

## 5. Cumulative Effects

Section 5 presents the cumulative scenario used to determine the cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Project. To document the process used to determine cumulative impacts, this section provides the CEQA requirements for an EIR's cumulative analysis, the projects identified and applicable to the cumulative analysis, and the methodology used in the cumulative assessment. It additionally contains the issue and resource-specific cumulative impact conclusions in EIR Section 5.3 (Summary of Cumulative Effects).

### 5.1 Introduction to Cumulative Impact Assessment

Under the State CEQA Guidelines “a cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the environmental impact report (“EIR”) together with other projects causing related impacts. An EIR should not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(1)). An EIR must discuss cumulative impacts if the incremental effect of a project, combined with the effects of other projects is “cumulatively considerable” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)). Such incremental effects are to be “viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)). Together, these projects comprise the cumulative scenario, which forms the basis of the cumulative impact analysis.

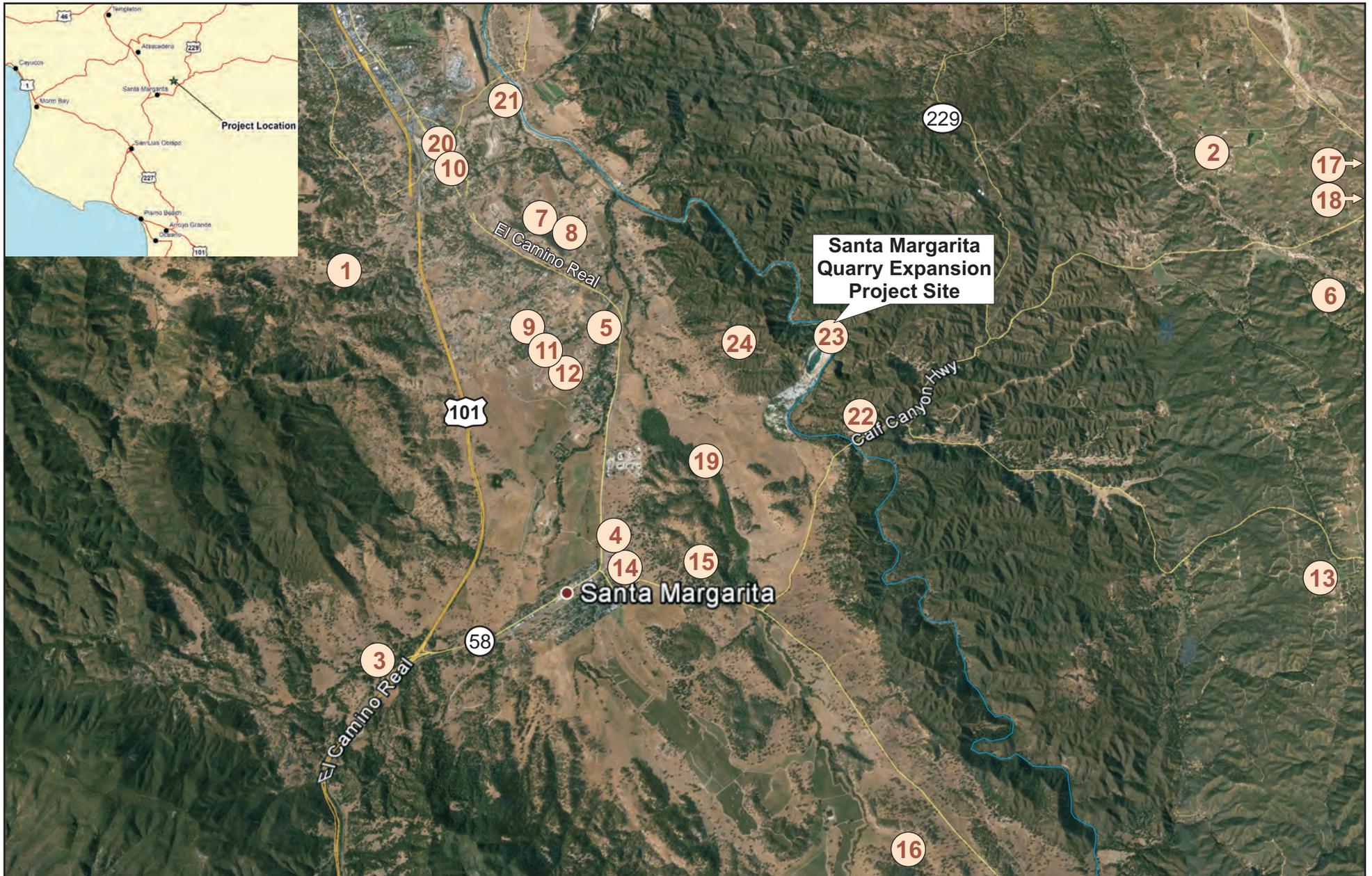
The cumulative impacts analysis should identify both the severity of impacts and the likelihood of their occurrence, “but the discussion need not provide as great as detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion of cumulative impacts shall be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness, and shall focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)).

There are two commonly used approaches, or methodologies, for establishing the cumulative impact setting or scenario. One approach is to use a “list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(A)). The other is to use a “summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(B)).

This EIR uses the list approach to provide a tangible understanding and context for analyzing the potential cumulative effects of the Proposed Project. General plans and other planning documents were used as additional reference points in establishing the cumulative scenario for the analysis.

### 5.2 Cumulative Projects

Reasonably foreseeable projects that could contribute to the cumulative effects scenario are listed in Table 5.2-1 and their locations are presented in Figure 5.2-1. The list indicates the project name and project type, as well as its location and status. Collectively, these projects represent known and anticipated activities that may occur in the project vicinity that have the potential to contribute to a cumulative impact on the environment. The majority of projects under the cumulative effects scenario is limited in geographic extent and their implementation would result in minor construction plans and renovations. However, some of the projects listed in Table 5.2-1 are expansive in nature and would have the potential to create cumulative impacts with or without implementation of the Proposed Project.



Santa Margarita  
 Quarry Expansion  
 Project Site

Santa Margarita



- Cumulative Project Site
- Salinas River

Note: Please refer to Table 5.2-1 for a listing and summary description of the cumulative projects.

**Figure 5.2-1**  
**Cumulative Projects**

**Table 5.2-1. Cumulative Project Listing**

Project ID	Project Name and APN	Description	Status
1	Eagle Ranch, City of Atascadero (Multiple APNs)	3,450-acre Specific Plan; annexation to City; reconfiguration of 452 existing residential lots, development of Village Center office and local retail uses, highway commercial uses at U.S. Highway 101 and Santa Barbara Road, resort hotel, schools, roads, trails, open space and agricultural uses	Early Summer 2013: Specific Plan and EIR are under preparation
2	Church of the Nazarene (043-301-035)	Re-zone from Agriculture to Rural Lands and expansion of organizational camp to add 10,000 square feet of yurt clustered and an approximately 4,000-square-foot dining room addition, with an increase of campers from 120 to 250.	Information Hold
3	Hendrix Minor Use Permit (070-093-017)	Temporary Events including: 10 events with no more than 300 attendees; 5 events with no more than 200 attendees; and 8 events with no more than 125 attendees.	Information Hold
4	Cully Parcel Map (069-044-005)	Four-lot parcel map (approximately 9.5 acres)	Information Hold
5	Johansen Parcel Map (059-241-021)	2 lot parcel map (approximately 5 acres)	Pending time extension
6	Wonseley Parcel Map (070-172-006)	2 lot parcel map (approximately 42 acres)	Recorded, not built
7	Loppini Parcel Map (059-061-015)	2 lot parcel map with Transfer Development Credits (TDCs) (approximately 2.5 acres)	Pending time extension
8	Volbrecht Parcel Map (059-181-064/ 065)	2 lot parcel map with TDCs (approximately 2.2 acres)	Recorded, not built
9	Galena Parcel Map (059-431-042)	2 lot parcel map with TDCs (approximately 2.5 acres)	Recorded, not built
10	Barre Parcel Map (059-331-029)	2 lot parcel map (approximately 2 acres)	Recorded, not built
11	Kelling Parcel Map (059-141-059)	2 lot parcel map with TDCs (approximately 4.9 acres)	Recorded, not built
12	Burgett Parcel Map (059-141-053)	3 lot parcel map with TDCs (approximately 5.4 acres)	Pending time extension
13	Damon Parcel Map (070-191-057)	2 lot parcel map (approximately 46 acres)	Recorded, not built
14	Dickerson Parcel Map (070-172-028)	2 lot parcel map (approximately 47 acres)	Pending time extension
15	Kregger Parcel Map (069-133-030)	4 lot parcel map	Pending time extension
16	Santa Margarita Ranch (Multiple APNs)	150 lot Agricultural Cluster, and future development to be determined	Approved/ Litigation
17	El Camino Real Bridge Replacement	Replace the existing steel structure with a three lane concrete bridge with eight foot shoulders	Design phase
18	Thompson CUP (059-171-015)	Wireless communications facility	Approved
19	Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment (070-091-037/039)	Lot line adjustments between 2 parcels (one parcel contains the access road to the Santa Margarita Quarry)	Information hold

**Table 5.2-1. Cumulative Project Listing**

Project ID	Project Name and APN	Description	Status
20	City of Atascadero, Dove Creek, PD-12 (ZCH 2003-0049)	Planned Development for 279 dwelling units, east of U.S. Highway 101, north of Santa Barbara Road	Construction complete by 2017
21	City of Atascadero, Las Lomas (Woodbridge Specific Plan, SP-1, ZCH 2003-0041)	Specific Plan for 279 dwellings (100 apartments, 179 single family)	50 percent of units completed. Construction complete by 2017
22	Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry (070-141-070/071)	New quarry, producing up to 500,000 tons of aggregate annually for 30 years, with approximately 273 daily truck trips.	Draft EIR Released April 2013. Final EIR and decision making hearings pending as of publication of this EIR.
23	Santa Margarita Quarry Expansion Project (Multiple APNs)	Existing quarry producing up to 700,000 tons of aggregate annually until approximately 2070.	Draft EIR released November, 2014.
24	Proposed Single Family Residential Unit (070-131-003) (#PMT2013-01537)	3,960-square-foot single family residence with an 800-square-foot attached garage, and a 1,384-square-foot Second Unit.	Approved. Structures currently under construction

The projects from Table 5.2-1 with the greatest potential to contribute towards significant cumulative effects are the Eagle Ranch Specific Plan and possible future development in the Santa Margarita Ranch. If developed, both of these projects would contribute substantial volumes of traffic affecting U.S. Highway 101, and would have related effects on air quality. Traffic and air quality are both topics that involve regional modeling and planning, and their cumulative effects are discussed in the context of larger plans. Eagle Ranch is located west of U.S. Highway 101 and would have less effect on traffic using State Route 58 and little or no effect on lands and other resources in the Proposed Project vicinity. A preliminary review of future development within Santa Margarita Ranch was provided in the Final EIR for the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision Project and Future Development Program (Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2008). In the traffic forecast used for future conditions, the Santa Margarita Ranch Agricultural Residential Cluster subdivision was considered, since it was approved, but the “Future Development Program” was not considered to be reasonably foreseeable because it was not approved.

The two solar photovoltaic projects (the Topaz Solar Farm and California Valley Solar Ranch) listed are very large, but are located at a substantial distance away from the Proposed Project and both are near completion of construction; therefore, once operational, they would not incrementally contribute to cumulative effects in a significant manner. By the time the quarry’s proposed expansion area is developed, the construction traffic associated with the two solar photovoltaic projects would no longer affect State Route 58.

Most of the remaining projects listed are small lot splits, parcel maps or single family residential developments that do not involve significant effects.

### 5.3 Summary of Cumulative Effects

The area within which a cumulative effect can occur varies by resource. For example, air quality impacts tend to disperse over a large area, while traffic impacts are typically more localized. For this reason, the geographic scope for the analysis of cumulative impacts shifts with each subject area addressed.

The analysis of cumulative effects considers a number of variables including geographic (spatial) limits, time (temporal) limits, and the characteristics of the resource (e.g., subject) being evaluated. The geographic scope of each analysis is based on the topography surrounding the Proposed Project and the natural boundaries of the resource affected, rather than jurisdictional boundaries. The geographic scope of cumulative effects will often extend beyond the scope of the direct effects, but not beyond the scope of the direct and indirect effects of the Proposed Project.

The cumulative impact analysis for each subject area addressed in this EIR is provided below.

### **5.3.1 Aesthetics and Visual Resources**

The area for the analysis of cumulative effects associated with aesthetics and visual resources is the area within a five-mile radius of the Santa Margarita Quarry site from which the Proposed Project would be visible. This distance encompasses the cumulative projects shown on Figure 5.2-1 and listed in Table 5.2-1. The proposed quarry expansion was identified as having less than significant impacts (Class III) on aesthetics and visual resources, primarily due to its distance from public vantage points along local roads and its position within the local terrain. As viewed from offsite, the Proposed Project's expansion of the mine would create no new adverse impacts. The visibility of an existing exposed mine face, as seen from State Route 58, would be reduced through the removal of a portion of the rock forming the mine face during future phases of the Project. The cumulative projects listed in Table 5.2-1 would not be within the viewshed of the Proposed Project owing to the intervening topography, which would block simultaneous views of the quarry and the cumulative projects, and distance, which mediates the visibility of any object by reducing its relative size and distinctness in the landscape being viewed. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not be expected to incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts to aesthetics and visual resources in a significant way (Class III).

### **5.3.2 Agricultural Resources**

The geographic extent for the analysis of cumulative impacts associated with agricultural resources consists of the entire County. Throughout the County, agricultural land is being converted to other land uses. The County considers agricultural lands to be those designated or zoned for agricultural use as well as other lands being used for agriculture production. In 2010, the County had a total of 1.59 million acres of agriculture land mapped by the DOC FMMP (DOC, 2010). The Proposed Project would involve minimal impacts to agricultural resources. Only 0.3 acres of the proposed quarry expansion site are classified as agricultural (Grazing Land) according to the FMMP. The minor impacts of the proposed quarry expansion and Proposed RPA areas on surrounding agricultural operations would be effectively minimized through BMPs and Mitigation Measures HYD-1.1, BIO-1.2, and BIO-3.2. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not be expected to incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts in a significant way (Class III).

### **5.3.3 Air Quality**

The discussion of air quality impacts in EIR Section 4.4 (Air Quality) shows that the Proposed Project would cause no change in average operational emissions. Ongoing operational emissions from stationary sources are presently authorized in permits from the County APCD, and mobile sources are not subject to permitting, including off-road equipment and haul trucks (on-highway). The facility-specific emissions inventory quantifies PM10 emissions only. Aggregate excavation, handling, and

processing and the activity of mobile sources on unpaved surfaces are the primary sources of particulate matter dust. For the most recent year of data (2011), the emissions from material processing at the quarry were reported to be 63.6 tons PM10 (Wallace Group, 2013). Because these emissions exceed the 25 tons per year threshold of significance and the daily threshold for operational PM10 (APCD, 2012), the impact of PM10 relative to conditions existing without the Proposed Project would be significant. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would control fugitive dust and PM10 to reduce the impact of PM10 emissions to less than significant (Class II).

Because no new average operational emissions would occur, there would be no change in the potential for the Proposed Project to cause a violation of any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected violation. The existing operational PM10 emissions exceed the significance thresholds and therefore, PM10 occurs at levels that may cause or contribute to violations. However, because the Proposed Project would not cause a net emissions increase at a level exceeding any emissions thresholds, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).

Emissions that occur throughout the region as a result of the existing quarry, with implementation of the Proposed Project, and emissions from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would cumulatively contribute to air pollution in the South Central Coast Air Basin. However, the incremental effect of the Proposed Project, including the emissions from existing mining operations would be included in the air quality planning inventory and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. Because no new average operational emissions would occur, the incremental effect of the Proposed Project when combined with the effects of other projects in the air basin would not be cumulatively considerable.

Localized air pollutant concentrations would be influenced by other projects in the vicinity. The existing quarry is within one mile of the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry, which was the subject of a Draft EIR that explored the potential health risks caused by traffic from the proposed Las Pilitas Quarry along the haul routes and found that the project-specific impact would be less than significant. The Draft EIR for the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry also described the total impacts associated with the existing truck traffic plus that from the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry on State Route 58 resulting in an approximation of the total cancer risk potential at about four in one million. That Draft EIR showed that the cumulative effect on nearby receptors due to emissions from the existing Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry and the separately proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry would be less than significant (Class III) (URS Corporation, 2013).

There is a low risk of ongoing quarry operations causing toxic air contaminants (TAC) concentrations of naturally occurring asbestos (NOA). Site specific geologic analysis indicates that there is no ultramafic rock, serpentine or other evidence of NOA exposed in the quarry, or any of the rock materials examined from the Proposed RPA (Golder Associates, 2012). To demonstrate compliance with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Asbestos Air Toxic Control Measure (ATCM) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations (17 California Code of Regulations Section 93105), the County APCD requires that an exemption request be filed for the determination that NOA is not present at the site of activities. As outlined in EIR Section 4.4 (Air Quality) Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would reduce impacts related to NOA to less than significant (Class II); therefore, when combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1) the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to NOA effects would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

The analysis in EIR Section 4.4 (Air Quality) shows that the Proposed Project would individually result in no cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. In addition, implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not contribute to cumulative impacts in a significant way (Class III).

### **5.3.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Global climate change is a cumulative impact that would be affected by GHG emissions from the existing quarry with the Proposed Project and emissions from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1). Given the regional (and global) nature of impacts related to GHG emissions, the analysis of GHG impacts is always in a cumulative framework. The impact analysis in EIR Section 4.5 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) follows the approach recommended by the County APCD. Sources that emit at levels less than the thresholds established by the County APCD would not significantly add to global climate change, and would not hinder the County's ability to achieve the goals of reducing GHG emissions, even when considered cumulatively (APCD, 2012b).

The analysis in EIR Section 4.5 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) notes that the Proposed Project would extend the mining of crushed aggregate and granite, which would continue and extend the emissions of GHG that annually occur at a level of less than 3,500 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per year. Although the GHG emissions would continue to be influenced by variations in stationary source operation, fuel use, electricity use, and water use that occur with the existing quarry operations, these emissions would not exceed the County APCD's GHG threshold of significance for new stationary sources of 10,000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per year.

Other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the general vicinity of the Proposed Project listed in Table 5.2-1 of this section would also emit GHG. Large development projects would be subject to project-specific evaluation regarding GHG emissions, and projects that could have significant impacts will have their GHG emissions evaluated as part of CEQA review using the thresholds appropriate to the type of each project, as recommended by the County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Project-specific review allows discussion of how other development projects may or may not be consistent with California's GHG reduction goals. As discussed in EIR Section 4.5 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), the Proposed Project would have no potential to conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions because the Proposed Project would not conflict with the successful implementation of AB32, the AB32 Scoping Plan, the County Climate Action Plan, also known as the EnergyWise Plan, and related goals. Although cumulative projects would cause GHG emissions, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact of global climate change or contribute to cumulative impacts in a significant way (Class III).

### **5.3.5 Biological Resources**

Impacts of the Proposed Project, as they relate to biological resources, are less than significant (Class III) or less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II). Although the Proposed Project would result in the removal of 33.2 acres of native habitats, proposed mitigation measures would require the preservation of habitat at a 1:1 ratio for non-sensitive and 3:1 for sensitive communities; these ratios result in the preservation of approximately 43.14 acres of sensitive and non-sensitive communities. Impacts to special-status species, such as the removal of foraging habitat for golden eagle, have been determined to be less than significant with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures (i.e., preservation of habitat). The Proposed Project would not have a significant impact to terrestrial wildlife movement or bird migration because Project activities would be in areas immediately

adjacent to the existing actively mined quarry. Therefore, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1), the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

### **5.3.6 Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

The Proposed Project's impacts related to cultural and paleontological resources would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (Class II) (see EIR Section 4.7.5, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures). Furthermore, the proximity of the Proposed Project within one mile of the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry provides an appropriate cumulative impact study area for cultural and paleontological resources. As outlined in the Draft EIR prepared for the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry, no historic structures were found to be present and no paleontological resources were known to exist within the proposed quarry area; at this proposed quarry site it was determined that the likelihood of major cultural or paleontological resources to be present would be very low, and potential impacts were determined to be less than significant (URS Corporation, 2013). Therefore the cumulative impacts from the Proposed Project would be considered negligible even when combined with the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry. When combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

### **5.3.7 Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources**

Potential cumulative effects could result from seismic hazards, geologic hazards, and loss of mineral resources. The Proposed Project would have no impacts related to seismic hazards and a beneficial impact on mineral resources; therefore, the Proposed Project would have no adverse incremental contribution to cumulative effects related to seismic hazards or mineral resources. The Proposed Project would affect geologic conditions on the site, but since all slopes and drainage would be directed inward on the site, there would be no potential geological effect on the surrounding land uses. Within the site itself, however, phased mining over the life of the Proposed Project may expose previously unidentified fractures with adverse orientations that could affect slope stability. As outlined in Section 4.8 (Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources), implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce impacts associated with stability of hard rock slopes within the Project site to less than significant (Class II). As a result, the Proposed Project would not incrementally contribute to any adverse cumulative effects related to geologic hazards in a significant way. All direct and indirect impacts associated with the Proposed Project would be either less than significant (Class III) or less than significant with mitigation incorporated (Class II). Therefore, when combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

### **5.3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

Hazards and hazardous materials impacts are generally site-specific and/or have limited mobility, and thus would not be expected to have cumulatively considerable effects beyond a specific project site. Additionally, and as outlined in EIR Section 4.9 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials), of the seven impact criteria associated with the Proposed Project, one effect, Impact HAZ-1, has been determined to be less than significant (Class III) and five effects (Impacts HAZ-2 through HAZ-6) have been determined to result in no impacts. The seventh impact (Impact HAZ-7) addresses the potential for the Proposed Project to create a health hazard by exposing quarry workers to the fungus that causes Valley Fever and

by spreading the fungus to new areas. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, in conjunction with Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a through HAZ-1c, this impact would be less than significant (Class II). Therefore, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

### **5.3.9 Land Use**

The community of Santa Margarita is the geographic scope of analysis for potential cumulative land use impacts because it encompasses local sensitive receptors that would most likely be affected by impacts associated with the Proposed Project and the cumulative projects listed in Table 5.2-1. Cumulative land use impacts could result from the disruption to existing land uses. Land use impacts would be considered significant if the Proposed Project would either disrupt, displace, or divide a permitted land use, or be inconsistent with community character or present safety issues.

The proposed excavation activities would expand the Proposed Project site by an estimated 33 acres. As discussed in the impact analysis presented in EIR Section 4.10 (Land Use), this expansion would not result in a significant impact to surrounding land uses. In regard to cumulative land use impacts, the construction of multiple projects within the community of Santa Margarita could create a potentially significant impact to local residential and agricultural land uses in the form of noise, traffic, and general neighborhood disruption. The Proposed Project may contribute to these disturbances, which are discussed below in EIR Sections 5.3.10 and 5.3.13; however, these disturbances would not result in the preclusion of a permitted land use and would not diminish the function of a land use. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute to cumulative land use impacts.

The Proposed Project would not alter the quarry's average operational throughput or its associated average number of truck trips. Therefore, there would be no average change in the Project's baseline conditions for vehicular traffic within the community of Santa Margarita; the Proposed Project would only extend existing conditions until approximately 2070. Therefore, the Proposed Project would neither result in a new land use that would be incompatible with the community, nor would present issues of safety in the areas surrounding the Project site. Impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

Based upon the above, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

### **5.3.10 Noise and Vibration**

Cumulative noise effects related to the Proposed Project could arise through: (1) increased roadway noise levels resulting from the combined noise impacts of quarry-related truck traffic and traffic generated by other projects utilizing the same roads; and, (2) increased ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Proposed RPA area resulting from the combined noise impacts of quarry operations and the operations associated with other projects located in the vicinity of the Proposed RPA area.

Section 4.11 (Noise and Vibration) discusses in detail the approach used to model cumulative traffic noise. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.3.10-1 below and indicate that both existing and cumulative traffic noise levels would exceed the 65 dBA Ldn/CNEL threshold (Table 4.11-6) for residential receptors in 3 of 12 the roadway segments monitored. All three segments are located along U.S. Highway 101. The predicted cumulative noise levels along these three roadway segments with the Proposed Project at peak operation would increase by a maximum of 1 dBA Ldn relative to existing condi-

tions and relative to cumulative conditions without the Proposed Project. This cumulative impact would not be perceptible, and is therefore less than significant (Class III).

In the nine currently compliant roadway segments, cumulative noise levels with the Proposed Project at peak operation are predicted to increase by a maximum of 3 dBA Ldn relative to existing conditions (Tables 4.11-4 and Table 5.3.10-1). Although the predicted increases are all below the 5 dBA change required before any noticeable change in community response is expected, cumulative traffic noise levels are predicted to reach 66 dBA Ldn (above the 65 dBA Ldn/CNEL threshold) along El Camino Real south of Santa Barbara Road and along State Route 58 between Murphy Avenue and Pinal Avenue (Table 5.3.10-1). It should be noted that the cumulative traffic noise analysis did not consider traffic generated by the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry, and it is therefore possible that noise levels along other segments of El Camino Real and State Route 58 could exceed the 65 dBA Ldn/CNEL threshold, and/or that noise levels could exceed the maximum predicted 66 dB Ldn along El Camino Real south of Santa Barbara Road and along State Route 58 between Murphy Avenue and Pinal Avenue. Under these noise conditions, it would become increasingly difficult to maintain interior noise levels at or below the 45 dBA Ldn/CNEL interior space threshold. It is not possible to mitigate these impacts by rerouting traffic from these roadways because travel along these routes is required to reach U.S. Highway 101. It is also not feasible to construct noise barriers because many sensitive receptors are located immediately adjacent to the roadways. Therefore, the cumulative traffic noise impact is significant and unavoidable (Class I). Additionally, the noise level data presented in Table 5.3.10-1 indicates that without the Proposed Project, noise levels along the nine currently compliant segments would not exceed the 65 dBA/CNEL Ldn threshold. This is consistent with the findings of EIR Section 4.11.5 (Noise and Vibration, Project Impacts, and Mitigation Measures), which indicate that traffic generated during the excavation phase of the Proposed Project has the potential to increase noise levels above the 65 dBA Ldn/CNEL threshold even with the implementation of Mitigation Measure NS-2. Consequently, the Proposed Project's incremental contribution is cumulatively considerable and the implementation of Mitigation Measure NS-2 would not reduce the project's contribution to this cumulative impact to a less-than-significant level. Cumulative impacts related to noise and vibration would be significant and unavoidable (Class I).

**Table 5.3.10-1. Summary of Noise Exposure Calculations: Cumulative Traffic Noise Scenario**

Roadway	Segment	Noise Levels (Ldn dB at 100 feet)			Change Relative to Existing Conditions: Without/With the Proposed Project
		Existing	Cumulative Scenario Without Proposed Project	Cumulative Scenario Plus Proposed Project Peak Operations	
U.S. Highway 101	North of Santa Barbara Road	74	74	75	0 / 1
U.S. Highway 101	Santa Barbara Road – State Route 58	74	74	74	0 / 0
U.S. Highway 101	South of State Route 58	74	74	75	0 / 1
Santa Barbara Road	U.S. Highway 101 North Bound Ramps – El Camino Real	63	63	65	0 / 2
El Camino Real	South of Santa Barbara Road	64	64	66	0 / 2
El Camino Real	North of Project Access Road	62	63	65	1 / 3
El Camino Real	South of Project Access Road	62	62	64	0 / 2
El Camino Real	North of State Route 58	63	63	65	0 / 2
State Route 58	Murphy Avenue – Pinal Avenue	65	65	66	0 / 1
State Route 58	El Camino Real – Pozo Road	63	63	63	0 / 0

**Table 5.3.10-1. Summary of Noise Exposure Calculations: Cumulative Traffic Noise Scenario**

Roadway	Segment	Noise Levels (Ldn dB at 100 feet)			Change Relative to Existing Conditions: Without/With the Proposed Project
		Existing	Cumulative Scenario Without Proposed Project	Cumulative Scenario Plus Proposed Project Peak Operations	
State Route 58	East of Pozo Road	59	59	60	0 / 1
Pozo Road	South of State Route 58	60	60	60	0 / 0

Source: Bollard, 2012.

All but three of the foreseeable cumulative projects listed in Table 5.2-1 are located more than one mile from the Proposed RPA area. Based on their distance from the Proposed RPA area and based on their proposed land uses (primarily residential, with some commercial and infrastructure), these foreseeable projects would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable ambient noise level increase in the areas potentially impacted by the Proposed Project.

The proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry project, the proposed Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project, and the proposed Single Family Residential Unit project are the three projects located in close proximity to the Proposed RPA area. The proposed Single Family Residential Unit project would involve construction of a new home approximately 350 feet southwest of Receptor R5 (Figure 4.11-1). However, the construction and use of a single residence would not have the potential to generate noise levels that could contribute to an ambient noise level increase. Furthermore, as discussed in EIR Section 4.11 (Noise and Vibration), the Proposed Project does not have the potential to significantly increase noise levels at the Receptor R5 location. Therefore, the incremental contribution to cumulative noise impacts from the Proposed Project and the proposed Single Family Residential Unit project would be less than significant (Class III).

The Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project would involve adjusting the lot line between two adjacent parcels, one of which contains the access road to the Santa Margarita Quarry (Figure 5.2-1). The parcels span the area southwest of the Proposed RPA area and northeast of the intersection of Estrada Avenue (CA-58) and El Camino Real (County of San Luis Obispo, 2013). The Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project would not change the current agricultural zoning designation of the parcels (County of San Luis Obispo, 2013), and the only approved development of the parcels would involve the construction of two single family homes, as well as other structures in support of agricultural operations, on each lot (Aspen Environmental Group, 2014). Because the Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project would not involve the development of noise generating land uses that differ from existing and surrounding land uses, it does not have the potential to cause an increase in ambient noise levels. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not increase noise levels within the Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project area (Bollard, 2012). Therefore, the incremental contribution to cumulative noise impacts from the Proposed Project and the proposed Major Domo Lot Line Adjustment project would be less than significant (Class III).

The Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry project is located east of the Proposed RPA area. The ambient noise levels in the areas located between the Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry area and the Proposed RPA area would be subject to noise generated from both quarries. EIR Section 4.11 (Noise and Vibration) discusses in the detail the analysis of noise levels at Receptors 7 and 8 (Figure 4.11-1), which are located south of, and between, both the Proposed RPA area and the Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry area. The results of the analysis show that noise levels at these receptors would decrease as a result of the implementation of the Pro-

posed Project because the Proposed Project would involve moving quarry operations to the north and west (i.e. further away from the Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry) (Table 4.11-7). This indicates that implementation of the Proposed Project would contribute to a reduction in ambient noise levels in areas that could also experience noise impacts from the Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry Project.

Based on the above, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be either mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II) or less than significant (Class III).

### **5.3.11 Public Services and Utilities**

The analysis for public services and utilities addresses potential impacts associated with fire protection, police protection, schools, hospitals, and utilities and service systems. Please refer to EIR Section 5.3.12 (Recreation) for the cumulative effects analysis associated with public recreational facilities and opportunities. For the purposes of this cumulative analysis, the study region includes the potential combined effects associated with implementation of all of the projects listed in Table 5.2-1. As outlined in EIR Section 4.12 (Public Services and Utilities), of the six impact criteria evaluated, the Proposed Project would result in one adverse but less-than-significant public services and utilities impact (Class III) during reclamation only (Impact PS-4). This impact relates to solid waste disposal needs/landfill capacity at the time that the quarry's equipment and associated facilities and structures are dismantled and either hauled to a licensed landfill or otherwise recycled. All other public service and utilities effects associated with the Proposed Project (Impacts PS-1 through Impacts PS-3 and Impacts PS-5 and PS-6) have been determined to result in no impacts. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not be expected to incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts in a significant way. The Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative public services and utilities impacts would be either less than significant (Class III) or have no impact.

### **5.3.12 Recreation**

The geographic scope for the analysis of cumulative impacts related to recreation resources is 7 miles because it encompasses local and regional resources, as addressed in EIR Section 4.13 (Recreation). Cumulative impacts could result from conflict with local and regional recreation facilities. The closest recreational resource is the proposed Salinas River Trail Corridor which would be located approximately 1.3 miles west of the Proposed Project site. Future uses of the Project site may include agricultural activities and improvements that may pose a conflict with development of the trail and/or may be incompatible with the recreational uses associated with it. Because the Proposed Project requires a discretionary approval from the County for its implementation, the County has the authority to offer an easement for the Salinas River Trail Corridor as a condition of approval, consistent with Policy 3.12.3.c of the County's Parks and Recreation Element. As a consequence, with implementation of Mitigation Measure REC-1, impacts to the Salinas River Trail Corridor would be less than significant (Class II).

Other recreational opportunities that could be impacted by the Project involve recreational bicyclists traveling along State Route 58. When Project-related heavy vehicles and bicyclists interact along State Route 58, the contribution of Project-related heavy vehicles would likely result in the perception of a decreased Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) or a lessening of their perceived experience cycling on the roadway. This perception could result in a disincentive for bicyclists to use State Route 58 during operational hours of the quarry. However, Mitigation Measure TR-3, as addressed in EIR Section 4.14 (Transportation and Circulation), would require future improvements along State Route 58, which could

provide, with additional future analysis, improvements to ensure all travelers, including bicyclists, are accommodated. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation MeasureTR-3, impacts to recreational bicyclists would be less than significant (Class II).

As outlined in the analysis for recreation, the Proposed Project would have no impact on any other surrounding recreational resources.

Based upon the above, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2 1), the Proposed Project’s incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be either mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II) or less than significant (Class III).

### 5.3.13 Transportation and Circulation

The analysis of cumulative traffic impacts utilizes a baseline of existing plus approved projects conditions (please refer to EIR Section 4.14.4, Transportation and Circulation, Environmental Impact Methodology Approach to Impact Analysis), and the addition of traffic trips from the Proposed Project at peak operation. The cumulative scenario represents future traffic conditions over the next 20 to 25 years. The geographic extent of the cumulative analysis includes the roadway network considered for analysis of the Proposed Project’s potential impacts, which includes segments of U.S. Highway 101, State Route 58, El Camino Real, and Santa Barbara Street.

As detailed in Appendix F, because the existing plus approved project conditions utilized in EIR Section 4.14 include County-approved projects, only those projects identified in Table 5.2-1 that have submitted a development application and would utilize study area roadway segments are considered within the cumulative traffic analysis baseline. Trip generation estimates for applicable cumulative projects are shown in Table 5.3.13-1. As shown, pending cumulative projects are expected to generate an additional 11,176 daily trips, with 787 occurring during the morning peak hour traffic (between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.) and 1,052 during the evening peak-hour traffic (between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.).

**Table 5.3.13-1. Cumulative Project Trip Generation Estimates**

Project ID	Name	Number of Vehicle Trips				Daily
		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		
		In	Out	In	Out	
1	Eagle Ranch	234	464	578	376	10,191
2	Nazarene	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50
3	Hendrix	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50
4	Cully	1	2	3	1	38
6	Wonsley	0	1	1	1	20
10	Barre	2	4	5	3	76
20	Dove Creek	9	27	31	18	468
22	Las Pilitas	24	19	15	20	283
<b>Totals</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>11,176</b>

N/A – Peak hour data unavailable  
Source: Pinnacle, 2013

Cumulative project trips, as shown in Table 5.3.13-1, were assigned to the study area street segments based on a review of local traffic patterns and knowledge of local demographics, or the actual distribution of trips included in the appropriate traffic analysis report (e.g., Eagle Ranch and Las Pilitas Quarry). Cumulative traffic volumes are show on the study area roadway segments in Figure 7 of Appendix F.

Baseline cumulative conditions were calculated by adding cumulative traffic volumes (refer to Table 5.3.12-1) to the existing plus approved projects conditions (refer to Table 4.14-3). To evaluate the Proposed Project’s contribution to future cumulative conditions, peak quarry operations are added to cumulative baseline conditions. Table 5.3.13-2 presents the results of the cumulative roadway segment LOS analysis when peak quarry operations are added to the baseline cumulative traffic demands.

**Table 5.3.13-2. Cumulative Baseline Plus Average and Peak Quarry Operations Roadway Segment LOS Analysis**

Roadway Segment	Configuration	Baseline Cumulative Conditions (Average Quarry Operations)		Baseline Cumulative Conditions (Peak Quarry Operations)	
		ADT	LOS	ADT	LOS
U.S. Highway 101, North of Santa Barbara Road	4-lane freeway	48,200	C	48,478	C
U.S. Highway 101, Santa Barbara Road – State Route 58	4-lane freeway	47,300	C	47,300	C
U.S. Highway 101, State Route 58	4-lane freeway	50,300	C	50,452	C
Santa Barbara Road, U.S. Highway 101 North Bound Ramps-El Camino Real	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	12,100	A	12,378	A
El Camino Real, South of Santa Barbara Road	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	7,100	C	7,380	C
El Camino Real, North of Project Access Road	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	4,700	A	4,980	A
El Camino Real, South of Project Access Road	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	4,600	A	4,760	A
El Camino Real, North of State Route 58	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	5,000	A	5,160	A
SR 58, Murphy Avenue - Pinal Avenue	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	6,400	A	6,552	A
SR 58, El Camino Real - Pozo Road	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	4,600	A	4,608	A
SR 58, East of Pozo Road	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	2,100	A	2,108	A
Pozo Road, South of State Route 58	2-lane arterial w/left turn lanes	2,600	A	2,600	A

As shown in Table 5.3.13-2, under cumulative conditions with peak quarry operations, daily traffic volumes on the study area roadway segments would remain within acceptable LOS performance standards, as defined by the County (LOS C or better) and Caltrans (between LOS C and LOS D for all segments except for State Route 58, where LOS E or better is considered acceptable for the segment of east of El Camino Real). Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not be expected to incrementally contribute to LOS cumulative impacts in a significant way (Class III) (Impact TR-1).

The cumulative contribution of Proposed Project peak operation traffic to the study area roadways would be identical to that presented in Table 4.14-4. As analyzed above under Impact TR 1, the Proposed Project would not generate any average or peak hour vehicle trips beyond that of current quarry operations (existing conditions). However, the Project would continue quarry traffic beyond the existing quarry permit, which is considered to result in a cumulative contribution to intersection LOS degradation at the intersections of Estrada Avenue (State Route 58) and El Camino Real, and Estrada Avenue and H Street (the location of the Santa Margarita Elementary School pedestrian crossing). The Project’s contribution from continued traffic at these locations is considered a potentially significant impact that can be mitigated through implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1. Implementation of this

mitigation measure would ensure the Project Applicant pay its fair share contribution to the improvements necessary to ensure roadway and pedestrian safety in the community of Santa Margarita. If approved, the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry would also be required to implement a similar mitigation measure for its contribution to potential cumulative impacts associated with the intersections located within the community of Santa Margarita.

Under existing quarry operations, shoulder damage on southbound El Camino Real at the quarry access road has occurred from quarry egress of large southbound trucks. Currently, the southbound lane of El Camino Real at the quarry entrance has a width of approximately 11 to 11.5 feet, with 4 to 5 feet of shoulder. The County Department of Public Works' standard for new roadway construction requires a 12-foot travel lane with an 8-foot shoulder. Large trucks exiting the quarry with a destination to the south would occasionally swing wide to minimize trailer tracking and the amount of time that the trailer is crossing the northbound lane. While it is acknowledged that shoulder damage on El Camino Real is part of baseline conditions, the Proposed Project would extend quarry operations for 59 years (through Phase IV). Therefore, continued operation of the quarry under the Proposed Project would have a direct and demonstrable continuing effect on shoulder damage impacts to El Camino Real. Mitigation Measure TR 2 would reduce the Proposed Project's impact related to rural roadway damage and design (Impact TR-3) to less than significant (Class II).

In addition to the above, the Proposed Project's contribution to long-term damage of certain segments of State Route 58 due to continued heavy truck traffic is considered a potentially significant impact, as detailed in EIR Section 4.14. Implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-3 would ensure ongoing maintenance of State Route 58 along the Project's haul route such that the highway does not experience major degradation beyond the existing condition of the highway without the Project. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-3, impacts would be less than significant (Class II).

The Proposed Project would continue existing operations of the quarry, including providing on-site parking for workers and no truck queuing on public roadways. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not change the accessibility or numbers of existing public parking areas or spaces (Impact TR-4) and no impact would occur. Similarly, the Proposed Project's continued operation would not introduce any new or incompatible uses to the area's roadway circulation system that could impede emergency access into the quarry. No impacts would occur; however, it is noted that with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-2, quarry egress and ingress on El Camino Real would improve emergency access. Therefore, any impacts associated with emergency access (Impact TR-5) would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

As noted in EIR Section 4.13 (Recreation), the Proposed Project's continued heavy truck traffic use of State Route 58 may result in the perception of a decreased Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) or a lessening of a bicyclist's perceived experience while cycling on the roadway. This perception could result in a disincentive for bicyclists to use State Route 58, which may be found to potentially conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (Impact TR-6). However, any degradation of the existing or future BLOS on State Route 58 from continued traffic volumes of the Proposed Project could be mitigated to a level of less than significant (Class II) with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-3, which may, at Caltrans' discretion and in consultation with the County, be used to determine the appropriateness of providing shoulders, restriping, and/or other improvements to ensure that all travelers, including bicyclists, can be accommodated on the State highway system. Alternative transportation impacts caused by the Proposed Project, therefore, would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

Based upon the above, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigable to a level of less than significant (Class II).

### 5.3.14 Water Quality and Supply

As described in EIR Section 4.15 (Water Quality and Supply), the major water body in the vicinity of the Proposed Project site is the Salinas River and most of the water quality issues for the Salinas River are in the Lower reach (and the Proposed Project site is in the Upper Reach). The nearest sampling location to the Proposed Project site is approximately 8 miles downstream in Atascadero (there are no upstream monitoring locations). Water quality in the Salinas River at this location, characterized by the results of monitoring conducted between 1999 and 2007, is relatively good for nutrients, indicators of biological contamination, turbidity, and toxicity. Monitoring has indicated "slightly impacted" or "impacted" conditions related to total dissolved solids, dissolved oxygen, pH, suspended solids, and water temperature (RWQCB, 2007). The Upper Salinas River (from confluence of the Nacimiento to the Santa Margarita Reservoir) has been listed as an impaired water body on the State's 303(d) list for chloride, sodium, and pH. The identified sources of this impairment are agriculture, pasture grazing, urban runoff/storm sewers, grazing-related sources, natural sources, and other urban runoff. Therefore, a cumulative impact related to water quality in the Salinas River is occurring. Since the proposed expansion area is internally drained (into the excavation pit) with no direct discharges of surface water to the Salinas River, and excavation operations have not been identified as a source of the water quality impairment, the potential incremental contribution of the Proposed Project to this cumulative impact would be less than significant (Class III).

As described under Impact HYD-1 in EIR Section 4.15 (Water Quality and Supply), after the completion of all quarry operations, active reclamation would take approximately 5 years and include grading and re-contouring in areas outside the Upper Area that drain to the Salinas River. It is possible that poorly managed grading operations could result in erosion and sediment discharges to the Salinas River. This potential project-level impact is identified in EIR Section 4.15 (Water Quality and Supply) and has been mitigated by Mitigation Measure HYD 1.1. However, there would be no cumulative impact because the Salinas River has not been identified as impaired for sediment and none of the cumulative projects listed in Table 5.2-1 and shown in Figure 5.2-1 would be expected to contribute a cumulatively significant sediment load to the Salinas River.

As also described in EIR Section 4.15 (Water Quality and Supply), the Proposed Project would result in a slight increase in water use (an approximately 3 afy increase), and the source of the water would be the Salinas River (pumped from surface water and/or underflow). The current water use is approximately 30 afy, and, therefore, the total water use under the Proposed Project would be 33 afy. The analysis included in EIR Section 4.15 (Water Quality and Supply) concludes that this would result in impacts that are less than significant (Class III) because there is plenty of baseflow (natural flow and releases from the Santa Margarita Reservoir) to support this water use.

Based on review of the cumulative projects (Table 5.2-1 and Figure 5.2-1), the only cumulative project that would be expected to use water supply directly from the Salinas River or its underflow (and thus could contribute to a significant cumulative impact) is the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry, located approximately 0.5 mile southeast of the Proposed Project site. According to the Draft EIR for the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry (URS Corporation, 2013), this quarry operation would use about 7 afy, including dust control, domestic purposes, and for irrigating revegetation as part of the mine reclamation. Water for this proposed quarry use would be drawn from a shallow well about 80 feet from the

Salinas River, and assumed to draw on Salinas River underflow. Therefore, the total anticipated net water consumption expected from the Proposed Project and the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry would be about 40 afy. Since the minimum or base flow in the Salinas River is about 800 afy, this net cumulative use is more than an order of magnitude below the minimum or base flow in the Salinas River; therefore, potential cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

During the Proposed Project's reclamation phase, the processing plant would no longer be in operation, and thus the main water use activity of the quarry would be eliminated. Water would continue to be used for dust suppression while final grading and resoiling activities are under way. This amount of water use would be expected to be similar to the amount of water needed during excavation phase dust suppression. Irrigation of plantings is not specified in the Proposed RPA, except in special circumstances (i.e., if particular areas do not meet their respective success criteria). After resoiling and establishment of vegetation is complete, water use would be eliminated completely. Since water use during the reclamation phase would decrease relative to existing conditions, no significant impacts related to water supply would be expected. Implementation of the Proposed Project, when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (Table 5.2-1) would not be expected to incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts in a significant way (Class III).

