

4.12 WASTEWATER

4.12.1 Existing Conditions

The proposed surface mining operation is located north of both State Route 58 and the Coastal Branch of the California Aqueduct, approximately three miles northeast of the unincorporated community of Santa Margarita. No urban or public wastewater disposal services are presently provided to the site. The project design includes a new septic tank and leach field to serve the wastewater needs of the project employees. Appropriate percolation tests and design measures will be incorporated into the facility to minimize the potential for water pollution, in accordance with County requirements.

Based on information from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (2011), the following soils are present on the site:

- Cieneba coarse sandy loam, 30 to 75 percent slopes
- Cieneba-Andregg complex, 30 to 75 percent slopes
- Metz loamy sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes
- Xerofluvents-Riverwash association

The Agriculture section of this EIR (Section 4.2) contains more information regarding these soils. For purposes of effluent disposal from septic systems, all of these soils are described as having “Limitations.” The reasons for the limitations vary by soil type, and include the following:

- Depth to bedrock <40 inches
- Slopes >15 percent
- Restricted permeability due to bedrock or hardpan
- Seepage in bottom layer

These limitations are not unique to the subject property; they are associated with the soils in the region including similar areas in the Residential Rural designation where large lot subdivisions have occurred with reliance on septic and leach field systems.

4.12.2 San Luis Obispo County Plans and Policies

The Plans and Policies of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan are applicable to Wastewater impacts relative to this proposed surface mining operation are shown in Table 4.12-1 below.

**TABLE 4.12-1
POLICY CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS – WASTEWATER**

Source	Policy Statement	Discussion	Preliminary Determination
Land Use Element Planning Principle 1, Policy 2	Keep the amount, location and rate of growth allowed by the Land Use Element within the sustainable capacity of resources, public services and facilities.	The proposed project's scale of potential employment is not large enough to cause a large migration of people to the area and cause a strain on any of these factors.	Potentially Consistent

4.12.3 Regulatory Setting

Regulations and guidelines on proper wastewater system design and criteria are found within the County's Plumbing Code. See Chapter 7 of the Building and Construction Ordinance (Title 19), the "Water Quality Control Plan, Central Coast Basin" (Regional Water Quality Control Board) and the California Plumbing Code. These regulations include specific requirements for both on-site and community wastewater systems. For on-site septic systems, the following key factors must be considered for a system to operate successfully:

- Sufficient land area (refer to the County's Land Use Ordinance or Plumbing Code): Depending on water source, minimum parcel size requirements will range from one acre to 2.5 acres.
- The soil's ability to percolate or "filter" effluent before reaching groundwater supplies (30 to 120 minutes per inch is ideal).
- The soil's depth: There needs to be adequate separation from the bottom of the leach line to bedrock (at least 10 feet) or high groundwater (5 to 50 feet, depending on percolation rates).
- The soil's slope. Surface areas which are too steep create a potential for day lighting on effluent.
- Potential for surface flooding.
- Distance from existing or proposed wells (minimum 100).
- Distance from creeks and water bodies (minimum 100 feet).

4.12.4 Assessment Methodology

The methodology for this Assessment included identification of the soil constraints ("Limitations") for on-site septic systems (as presented by NRCS 2011), and review of

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applicable codes and regulations in the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation prepared for the project.

4.12.5 Significance Criteria

With appropriate consideration of the significance criteria presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the County of San Luis Obispo has developed and adopted the following significance criteria to determine project effects for wastewater within San Luis Obispo County. Accordingly, the Las Pilitas Quarry project will have a significant impact if it will: violate waste discharge requirements or Central Coast Basin plan criteria for wastewater systems; and/or change the quality of surface or groundwater (e.g., nitrogen-loading, day lighting); and/or adversely affect the community wastewater service provider.

4.12.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

As identified in the Initial Study form prepared for the Notice of Preparation, the site appears to be able to accommodate an on-site septic system that will meet the standards of both the “Water Quality Control Plan, Central Coast Basin” (Regional Water Quality Control Board) and the California Plumbing Code, including all relevant potential constraints of the soil types identified on the site by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey. Appropriate percolation test results and documentation of compliance with other County regulations related to installation of septic systems and leach fields will be required prior to the issuance of permits associated with the on-site wastewater disposal system. Potential effects related to the use of an on-site septic system can be mitigated.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual impact
IMPACT WW-1: Demand for Wastewater Disposal Service. The project will contribute to an incremental demand for Wastewater service, which can be provided by an on-site septic system.	MM WW-1: Demand for Wastewater Disposal Service. Prior to the issuance of a permit for the project’s septic and leach field system, the applicant/quarry operator shall submit percolation test results and leachfield design details for review and approval by the Department of Planning and Building.	Less than significant

Cumulative Effects

The project is about one-half mile from the existing Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry. Both quarries are within the EX1 Extractive Resource Combining Designation, as shown on Figure 3-1. In this region, the EX1 Combining Designation is placed over the La Panza Granitics, a large area that is classified as MRZ-2 by the California State Geological Survey (1989:9). Since this Combining Designation is specifically intended to protect mineral resources, it is reasonable to expect that future quarries will be approved and constructed in this area.

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Additional development in the vicinity of the project would be served by on-site wastewater disposal systems; no cumulative effects related to Wastewater are anticipated.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual impact
IMPACT WW-2: Cumulative Effects related to Wastewater. The project, in conjunction with future development in the area, may potentially contribute to a small increment of demand for wastewater treatment services.	MM WW-2: Cumulative Effects related to Wastewater. Since this effect is less than significant, no mitigation is required.	Less than significant