agricultural customers. Participation in 3CE as an electricity provider is voluntary (3CE 2025). A small solar array on the northwest side of the project site supplies energy to the energy grid and helps supply renewable energy to Nipomo. Natural gas services in Nipomo are provided by PG&E and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas).

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property (International Code Council 2026). The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and non-residential structures, the most recent version of which are referred to as the 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. These standards focus on advancing building decarbonization and climate responsiveness through several key areas, including expanded use of heat pumps for space and water heating, integration of photovoltaic and battery storage systems with other demand-flexible technologies, strengthened ventilation standards to improve indoor air quality, and continued improvements to building efficiency measures (California Energy Commission 2025).

Environmental Evaluation

- (a) **Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?**

Less than Significant Impact. Energy resources were evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which concluded that impacts would be less than significant because the proposed project was required to comply with all applicable state laws implementing energy-conserving measures in building design. The proposed project would not include the development of new buildings or facilities. The reduction of the agricultural buffer would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources; impacts would be less than significant; and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Energy resources were evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which concluded that energy impacts would be less than significant due to compliance with applicable state energy conservation laws. The proposed project would include reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site and would not directly result in the development of new uses on-site. Future development on the Nipomo High School Campus would be subject to CBC requirements at the time they are proposed, and future development requiring discretionary review would be subject to review under CEQA, including evaluation for potential impacts associated with consistency with applicable energy plans and policies. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with energy would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

VII. Geology and Soils

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Regionally, the project site is located within the Coast Ranges geomorphic province of California, which are northwest-trending mountain ranges that reach a maximum elevation of about 6,000 feet and are generally parallel to the San Andreas Fault. The ranges are formed by an asymmetrical uplifted block that forms a rugged coastline at the Pacific Ocean and dips eastward towards the Great Valley province. The Coast Ranges are geologically complex with rocks that span from middle Mesozoic to late Quaternary in age.

The Nipomo Mesa is primarily an area of late Pleistocene sand dunes that are generally inactive, stabilized by vegetation, and locally dissected by ephemeral streams; however, a strip of active sand dunes (Oceano and Pismo Dunes) exists between the Nipomo Mesa and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

The Santa Lucia Range is bound by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Salinas River to the east. Structurally, the Santa Lucia Range is bordered on the northeast by the Rinconada fault zone and to the southwest by Hosgri-San Simeon and Oceanic-West Huasna fault zones. Tectonically, the region is dominated by northwest-trending faults, which include the Rinconada, Hosgri-San Simeon, Oceanic-West Huasna, and San Luis Range Faults (ESP 2021). There are no fault lines directly under the proposed project site.

Environmental Evaluation

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

(a)(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.

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential geologic and seismic hazards associated with the approved project. The geotechnical analysis in the 1998 EIR determined that the project site is located in a seismically active region and could be subject to strong ground shaking during the assumed life of the structures due to the proximity of several active and potentially active faults, including the Wilmar Avenue–Santa Maria Fault (Impact I2). The 1998 EIR concluded that the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and that the potential for surface fault rupture is low. Although localized liquefaction and minor seismically induced settlement could occur during strong ground motion, the likelihood of damaging ground failure or differential settlement was determined to be low with proper site preparation and engineering design. Landslide hazards were not identified as a concern due to the site’s relatively flat topography.

Any future development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to comply with current CBC seismic protection requirements as well as Mitigation Measures I1 and I2 from the 1998 EIR, which require preparation of a design-level geotechnical report in accordance with California Division of Mines and Geology Note 48, implementation of appropriate foundation and structural design measures, and design of all structures to withstand a seismic event of up to magnitude 7.5. With implementation of these measures, potential risks related to fault rupture, strong ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, and landslides would remain less than significant, consistent with those previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new or more severe impacts, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(a)(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion VII(a)(i)*.

(a)(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion VII(a)(i)*.

(a)(iv) Landslides?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion VII(a)(i)*.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The geotechnical analysis in the 1998 EIR determined that the project site is relatively flat and does not present landslide hazards. While the site is located in a seismically active region and could experience strong ground shaking, the potential for damaging ground failure, differential settlement, or other conditions that could contribute to substantial soil instability or erosion was determined to be low with proper site preparation and engineering design. The EIR did not identify erosion or topsoil loss as a significant impact, and no unstable slopes or erosion-prone landforms were identified on the site.

Any future development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measures I1 and I2 from the 1998 EIR, including preparation of a design-level geotechnical report in accordance with California Division of Mines and Geology guidelines and implementation of appropriate site preparation, grading, and structural design measures. Additionally, if the proposed project facilitates construction, all applicable permitting conditions set forth in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) would include implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which includes Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater runoff, including measures to prevent soil erosion. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any soil erosion or loss of topsoil and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Analysis from the 1998 EIR determined that, although localized liquefaction and minor seismically induced settlement could occur on the project site during seismic events, the likelihood of damaging ground failure, lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse would be low with proper site preparation and engineering design. Landslide hazards were not identified as a concern due to the site's and surrounding area's relatively flat topography.

Any future development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measures I1 and I2 of the 1998 EIR, as previously described. Implementation of these measures would ensure that site-specific soil and geologic conditions are adequately addressed and that risks associated with liquefaction, settlement, or other forms of ground instability remain less than significant. Additionally, any constitution that is facilitated as a result of the proposed project would be subject to a geotechnical investigation and comply with CBC seismic requirements to address potential seismic-related ground failure, including lateral spread and liquefaction. Therefore, the proposed project is not at risk of on or off site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquification, or collapse, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) soil maps prepared by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the proposed project site is underlain primarily by Cropley clay soils (Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] 2025). The soils analysis in the 1998 EIR identified the presence of expansive soils and low in-place soil densities at depths of approximately five feet below ground surface (Impact I3). The 1998 EIR noted that special engineering considerations are required when construction occurs on expansive soils, particularly

in areas subject to seasonal moisture variations, as these conditions can increase the potential for structural movement and associated damage if unmitigated. To address these conditions, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measure I3, which requires that final structural, foundation, and roadway design and construction conform to the recommendations of a Final Soils Engineering Report prepared by a registered geotechnical engineer. With implementation of Mitigation Measure I3, the 1998 EIR concluded that impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant with mitigation.

The proposed project would allow for the future development on the perimeter areas of the project site. Future development would be required to demonstrate compliance with CBC regulations in place at the time development is being proposed, as well as the previously adopted Mitigation Measure I3, which would reduce potential direct or indirect risks to life or property to less than significant levels. Additionally, future development under the proposed project would be required to account for potential expansive soil conditions in the design and construction practices of the proposed project. The proposed project would not result in new or more severe impacts related to expansive soils beyond those analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(e) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The 1998 EIR determined that the use of septic systems on the project site is not feasible due to the presence of clay soils with low permeability rates. The 1998 EIR concluded that these soil conditions would not allow for adequate percolation of wastewater, and that a leach field system of the size required to serve the proposed project could not be reasonably provided on the site. As a result, the approved project did not utilize septic tanks or alternative on-site wastewater disposal systems and relied upon local sewer system connections and services for wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the established agricultural buffer on-site to 50 feet, and no current development is proposed. However, future development facilitated by the proposed project would be anticipated to connect to the existing wastewater system services lines on the project site, consistent with the conclusions of the 1998 EIR. Therefore, the proposed project would not involve installation of septic or alternative wastewater systems on soils incapable of adequately supporting these uses, and no impacts related to inadequate septic system performance would occur. Accordingly, no new or more severe impacts would result from the proposed project beyond what was evaluated in the 1998 EIR and this issue will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Potential impacts to paleontological resources were evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which concluded that impacts would be less than significant because the site was not in an area known for potentially significant paleontological resources. Since the proposed project would not directly lead to any ground disturbing activities no paleontological resource sites unique geologic features would be impacted, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with geology and soils would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

GHGs are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere, and are different from the criteria pollutants discussed in *Section III, Air Quality*, above. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated gases. These are most commonly emitted through the burning of fossil fuels (i.e., oil, natural gas, and coal), agricultural practices, decay of organic waste in landfills, and a variety of other chemical reactions and industrial processes (e.g., the manufacturing of cement). CO₂ is the most abundant GHG and is estimated to represent approximately 80–90% of the principal GHGs that are currently affecting the earth’s climate. According to the CARB, transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHG in the state (CARB 2025).

The passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, in 2006 recognized the need to reduce GHG emissions and set the GHG emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law required that by 2020, state emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels. This is to be accomplished by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources through regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions. Subsequent legislation (e.g., Senate Bill [SB] 97, Greenhouse Gas Emissions bill) directed the CARB to develop statewide thresholds (CARB 2025).

The SLOAPCD is a local public agency with the primary mission of realizing and preserving clean air for all county residents and businesses. Responsibilities of the SLOAPCD include but are not limited to, preparing plans for the attainment of ambient air quality standards, adopting and enforcing rules and regulations concerning sources of air pollution, issuing permits for stationary sources of air pollution, inspecting stationary sources of air pollution and responding to citizen complaints, monitoring ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implementing programs and regulations required by federal and State regulatory requirements.

As a Commenting Agency under CEQA, the SLOAPCD has developed the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* to assist lead agencies, planning consultants, and project proponents in assessing the potential air quality and GHG impacts from residential, commercial, and industrial development. SLOAPCD recently developed and published the 2023 Administrative Update Version of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook, which included updated thresholds of significance for GHG emissions. These thresholds have been established through the year 2045, the last year specified in AB 1279 and the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan Update for California to achieve its net zero GHG emissions target (SLOAPCD 2023).

Under CEQA, an individual project’s GHG emissions will generally not result in direct significant impacts. This is because the climate change issue is global in nature. However, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. Projects that have GHG emissions above SLOAPCD thresholds may be considered cumulatively considerable and require mitigation.

Environmental Evaluation

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

No Impact. The approved project’s potential impacts associated with GHG emissions were not analyzed in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer and would allow for future planned school development within perimeter areas of the project site. The proposed project does not include any specific development plans, proposed land uses, or activities that would result in GHG emissions. Development of future uses within the perimeter areas of the project site would be evaluated at the time they are proposed for potential to exceed applicable SLOAPCD GHG emissions significance thresholds and required to implement mitigation measures if the thresholds are exceeded. Therefore, no impacts would occur and potential impacts related to GHG emissions will not be further analyzed in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. As stated above, potential impacts associated with GHG emissions were not analyzed in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project does not include any specific development plans and therefore would not directly result in any short-term or long-term GHG emissions. Therefore, no impacts would occur and potential impacts related conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs will not be further analyzed in the SEIR.

Conclusion

The proposed project does not include proposed development, uses, or activities that would result in GHG emissions. Therefore, impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List. The California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database tracks DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination, such as federal superfund, state response, voluntary cleanup, school cleanup, school investigation, and military evaluation sites. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database contains records for sites that impact, or have the potential to impact, water in California, such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST), Department of Defense, and Cleanup Program sites. The remaining data regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the “Cortese List” requirements can be located on the CalEPA.

Based on a review of the DTSC EnviroStor and SWRCB GeoTracker databases, the project site is not located within an active hazardous waste cleanup site (DTSC 2026; SWRCB 2026). When the 1998 EIR was certified for the original Nipomo High School development, a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was prepared. The investigations focused on soil contamination from agricultural use. The site came up clean for soil contamination.

The nearest airport facilities to the project site include the Oceano Airport, approximately 8.15 miles northwest of the project site. The project site is not located within any mapped Airport Influence Area.

Environmental Evaluation

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

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR concluded that the project site did not contain any pre-existing hazardous materials. Since the construction of the approved project, the area where the 50-foot buffer would be proposed has been largely undeveloped and would not have any risk of new soil contamination. Construction activities associated with future development within the previously established agriculture buffer area project would be anticipated to require use of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling, transport, and storage of hazardous materials, including California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Division 4.5. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact associated with creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential risks related to existing pipeline facilities “in proximity” to the approved project. The analysis identified the pipelines as a potential environmental and safety concern in the event of an accidental release of crude oil. However, the 1998 EIR determined that the likelihood of a spill or explosion affecting the project site would be relatively minimal. The pipeline owner is required to comply with California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulations governing pipeline maintenance, operation, and periodic inspection, and emergency response plans have been established with appropriate regulatory agencies. In addition, proposed school structures were to be set back approximately 500 feet from the western boundary of the site where the pipelines are located, and the School District would coordinate with existing emergency response programs as part of project implementation. Based on these factors, the 1998 EIR concluded that impacts associated with potential accidental releases from nearby pipelines would be less than significant.

The proposed project would allow future development to occur within areas of the project site that were previously restricted as an agricultural buffer by Mitigation Measure A1 of the 1998 EIR. Any future development facilitated by the proposed project could therefore be located closer to existing crude oil pipelines in proximity to the western boundary of the site. However, the pipelines would continue to be maintained, inspected, and operated in compliance with CPUC regulations, and LMUSD would coordinate with existing emergency response plans and programs as part of project implementation. Construction contractors would also be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws for the handling of hazardous materials, including response and clean-up requirements for any minor spills. Therefore, potential impacts related to the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Hazardous air emissions were evaluated in the 1998 EIR in consultation with the SLOAPCD pursuant to Section 21151.8 of the California Public Resources Code. No facilities were identified within one-quarter mile of the project site that would be expected to emit hazardous air emissions. As a result, the 1998 EIR determined that the approved project would not expose sensitive receptors to hazardous air pollutants and that impacts related to hazardous air emissions would be less than significant.

The proposed project would allow for future development within the perimeter areas of the existing Nipomo High School campus site. Future uses to be developed on-site would generally consist of educational facilities, and would therefore not be expected to emit hazardous emissions. Any future uses that would propose use or handling of acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste would be reviewed for compliance with applicable environmental health standards and regulations at the time such uses are proposed. Therefore, potential impacts related to emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials on a school campus would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The 1998 EIR concluded that minimal potential hazardous materials conditions exist on the project site and in the immediate vicinity. Based on a review of the DTSC EnviroStor and SWRCB GeoTracker databases, the project site is not located within an active hazardous waste cleanup site and is not within 2000 feet of any sites. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. Potential impacts associated with airport hazards were not analyzed in the 1998 EIR. The project site is not located within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport facilities to the project site include the Oceano Airport, approximately 8.15 miles northwest of the project site. The project site is not located within the Airport Land Use Planning Area or mapped noise contours associated with the Oceano Airport. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Potential impacts associated with possible interference with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan was evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which concluded that impacts were less than significant. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site, allowing future development to be located closer to the project site boundaries. The proposed project would not directly result in any new development, land uses, or activities that could

impair implementation or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Potential impacts associated with emergency response plans and/or emergency evacuation plans would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area and generally surrounded by areas within a Local Responsibility Area or mapped in a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As part of the analysis of the 1998 EIR, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department was contacted and they indicated that “no unusual fire hazards exist on or near the site.” However, the 1998 EIR determined that the approved project would be vulnerable to wildfire risk based on the project site’s proximity to nearby grasslands. Mitigation Measure C3 was identified in the 1998 EIR to reduce wildfire risk to less than significant levels by requiring all buildings be set back at least 30 feet from property lines that are adjacent to areas identified by CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department as subject to wildland fire hazards, and the buffer area between the property line and any proposed buildings shall be planted with low fuel vegetation and maintained on a regular basis. Any future development facilitated by the proposed project would be subject to this mitigation measure and would therefore have a less than significant impact. Further, future on-site development would be required to comply with all applicable fire safety rules and regulations including the California Fire Code and would have adequate fire protection should a fire incident occur. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe hazards and hazardous materials impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The project site is in the Nipomo – Suey Watershed that covers 36,912 acres and rises to a maximum elevation of approximately 1,800 feet amsl. The watershed includes Nipomo and Suey Creeks, two tributary basins to the Santa Maria River with their headwaters in the foothills of the Coast Range (Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District 2014).

The project site is located just north of the Santa Maria River Valley groundwater Basin. The Santa Maria Basin is bounded on the north by the San Luis and Santa Lucia Ranges, on the east by the San Rafael Mountains, on the south by the Solomon Hills and the San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin, on the southwest by the Casmalia Hills, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean (DWR 2004). Recharge of the Santa Maria Basin occurs in four main ways: rainfall percolation, riverbed recharge, subsurface inflows, and return flows (MKN 2021). Because the project site is not within the Santa Maria Valley groundwater basin it is not subject to the sustainable groundwater management plan policies.

Historically, the NCS D has relied heavily on pumped groundwater from the Nipomo Mesa Management Area (NMMA). Groundwater was the sole source of the NCS D water supply until 2015, when the NCS D began importing water from the City of Santa Maria as part of the Nipomo Supplemental Water Project (NSWP) and Wholesale Water Supply Agreement. The supplemental water consists of a “municipal mix” (or blended water) of both surface water from the State Water Project and groundwater from the City of Santa Maria. The Wholesale Water Supply Agreement requires a minimum water delivery to the NCS D of 2,500 AFY by the 2025–2026 fiscal year, a readily available amount of 500 AFY, and a maximum allowable delivery of 6,200 AFY (MKN 2022).

The 100-year flood zone identifies areas that would be subject to inundation in a 100-year storm event, or a storm with a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Hazard Layer Viewer, a small portion of the project site on the west side next to Nipomo Creek is within the 100-year flood zone. This portion of the project site is already developed as sports facilities. Much of the project site is within the 0.2% change annual flood zone. Deleissigues Creek runs along the southeast side of the project site and is the cause of the potential flooding on campus (FEMA 2012).

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential impacts to groundwater resources associated with water supply for the approved project and identified Impact L2, which concluded that the approved project could result in a significant impact on groundwater resources if it relied on an on-site well or failed to meet Nipomo Community Services District (NCSD) annexation requirements for offsetting project water demand. The 1998 EIR determined that, although the approved project's contribution to overall basin capacity would not be significant by itself, reliance on groundwater without appropriate offsetting measures could result in localized groundwater impacts. To address this issue, Mitigation Measure L2 was adopted, requiring LMUSD to annex the project site into the NCSD or enter into an outside user agreement and to provide offsetting water supplies through installation of a groundwater well meeting NCSD standards and/or participation in NCSD's retrofit program to ensure no net increase in water use within the NCSD service area. The implementation of Mitigation Measure L2 reduced the impact to less than significant.

Nipomo High School currently relies on municipal water service provided by the NCSD. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site and allow for future development within the perimeter areas of the project site. Future development on-site would rely on municipal water and wastewater service from the NCSD, and would be subject to applicable state and local water quality and waste discharge regulations, including water quality standards set in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the RWQCB. Future development involving the disturbance of 1 acre or more would be required to develop and implement a SWPPP in accordance with the Construction General Permit. The SWPPP would include a grading plan, a drainage plan, an erosion and sedimentation control plan, pollutant sources, BMP identification, and post-construction stormwater management. Therefore, this impact is less than significant and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As previously discussed, the 1998 EIR evaluated potential impacts to groundwater supplies associated with water demand for the approved project and identified Mitigation Measure L2 requiring the LMUSD to annex into the NCSD or enter into an outside user agreement and to offset project water demand through installation of a groundwater well meeting NCSD standards and/or participation in NCSD's retrofit program. This measure ensured that water used by the approved project would be balanced by new or conserved water supplies and would result in no net increase in groundwater use within the NCSD service area. With implementation of this mitigation, the 1998 EIR concluded that impacts to groundwater supplies would be reduced to less than significant.

The proposed project includes reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site, allowing for future development to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Future development of impervious surfaces on-site would be subject to Central Coast RWQCB post-construction requirements to manage stormwater on-site. On addition, wastewater generated by future uses on-site would be collected and treated by the NCSD and made available for groundwater recharge within the management area. Therefore, even though the proposed project would allow for a future increase in impervious surfaces on-site, the proposed project would not adversely affect groundwater recharge.

Future development of uses on the project site would rely on the NCS D for municipal water service. Groundwater was the sole source of the NCS D water supply until 2015, when the NCS D began importing water from the City of Santa Maria as part of the Nipomo Supplemental Water Project (NSWP) and Wholesale Water Supply Agreement. The supplemental water consists of a “municipal mix” (or blended water) of both surface water from the State Water Project and groundwater from the City of Santa Maria. The Wholesale Water Supply Agreement requires a minimum water delivery to the NCS D of 2,500 AFY by the 2025–2026 fiscal year, a readily available amount of 500 AFY, and a maximum allowable delivery of 6,200 AFY (MKN 2022). Therefore, future uses on the project site would be expected to have sufficient water supplies that would not result in a depletion of groundwater supply. The proposed project would not decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the proposed project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

(c)(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Water quality and drainage impacts of the approved project were analyzed in the 1998 EIR. The 1998 EIR identified potentially significant impacts related to increased stormwater runoff, downstream flooding, erosion, and water quality degradation (Impacts B1 and B2). It was determined that development of the approved project would increase impervious surfaces, which could increase runoff rates and volumes and contribute to downstream flooding in areas already prone to flooding, as well as erosion and siltation during construction. In addition, runoff from parking areas and access roads could carry pollutants, including oily residues, into Nipomo Creek and Deleissigues Creek, potentially affecting riparian habitat and water quality. Cumulatively, if project and future watershed development were allowed to drain directly to Nipomo Creek without mitigation, 100-year flood elevations could increase by more than 12 inches at the Tefft Street Bridge and water quality could be substantially degraded.

To address these impacts, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measures B1 and B2, which require construction of an on-site drainage detention basin and all stormwater releases to be designed to discharge into Nipomo Creek or other natural drainage courses in a non-erosive manner. Incorporation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

The proposed project would allow for future development within the perimeter areas of the existing Nipomo High School campus site. Future uses within these areas on-site would be subject to Mitigation Measures B1 and B2 identified in 1998 EIR as well as state and local requirements to develop a SWPPP with BMPs to address stormwater runoff, including measures to prevent soil erosion. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site or impede or redirect flood flows, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(c)(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion X(c)(i)*.

(c)(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion X(c)(i)*.

(c)(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. See *Impact Discussion X(c)(i)*.

(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR identified the site as being within the flood hazard zone as defined on National Flood Insurance Program maps developed by FEMA. The area of the proposed site is shown on *FEMA Panel 761 of 975 Flood Boundary and Floodway Map*, dated July 18, 1985. According to the 1998 EIR, the site is subject to flooding during a 100-year storm along its easterly boundary along Deleissigues Creek and along its southwesterly boundary along Nipomo Creek. The FEMA maps also define the 500-year flood inundation area. The middle of the site is shown as being inundated during a 500-year flood event. The 1998 EIR determined that Project stormwater runoff will increase flood levels downstream in an area prone to flooding. This is a potentially significant impact without mitigation. As previously described Mitigation Measure B1 required the approved project to construct a drainage detention basin at the low end of the site and route all site runoff through the basin. This measure reduced the impact to less than significant by reducing post-development drainage flows to historic rates.

Future development within the perimeter areas of the project site enabled by the proposed project would be subject to Mitigation Measure B1 as well comply with RWQCB permits. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential risk release of pollutants due to project inundation, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Nipomo High School currently relies on municipal water service provided by the NCSD. The proposed project would include the reduction of the agricultural buffer on-site and allow for future development within the perimeter areas of the project site. Future development on-site would rely on municipal water and wastewater service from the NCSD, and would be subject to applicable state and local water quality and waste discharge regulations, including water quality standards set in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the RWQCB. Future development involving the disturbance of 1 acre or more would be required to develop and implement a SWPPP in accordance with the Construction General Permit. The SWPPP would include a grading plan, a drainage plan, an erosion and sedimentation control plan, pollutant sources, BMP identification, and post-construction stormwater management. Therefore, this impact is less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with hydrology and water quality would be less than significant with mitigation. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe impacts to hydrology and water quality than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XI. Land Use and Planning

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed project is located within the unincorporated town of Nipomo in San Luis Obispo County within the *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Agriculture* land use designation. However, the proposed project site is under the jurisdiction of LMUSD, and pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094, school districts are considered agencies of the State and are therefore exempt from local general plans and zoning ordinances. Accordingly, the County's land use plans, policies, and regulations are not binding on the proposed project, however, they can still be useful as references when evaluating potential environmental impacts under CEQA.

The project site is also not within any adopted conservation plans or specific plans. Potential impacts associated with land use and planning were not analyzed as a part of the 1998 EIR.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. Future development facilitated by the proposed project would be entirely within the established Nipomo High School campus. Therefore, the proposed project would not divide an established community, no impacts would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. The proposed project is within the LMUSD jurisdiction and as such is not subject to the County's land use plans, policies, or regulations, pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094. However, future uses proposed on-site would be subject to review for consistency with regional plans and policies such as the SLOAPCD Clean Air Plan and associated regulations, and the San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan. The proposed project, which consists of

reduction of the established agricultural buffer on-site, would not conflict with these plans because the proposed project does not include any new development, uses, or activities on-site that would have the potential to conflict with regional plans and their associated policies. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with land use and planning would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XII. Mineral Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 requires that the State Geologist classify land into mineral resource zones (MRZ) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of the land (PRC Sections 2710–2796). The three MRZs used in the SMARA classification-designation process in the San Luis Obispo-Santa Barbara Production-Consumption Region are defined below (CDOC 2015):

MRZ-1: Areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant mineral resources.

MRZ-2: Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists. This zone shall be applied to known mineral deposits or where well-developed lines of reasoning, based upon economic-geologic principles and adequate data, demonstrate that the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is high.

MRZ-3: Areas containing known or inferred aggregate resources of undetermined significance.

The project site is not located within or adjacent to an area mapped as MRZ-2 (CDOC 2017).

Environmental Evaluation

- (a) **Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?**

No Impact. Mineral resources were evaluated in the 1998 EIR, which concluded that impacts would be less than significant. There are no known mineral resources in the project area, and future extraction of mineral resources is very unlikely due to the urbanized nature of the area. Therefore, there would be no impacts, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

- (b) **Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?**

No Impact. As stated above, there are no known mineral resources in the project area, and none are delineated on any local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. Therefore, there would be no impact, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with mineral resources would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XIII. Noise

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project result in:</i>				
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed project site ambient noise environment is characterized by transportation-related noise from US 101, which is located to the west of the project site and as well as from the existing Nipomo High School campus uses, events, and activities. Vehicle traffic on US 101 is a predominant source of ambient noise. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include those uses where noise exposure

could result in health-related risks to individuals, as well as places where quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. The proposed project is on a school campus and adjacent to residential development to the east. Both on-site students and the off-site residents are considered sensitive receptors.

The *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Noise Element* provides a policy framework for addressing potential noise impacts in the planning process. The purpose of the Noise Element is to minimize future noise conflicts. The Noise Element identifies the major noise sources in the county (highways and freeways, primary arterial roadways and major local streets, railroad operations, aircraft and airport operations, local industrial facilities, and other stationary sources) and includes goals, policies, and implementation programs to reduce future noise impacts (County of San Luis Obispo 1992). Pursuant to California Government Code Section 53094, school districts are considered agencies of the State and are therefore exempt from local general plans and zoning ordinances. However, review of the County’s Noise Element policies and the proposed project’s consistency with these policies provides helpful context for evaluation of the proposed project’s potential impacts under CEQA.

As shown in Table 1, Ldn/CNEL noise levels for outdoor activity areas range from 60 to 70 dB. Interior spaces have an Ldn/CNEL standard of 45 dB for residences, hotels, motels, hospitals, and nursing facilities. Interior spaces for public assembly and entertainment-type land uses have a 35 Leq dB standard and office, places of worship, and school-type land uses have a 45 Leq dB standard. Table 2 shows the County’s maximum allowable noise-exposure standards for stationary noise sources.

Table 1. County of San Luis Obispo Maximum Allowable Noise-Exposure Standards for Transportation Noise Sources

Land Use	Outdoor Activity Areas ¹	Interior Spaces	
	Ldn/CNEL (dB)	Ldn/CNEL (dB)	Leq (dB) ²
Residential (except temporary dwellings and residential accessory uses)	60 ³	45	--
Bed and Breakfast Facilities, Hotels and Motels	60 ³	45	--
Hospitals, Nursing and Personal Care	60 ³	45	--
Public Assembly and Entertainment (except Meeting Halls)	--	--	35
Offices	60 ³	--	45
Churches, Meeting Halls	--	--	45
Schools: Preschool to Secondary, College and University, Specialized Education, Training Libraries and Museums	--	--	45
Outdoor Sports and Recreation	70	--	--

Source: County of San Luis Obispo (1992)

¹ Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.

² As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

³ For other than residential uses, where an outdoor activity area is not proposed, the standard shall not apply. Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to 60 dB Ldn/CNEL may be allowed provided that available exterior noise level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with this table.

Table 2. County of San Luis Obispo Maximum Allowable Noise-Exposure Standards for Stationary Noise Sources

Descriptor ¹	Daytime (7 a.m.–10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m.–7 a.m.)
Hourly Leq, dB	50	45
Maximum level, dB	70	65
Maximum level, dB-Impulsive Noise	65	60

Source: County of San Luis Obispo (1992)

¹ As determined at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures, the standards may be applied on the receptor side of noise barriers or other property line noise mitigation measures. Applies only where the receiving land use operates or is occupied during nighttime hours.

Vibration can be measured in terms of acceleration, velocity, or displacement. Measurements in terms of velocity are expressed as peak particle velocity (PPV) with units of inches per second (in/sec). There are no federal, state, or local regulatory standards for groundborne vibration. However, Caltrans has developed vibration criteria based on potential structural damage risks and human annoyance. The threshold at which there is a risk to normal structures from continuous events is 0.3 in/sec PPV for older residential structures and 0.5 in/sec PPV for newer building construction. With regard to human perception, vibration levels would begin to become distinctly perceptible at levels of 0.04 in/sec PPV for continuous events. Continuous vibration levels are considered potentially annoying for people in buildings at levels of 0.2 in/sec PPV.

Environmental Evaluation

(a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR analyzed the noise impacts from the approved project. Construction activities such as grading and building erection were found to potentially generate noise levels of up to approximately 91 dBA at the nearest residences adjacent to the southern project boundary for limited periods when construction occurs near that boundary (Impact E1). Without mitigation, these short-term construction noise impacts could exceed applicable noise standards. In addition, operational noise associated with stationary sources, including the athletic play field and football stadium, could generate nighttime noise levels exceeding 65 dBA L_{max} at nearby residences and could potentially exceed the County’s 45 dBA L_{eq} nighttime standard during special events (Impact E2). Traffic noise increases associated with the approved project, however, were determined to be less than the applicable 3 dBA significance threshold for both off-site and on-site uses (Impacts E3 and E4).

To address these impacts, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measures E1 and E2, which require construction equipment to be fitted with working mufflers, restrict construction hours, and limit noise-producing activities at the athletic play field after 10:00 p.m. With implementation of these measures, construction-related noise impacts and operational impacts would be reduced to less than significant, and operational noise would not exceed the County’s nighttime noise standards.

The proposed project would potentially allow for new development, land uses, and/or activities to be located at closer distances to off-site sensitive receptors. Future proposed uses within the perimeter areas of the project site would be required to comply with Mitigation Measures E1 and E2, which would reduce noise impacts to off-site noise sensitive receptors during both construction and operation. Therefore,

potential impacts related to substantial temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels in excess of established agency standards will be less than significant with mitigation, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Potential impacts associated with groundborne vibration were not evaluated in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project includes reduction of the established agricultural buffer on-site, and would not include any direct development of new uses or establishment of new activities on-site. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact for groundborne vibration, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. This impact was not analyzed in the 1998 EIR. The project site is approximately 7.9 miles north of the Marian Medical Center Heliport and 8.15 miles southeast of the Oceano Airport and is not located within either associated Airport Influence Area. The proposed project implementation would not result in increased exposure of individuals to excessive aircraft noise levels associated with the existing airport; therefore, no impacts would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with noise would be less than significant. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe noise than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XIV. Population and Housing

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Nipomo’s population has grown from 16,179 in 2010 to 18,182 in 2020 based on United States Census. At the time of the 2020 Census, there were 6,027 housing units in Nipomo and the average household size in Nipomo in 2023 was 3.03. The median income in Nipomo was \$102,382 and unemployment was 60.2% in 2023. In 2023, 69.4% of Nipomo residents owned their home which is above 55.9% overall

home ownership in California. There were estimated to be about 262 vacant housing units in Nipomo in 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau 2023).

There are no residences or residential uses within the project site; however, there are residences and commercial uses adjacent to the project site to east and across US 101 to the west.

Environmental Evaluation

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

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated the approved project's potential to induce economic, population, or housing growth and concluded that the proposed school would not directly induce population growth. New school construction is considered growth-accommodating rather than growth-inducing, as schools are built in response to existing and projected population growth. In this case, the approved project was determined to reduce existing overcrowding at Arroyo Grande High School, which was operating well above its design capacity, rather than creating conditions that would attract new population growth.

The proposed project would make additional land available for the Nipomo High School to move classrooms and other school facilities freely around their full campus parcel without the restrictions of the A1 buffer from the 1998 EIR. Any new or rearranged school facilities that may be facilitated by the proposed project would be serving the needs of the student population already present at Nipomo High School and would not directly expedite or enable any growth of the student population. Therefore, the proposed project would not lead to any unplanned population growth within Nipomo directly or indirectly, impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. This potential impact was not evaluated in the 1998 EIR. The proposed project site is entirely within the parcel owned by the LMUSD for the Nipomo High School campus. The proposed project would not displace any existing people or housing, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XV. Public Services

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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 public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

In the unincorporated community of Nipomo, fire protection and emergency medical services are provided by CAL FIRE Station 20, located on North Oakglen Avenue, east of US 101 in Nipomo, approximately 0.3 miles southeast of the project site. Nipomo is also served by CAL FIRE Mesa Station 22 (Station 22) located on State Route 1 on the west side of the mesa, located approximately 6.4 miles west of the project site (CAL FIRE 2021).

The County Sheriff’s Office provides police protection services throughout the unincorporated county. There are three stations that serve the county: the North Station, located in Templeton, approximately 37 miles north of the community of Nipomo; the South Station, located in Oceano, approximately 8 miles northwest of the community of Nipomo; and the Coast Station, located in Los Osos, approximately 26 miles northwest of the community of Nipomo (San Luis Obispo County Sherriff’s Office 2024).

The project site is located within the LMUSD which is the largest school district in the county, covering approximately 550 square miles and serving the communities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Nipomo, Oceano, Pismo Beach, and Shell Beach. The LMUSD is governed by a seven-member Board of Education and consists of 11 elementary schools, three middle schools, three comprehensive high schools, one continuation high school, one independent student study school, and one adult education program. There are nearly 10,000 students within the LMUSD (LMUSD 2026).

Public parks and recreation trails within Nipomo are managed and maintained by County Parks.

Environmental Evaluation

- (a) **Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:**

Fire protection?

Police protection?

Schools?

Parks?

Other public facilities?

Less than Significant Impact. Potential impacts associated with Public Services were analyzed in the 1998 EIR in the Public Services section. The 1998 EIR determined that the approved project would incrementally increase demand for fire protection services; however, this demand could be offset by public services fees and accommodated by existing staffing levels and would not require construction of new fire facilities. With implementation of Mitigation Measure G2, requiring fire sprinklers in all school buildings over 27 feet in height, fire service impacts would be reduced to less than significant. The 1998 EIR also determined the proposed project would result in an incremental increase in demand for law enforcement services, potentially requiring assignment of a full-time officer to the campus and minor adjustments in California Highway Patrol staffing for traffic-related calls. However, these changes would not require construction or expansion of police or CHP facilities and therefore would not result in adverse physical environmental impacts. The Initial Study prepared by LMUSD in 1998 determined the approved project would not increase the demand for neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities.

The proposed project includes reduction of the on-site agricultural buffer, allowing existing uses to be relocated or future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Reduction of the buffer would not directly result in any increased demand for local public services, including fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, libraries, or post offices. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with public services would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XVI. Recreation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Nipomo supports various community and neighborhood parks and bike paths. The main park in Nipomo is the Nipomo Wildlife Park and Nipomo Regional Park that is about 1.25 miles to the west of the proposed project site. The Nipomo Wildlife Park is also known as the Nipomo Native Garden or Nipomo Regional Park Natural Area and is a preserved open space and habitat restoration area located within Nipomo Regional Park. The 4 square mile park features walking trails, restoration planting and has volunteer programs for restoration and outdoor education.

The Nipomo High School Campus where the proposed project is located includes recreational facilities. The facilities include an all-weather track with a football/soccer field, six tennis courts, and a gymnasium which includes a basketball court, volleyball court, and a wellness center. The track, soccer/football field, and tennis courts are available for the community to use outside of school hours.

Environmental Evaluation

- (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?**

Less than Significant Impact. The Initial Study prepared by LMUSD in 1998 determined the approved project would not increase the demand for neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities. The proposed project would include the reduction of the established on-site agricultural buffer and would not include any new development or uses on-site. Reduction of the buffer would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter of the project site, and would not directly result in any increased demand for parks or recreation facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not 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, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(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?

Less than Significant Impact. As stated in *Impact Discussion XVI(a)*, the proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Therefore, no new recreational facilities would be built due to the proposed project, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with recreation would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XVII. Transportation

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The 2023 Regional Transportation Plan outlines the County’s transportation goals through 2045, focusing on improving roads, transit, bike and pedestrian systems. The plan emphasizes sustainability, infrastructure repair, and connections between housing and transportation. Community input played a key role in shaping priorities. Moving forward, implementation will rely on strategic funding and coordination across agencies.

In 2013 SB 743 was signed into law with the intent to “more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions” and required the California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to identify new metrics for identifying and mitigating transportation impacts within CEQA. As a result, in December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. The revisions included new requirements related to the implementation of SB 743 and identified VMT per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis under CEQA, to be implemented statewide beginning on July 1, 2020 (as detailed in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)).

In June 2020, the City formally adopted the transition from Level of Service (LOS) to VMT for the purposes of CEQA evaluation and established local VMT thresholds of significance.

The project site has access via North Thompson Avenue. Once within the project site, there are two main roadways that connect to North Thompson Avenue on the northwest corner and the northern side of the site.

Environmental Evaluation

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

Less than Significant Impact. Transportation impacts were analyzed in the 1998 EIR for the approved project, including the consistency with applicable circulation plans and policies and identified potentially significant impacts related to roadway capacity, intersection operations, and bicycle and pedestrian access (Impacts D1 and D2). To address these impacts, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measures D1 and D2, which required roadway and intersection improvements consistent with County Engineering Department standards.

The proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with adopted circulation plans, ordinances, or policies; impacts would be less than significant; and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. This impact was not evaluated in the 1998 EIR. The 1998 EIR evaluated transportation impacts using LOS criteria, which was the accepted methodology at the time. The proposed project would facilitate continued school use consistent with the approved project. As a public school project, the development is intended to serve an existing and projected student population within the LMUSD and is therefore considered growth-accommodating rather than growth-inducing.

The proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not introduce new land uses or transportation demands that would fundamentally alter travel patterns or substantially increase VMT beyond what was anticipated in the original approval. Impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated potential traffic safety hazards associated with roadway geometry, access design, and surrounding land uses and identified potentially significant impacts related to inadequate roadway width and intersection configurations along Thompson Avenue and at the Thompson Avenue/Mehlschau Road intersection (Impact D1). Without mitigation, these conditions could result in safety concerns for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians accessing the project site. To address these safety concerns, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measure D1, which requires Mehlschau Road to be constructed to County standards and Thompson Avenue to be widened along the project frontage to urban standards.

The proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

No Impact. The 1998 EIR determined that impacts associated with the approved project would be less than significant relating to inadequate emergency access. The proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Any new development would be required to meet the LMUSD’s standards for emergency access. Therefore, site emergency access would remain adequate for the proposed project, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with transportation would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1. Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR; or
 - b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).

2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

Recognizing that tribes have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

In accordance with AB 52 requirements, outreach has been conducted to the California Native American tribes who are geographically and culturally affiliated with the project area: Barbareno/Bentureno Band of Mission Indians, Chumash Council of Bakersfield, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties, San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and yak tityu tityu yak tilhini – Northern Chumash Tribe. A summary of all AB 52 correspondence and consultation is provided below.

Environmental Evaluation

- (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:**
 - (a)(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)?***

No Impact. This impact was not evaluated in the 1998 EIR. However, the proposed project would not contain any California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources. Of the California Native American Tribes who were notified of the project and the opportunity to request consultation, the yak tityu tityu yak tilhini – Northern Chumash Tribe responded and requested additional information. Once additional information was provided, the yak tityu tityu yak tilhini – Northern Chumash Tribe confirmed that they had no further questions or requests for consultation on November 13, 2025. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. As described in *Section V: Cultural Resources*, the proposed project site was found to be potentially sensitive for archaeological resources. Of the California Native American Tribes who were notified of the project and the opportunity to request consultation, the yak tityu tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe responded and requested additional information. Once additional information was provided, the yak tityu tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe confirmed that they had no further questions or requests for consultation on November 13, 2025. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with tribal cultural resources would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Setting

Water and wastewater services within Nipomo are provided by the Nipomo Community Service District (NCSD). According to the Urban Water Management Plan for NCSD from June 2016, the NCSD supplies water to residents from five wells that tap into the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin and supplemental water from the city of Santa Maria aquifer (Nipomo Community Services District 2016). The project site is within the Nipomo Mesa Management Area (NMMA) for groundwater. Groundwater intrusion is a primary threat to groundwater in the project area. Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), located just south of Nipomo along US 101, collects and treats wastewater in Nipomo. NCSD also provides waste disposal for Nipomo residents.

Within Nipomo, gas is provided by Southern California Gas Company and PG&E. PG&E, in partnership with 3CE, provides electricity to the area.

The 1998 EIR analyzed potential impacts of the approved project on utilities and service systems in the *Solid Waste, Wastewater Disposal, and Water Supply* sections of the 1998 EIR.

Environmental Evaluation

- (a) **Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The 1998 EIR evaluated the approved project's potential impacts associated with water supply, wastewater conveyance and treatment, solid waste disposal, and related infrastructure. The 1998 EIR concluded that solid waste generation would be accommodated by existing landfill capacity and existing recycling programs, resulting in a less-than-significant impact. With respect to wastewater, the EIR determined that while downstream sewer facilities have adequate capacity for initial campus development, ultimate buildout could exceed the capacity of the Tefft Street Lift Station. This impact would be addressed through payment of connection and impact fees and, if necessary, construction of lift station improvements pursuant to Mitigation Measure L1, reducing impacts to less than significant.

The 1998 EIR also concluded that water service would be provided through annexation into the NCSD or an approved outside user agreement, with required offsetting measures to avoid a net increase in water use within the NCSD service area. Mitigation Measure L2 requires installation of a water main extension and provision of offsetting water supplies through groundwater well development and/or participation in NCSD's retrofit program.

The proposed project would not involve any new development but would allow for future uses to be located within the perimeter areas of the project site. Future development facilitated by the proposed project may increase utility demands, such increases would remain subject to the mitigation measures identified in the 1998 EIR. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation identified in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

No Impact. As stated in *Utilities and Service Systems a*), the proposed project would not directly result in any construction of new facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The proposed project would not directly lead to any new facilities construction. Any new facilities that may be developed after the proposed project approval would be evaluated for sufficient wastewater collection and treatment capacity. Therefore, no impact would occur and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

No Impact. The proposed project would not directly lead to any new facilities construction. Any new facilities that may be developed after the proposed project's approval would be subject to all state, federal, and local standards for solid waste. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

No Impact. The proposed project would not directly lead to any new facilities construction. Any new facilities that may be developed after the proposed project approval would be subject to all state, federal, and local management and reduction statutes related to state law. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with utilities and service systems would be less than significant. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe utilities and service systems impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

XX. Wildfire

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</i>				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

The proposed project is subject to the *San Luis Obispo County Strategic Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (Strategic CWPP) that is a cohesive document created with the intent of supporting the vision, goals, and objectives of the California Fire Plan. The Strategic CWPP identifies the county’s physical and social characteristics, identifies and evaluates landscape-scale fire hazard variables, utilizes Priority Landscape data sets for evaluating wildfire risk, identifies measures for reducing structural ignitability, and identifies potential fuel reduction projects and techniques for minimizing wildfire risk (County of San Luis Obispo 2019). The goal of the Strategic CWPP is to provide a planning-level framework for hazardous fuel assessment and reduction within the county to protect structures and assets and to reduce the potential for wildfire to occur.

CAL FIRE has assigned fire hazard severity zones to lands within the state using a science-based and field-tested model that assigns a hazard score based on factors that influence fire behavior. These factors include fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), predicted flame length, blowing embers, terrain, and typical fire weather for the area. Urban and wildland areas are treated differently in the model. The project site is located in a Local Responsibility Area according to the CalFire March 2025 maps and is not in a Very High Fire Severity Zone. Areas surrounding the project site are also considered to not be in Very High Fire Severity Zones (CAL FIRE 2025).

Environmental Evaluation

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

No Impact. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area and is generally surrounded by land within a Local Responsibility Area, and land within a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone (County of San Luis Obispo 2026). The proposed project would include the reduction of the established on-site

agricultural buffer and would not include any new development or uses on-site. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, if located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated wildfire hazards in the *Fire Hazards* section and concluded that development of the approved project would be at risk for wildfire impacts due to the proximity of surrounding grassland areas and may increase the number of people exposed to wildfire risk due to the proximity of developed activity areas to wildland fuels. These impacts were identified as potentially significant without mitigation (Impact C3). To reduce wildfire risk to project occupants and surrounding areas, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measure C3, which requires that all proposed buildings be set back a minimum of 30 feet from property lines adjacent to areas identified by the CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department as subject to wildland fire hazards, and that the setback areas be landscaped with low-fuel vegetation and maintained on a regular basis.

Mitigation Measure C3 further requires consultation with the CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department and review by the State Fire Marshal to ensure compliance with applicable fire safety regulations, including access and fireflow requirements, with landscape buffer areas installed prior to occupancy. Implementation of this mitigation reduces wildfire risk to project occupants and the potential for project-related wildfire ignitions to less than significant levels, as determined in the 1998 EIR.

The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area and is generally surrounded by land within a Local Responsibility Area, and land within a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone (County of San Luis Obispo 2026). The proposed project would include the reduction of the established on-site agricultural buffer and would not include any new development or uses on-site. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

(c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area and is generally surrounded by land within a Local Responsibility Area, and land within a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone (County of San Luis Obispo 2026). The proposed project would include the reduction of the established on-site agricultural buffer and would not include any new development or uses on-site. Therefore, no impact would occur, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The 1998 EIR evaluated wildfire hazards in the *Fire Hazards* section and concluded that development of the approved project would be at risk for wildfire impacts due to the proximity of surrounding grassland areas and may increase the number of people exposed to wildfire risk due to the proximity of developed activity areas to wildland fuels. These impacts were identified as potentially significant without mitigation (Impact C3). To reduce wildfire risk to project occupants and surrounding areas, the 1998 EIR adopted Mitigation Measure C3, which requires that all proposed buildings be set back a minimum of 30 feet from property lines adjacent to areas identified by the CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department as subject to wildland fire hazards, and that the setback areas be landscaped with low-fuel vegetation and maintained on a regular basis.

Mitigation Measure C3 further requires consultation with the CAL FIRE/SLO County Fire Department and review by the State Fire Marshal to ensure compliance with applicable fire safety regulations, including access and fireflow requirements, with landscape buffer areas installed prior to occupancy. Implementation of this mitigation reduces wildfire risk to project occupants and the potential for project-related wildfire ignitions to less than significant levels, as determined in the 1998 EIR.

The proposed project would include the reduction of the established on-site agricultural buffer and would not include any new development or uses on-site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new or more severe wildfire impacts than those previously analyzed, impacts would be less than significant, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

Conclusion

Potential impacts associated with wildfire would be less than significant. The proposed project would not result in any new or more severe wildfire impacts than were previously analyzed in the 1998 EIR, and this topic will not be analyzed further in the SEIR.

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