4.13 WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

4.13.1 Existing Conditions

Water Quality

The site is located adjacent to the Salinas River near the confluence of the Salinas River and a tributary known as Moreno Creek. Moreno Creek and its small tributaries drain the area along Parkhill Road, east of the project site, and have a total watershed of 2,613 acres. Calf Canyon, for which the segment of SR 58 in this area is named, drains a similar sized watershed (about 2,171 acres) that joins the Salinas River in the Hanson Santa Margarita quarry, about one-half mile northwest of the proposed Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry. The southernmost portion of the proposed quarry site drains into Moreno Creek, and most of its operations would be within a small unnamed drainage that leads to the Salinas River about one-half mile to the west.

The Salinas River is one of the major coastal rivers in California, and flows northward approximately 130 miles from its headwaters southeast of Pozo to its mouth in Monterey Bay. The project site is within the upper (southern) portion of the Salinas River drainage, which is generally defined as the Salinas River drainage upstream of (south from) Bradley in southern Monterey County. Thus, the entire length of the Salinas River in San Luis Obispo County is considered in the "upper" watershed. In the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (RWQCB: 2011), the project site is within the Paso Robles Hydrologic Area (designated HA 309.80 in RWQCB 2001: Figure 2-1). The Paso Robles Hydrologic Area is a large sub-basin within the Salinas Hydrologic Unit (HU 309.00), which is shown in Figure 4.13-1.

In the San Luis Obispo County Master Water Plan, the project site is in the Salinas-Estrella Water Planning Area (WPA 14 in San Luis Obispo County 2012: Figure 2-3. This is WPA 9a in earlier versions.). This large WPA extends from the northern county line to the Santa Margarita WPA, and includes the Paso Robles groundwater basin. The Paso Robles groundwater basin is prominent in both the County Master Water Plan and the RWQCB Basin Plan, and much of the water quality information for the region is oriented towards the Paso Robles groundwater basin and the portion of the upper Salinas River drainage that contains this basin. But the proposed quarry site is not within this groundwater basin; it is about three miles from the nearest point in the Huerhuero Creek drainage to the east, or to Santa Margarita in the west, which are the closest points in the Paso Robles groundwater basin (see Figure 4.13-2).

Water quality standards and management programs are based on maintaining water quality necessary to support identified "beneficial uses" of surface and groundwater within the various planning units. The following beneficial uses have been identified for surface waters throughout the Upper Salinas Watershed (RWQCB Basin Plan Table 2-1):

- MUN – Municipal and Domestic Supply
- AGR – Agricultural Supply
- PROC – Industrial Process Supply
- GWR – Groundwater Recharge
- REC1 – Water Contact Recreation
- REC2 – Non-Contact Water Recreation
- WILD – Wildlife Habitat
- COLD – Cold Fresh Water Habitat
- WARM – Warm Fresh Water Habitat
- MIGR – Migration of Aquatic Organisms
- SPWN – Spawning, Reproduction and/or Early Development of fish
- RARE – Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species
- COMM – Commercial and Sport Fishing

Water quality objectives are established based on the various beneficial uses listed above. For some individual watersheds, the Basin Plan also defines special water quality objectives. This has been done for the upper Salinas River watershed, and the specific water quality objectives for this area are summarized in Table 4.13-1, below.

TABLE 4.13-1
SPECIFIC WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES
FOR UPPER SALINAS RIVER WATERSHED

Constituent	Water Quality Objective (mg/liter)
Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)	250
Chloride ion (Cl)	20
Sulfate ion (SO_4)	100
Boron (B)	0.2
Sodium ion (Na)	20

Source: RWQCB 2011: Table 3-7.

Agriculture has been the dominant land use in the upper Salinas watershed. For the most part, the agricultural uses include grazing and pasture land on relatively flat areas such as the southern portion of the Oster property. Vineyards are also being developed in large areas, particularly around Paso Robles but also on portions of the Santa Margarita Ranch. The

RWQCB has identified several water quality issues within the overall Salinas watershed. These include seawater intrusion near the coast, nitrates in ground water and surface water, pesticides in sediment and animal tissues, mercury in Lake Nacimiento and its tributaries, and erosion and sedimentation (RWCB 1999:3). Most of these pollutants are associated with intensive agriculture and urban sources characteristic of the lower watershed, or with specific uses such as the now abandoned mercury mines in the Las Tablas tributary drainage to Lake Nacimiento.

The upper Salinas River is included in the California and U.S. EPA list of impaired water bodies, required by Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act, due to excessive concentrations of chloride ions, sodium ions, and due to pH being outside of the acceptable range at some sites. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) have not yet been established for these pollutants in the watershed (State Water Resources Control Board – SWRCB 2010). The monitoring data that led to the inclusion of the upper Salinas River on the 303(d) list was obtained through the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP – RWQCB 2000). The initial CCAMP report was based on 34 sampling locations along the Salinas River, plus additional sample points on major tributaries. The southernmost sampling point was at the point where the Salinas River crosses under SR 41 in Atascadero (Site "SAT" in RWQCB 2000:11). Although the entire upper Salinas River is included on the 303(d) list, a review of the monitoring results for this nearest sample point on the river indicates that in general the water quality at this point was good. Table 4.13-2 below summarizes the water quality at "SAT" (the point nearest the project site) for constituents identified with specific water quality objectives, based on the most current CCAMP data (RWQCB 2007).

TABLE 4.13-2
SUMMARY OF CCAMP DATA FOR SITE "SAT"

Constituent	Min. Value	Mean Value	Median Value	Max. Value	No. of Samples	General Notes from CCAMP
TDS (mg/l)	270.0	521.2	510.0	777.0	16	Slightly impacted, decreasing
Cl (mg/l)	11.00	44.94	44.00	85.00	17	Good, decreasing
SO_4 (mg/l)				Not analyzed		
B (mg/l)	0.061	0.111	0.110	0.170	14	Good, decreasing
Na (mg/l)	19.00	43.79	49.00	59.00	14	Good, decreasing

Source: RWQCB 2007. Summary of data from 1999–2007 for all constituents.

Since the proposed quarry site near the Salinas River is located several more miles upstream from the sampled point, and in an area that is more rural and less developed, it is reasonable to assume that the surface water quality in the river near the project site is better than that shown above.

The Basin Plan describes a series of authorities or control actions that the RWQCB can use to maintain water quality throughout the region. These include the issuance of permits under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program for discharges to surface water that are regulated under both the federal and state Clean Water Acts, the establishment of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) to regulate material discharges to land that may affect water quality, and various enforcement actions. Mining activities such as the proposed quarry may be subject to individual WDRs (and NPDES permits) or may be covered under statewide NPDES permits that have been established to control releases from construction sites and various industrial uses (RWQCB 2011:IV-40).

Current Water Use and Supply

Project Site. The existing water uses on the property support two residences and some agricultural use – typically watering for up to 30-40 cattle, and a small orchard and garden and landscaping at the main house. Estimated water consumption for recent years (when there has been no extensive irrigation of corn or other field crops) is between 1.5 and 1.7 acre feet per year (afy), so a figure of two afy is assumed in this discussion.

The Oster property directly abuts both Moreno Creek and the Salinas River, and thus has riparian rights to both of these water sources. Water is supplied from a system of wells on both drainages and a concrete spring box along Moreno Creek just upstream from its confluence with the Salinas River. There are two water storage facilities on the property with a combined capacity of 0.7 acre feet. There are five recorded Statements of Diversion and Use filed by the property owner with the SWRCB, which document pre-1914 use of surface water on the property from the Salinas River and Moreno Creek. While the Statements of Diversion and Use by themselves do not establish or constitute evidence of a right to divert and use water, they do provide evidence of the past and existing use of water on the property (California Water Code Section 5106(a) and (c)). The original Statements, and several Supplemental Statements of Use, indicate that approximately 94 afy has historically been diverted for temporary storage from Moreno Creek and from shallow wells associated with the Salinas River.

Both the Salinas River and Moreno Creek water sources are highly dependable, but this discussion will focus on the Salinas River since that source is proposed for use by the quarry project. Appendix F of this EIR contains a Water Supply Assessment prepared pursuant to Water Code Section 10910, et seq. for the project that provides details of the available Salinas River water supply, which is summarized in the following paragraphs.

Upstream from the project site, the drainage of the Salinas River includes over 100,000 acres, as shown in Figure 4.13-3. The Salinas Dam and Santa Margarita Reservoir are located about six miles upstream (south) from the project site. This reservoir holds approximately 23,000 acre feet of water and supplies municipal drinking water to the City of San Luis Obispo,

under an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As part of the permit for diversion and use associated with this dam, the City of San Luis Obispo is required to release a sufficient volume of water from the dam to maintain the pre-existing downstream uses of water (SWRCB 1978). In simple terms, this condition requires releases from the dam to maintain surface flow in the river during dry months. The County of San Luis Obispo operates the dam and related facilities under an agreement with the City. A stream gauge just downstream from the dam measures flows in the river at this point. Based on data from that gage, annual flows from 1987 through 2009 ranged from a low of 808 afy (rainfall year beginning April 1 1990) to over 80,000 afy (in 1997). The median annual flow over the same period was 8,660 afy.

Santa Margarita. The community of Santa Margarita is located about three miles to the southwest from the project site, and is provided water from two wells in the area by County Service Area 23. The County's 2009-2010 Annual Resource Summary Report (San Luis Obispo County 2011) describes the water supply and system as follows:

> [Santa Margarita's] water supply is provided by two wells. The primary source is a high-producing well in a shallow formation subject to seasonal fluctuations. The secondary well is in a low-producing formation and is used in combination with the primary well in order to meet demand during hot weather periods and for operational flexibility. The two wells are capable of meeting the community's current needs (CSA 23); however, an additional source of water is needed since the back-up well in the low-producing formation is incapable of meeting the needs of the town by itself should the main well fail for some reason (a CA Title 22 requirement).
>
> At this time, the community is evaluating alternatives for a small additional supply for the purpose of drought reliability. Those options are a connection to State Water or Nacimiento Water for 5 AFY, with an exchange agreement with a water contractor that would allow the water to be banked and withdrawn only when it is needed.

The two wells used by CSA 23 as discussed above draw water from shallow alluvium along Santa Margarita Creek (the primary well) and from deeper groundwater in the Santa Margarita formation 780 feet beneath Yerba Buena Creek, near the eastern end of the community (San Luis Obispo County 2012 Santa Margarita Water Supply Reliability Report: page 1). Because of their location and depth, these wells are not strongly dependent on surface flows in the Salinas River, and neither would be influenced by any activities on the Oster property or water use by the proposed quarry.

Parkhill Road. The project site and the lands along Parkhill Road to the east are at the southern edge of Water Planning Area 14: Salinas/Estrella, in the County Master Water Report (San Luis Obispo County 2012: Figure 4.14). The Master Water Report identifies "Park Hill" as one of several "...more developed supply sources of the County that are

outside of groundwater basins..." discussed in the report but not analyzed in detail (San Luis Obispo County Master Water Report 2012:page 4-55).

The Las Pilitas Area Plan (San Luis Obispo County 2003:page 5-3) describes the lands along Parkhill Road as follows:

> The area has limited water resources, and properties must rely on individual wells located in Moreno Creek and small local drainage ways. Rural residential use should be confined to existing lots in this area so as to not further over-burden an already limited water capability.

Moreno Creek flows into the Oster property, and its confluence with the Salinas River is also within the Oster property. The primary diversion point on the Oster property for use of water from Moreno Creek is a concrete box in the drainage just south of SR 58. Surface water in this structure flows by gravity to a stock pond (north of SR 58) and then into the Salinas River. This system does not forcibly withdraw water from the Moreno Creek basin so it has no effect on the depth to the water table at upstream wells.

4.13.2 San Luis Obispo County Plans and Policies

Table 4.13-3 below summarizes County policies related to water quality and supply. All of the identified policies are from the Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE San Luis Obispo County May, 2010).

4.13.3 Regulatory Setting

The Federal Clean Water Act of 1972, and subsequent amendments, forms the overall structure for maintaining surface water quality in the country. The act prohibits point source discharges to surface waters unless a permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is obtained from the U.S. EPA. For waters affected by broader pollutant issues, the CWA requires the identification of impaired water bodies, in which pollutant concentrations will adversely affect beneficial uses of the water. For these water bodies, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for pollutants from natural and man-made sources must be specified and implemented through management practices and permit procedures.

The California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 established the authorities of the SWQCB and the nine RWQCBs throughout California, and set up the basin planning and regulatory procedures to control discharges that adversely affect surface and ground waters. The federal programs from the Federal Clean Water Act are also administered by these state agencies.

TABLE 4.13-3
POLICY CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS – WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

Source	Policy Statement	Discussion	Preliminary Determination
COSE Chapter 10, Policy WR 1.12	Impacts of New Development: Accurately assess and mitigate the impacts of new development on water supply (GM1). At a minimum, comply with the provisions of Senate Bills 610 and 221.	Water Supply Assessment compliant with SB 610 was prepared for project (Appendix F of this EIR). SB 221 (chaptered at Government Code Section 66473.7) does not apply, since the project does not include a residential subdivision map.	Consistent
Policy WR 1.14	Avoid Net Increase in Water Use: Avoid a net increase in non-agricultural water use in groundwater basins that are recommended or certified as Level of Severity II or III for water supply. Place limitations on further land divisions in these areas until plans are in place and funded to ensure that the safe yield will not be exceeded.	Project site is not in area affected by Level of Severity II or III, and will not affect groundwater basin. The community of Santa Margarita is not in an area affected by Level of Severity II or III.	Potentially Consistent
Policy WR 3.1	Prevent Water Pollution: Take actions to prevent water pollution, consistent with federal and state water policies and standards, including but not limited to the federal Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).	Project will be subject to Statewide General NPDES permits; will have Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan incorporating Best Management Practices; and will be subject to review by the RWQCB. Concrete recycling operation will not accept hazardous grade material.	Potentially Consistent

The initial water quality regulatory mechanism applicable to the project is the Statewide General Permit issued under SWRCB Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002, which applies to stormwater discharges from all construction projects disturbing more than one acre of land. The focus of the general permit is to control erosion and the discharges of sediment on the basis of erosion risk levels. All dischargers covered under the permit are required to file Permit Registration Documents (PRD), and to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Best Management Practices are required to avoid discharges of any debris or non-stormwater material, and training provisions are required for those developing and implementing the SWPPP.

A similar Statewide General Permit applies to industrial uses. In part, the applicability of this permit is defined by the Standard Industrial Code (SIC) describing the use. For this project, the SIC is 1423 – Mining, crushed and broken granite, and this is one of the uses to which the General Industrial Permit applies. This permit is issued under SWRCB Order No. 97-03-

DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000001. Dischargers are required to file a Notice of Intent to be covered under the General Permit, and to prepare and implement a SWPPP.

Finally, SWRCB Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000004, addresses stormwater discharges from small municipal separate storm sewer systems (i.e., drainage systems) and applies to San Luis Obispo County. This permit requires that local governments develop Stormwater Management Plans incorporating various actions to help reduce water pollution from runoff including: public education and participation, detection and elimination of illicit discharges, regulation of runoff from construction sites, and management of stormwater from developed areas. San Luis Obispo County implements these requirements through its NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Program and through requirements set forth in Section 22.10.155 of the Land Use Ordinance addressing Stormwater Management. Provisions of this section include the requirement for a Stormwater Quality Plan incorporating Best Management Practices in compliance with the Low Impact Development Handbook, and planning to control drainage, erosion and sedimentation and to maintain the provisions for the life of the project. The proposed surface mine is not explicitly among the categories of projects to which this section applies (see Section 22.10.155 B.). In the event the County determines that this section does apply to the project, then its application would take the place of the Statewide General Permit for industrial uses described above. In either case, non-stormwater discharges would be prohibited and stormwater discharges would be managed through the required plans and regulatory process.

The RWQCB also has review authority over the project, and could determine that it is necessary to establish Discharge Requirements for the project under a separate permit. In this event, the RWQCB permit would incorporate regulation of all potential discharges from the project.

Other regulations at the state level control the use and storage of hazardous materials that may be involved in the operation, and other aspects of the mining (such as blasting), so they are conducted in a manner that protects the public health and the environment.

With respect to water supply, the County of San Luis Obispo must approve a Conditional Use Permit for the project (consistent with Sections 22.62.060 (CUP) and 22.36.010 (Surface Mining and Reclamation) of the County Code). These required approvals cause the project to be subject to review under CEQA, which requires a demonstration of adequate water supply. Since there is no utility company or service district that provides water in the project vicinity, and because the project proposes an industrial use on a property that is greater than 40 acres in size, the County prepared a Water Supply Assessment for the proposed development (California Water Code Section 10910(c) (3)). The Water Supply Assessment is included within this EIR as Appendix F.

4.13.4 Assessment Methodology

The assessment of project effects on water quality and supply is based on a review of information prepared for the mining plan and submitted as part of the CUP application. This information included the location and preliminary design for three detention basins in the project (Sheets 2, 4, and 6 of the submitted plans, and details provided in sheets 11, 12, and 13, and related material in Tartaglia 2009). Applicable County policies and procedures were reviewed, along with existing Statewide General Permits regulating stormwater runoff from construction and industrial uses. Original and Supplemental Statements of Diversion and Use filed for the Oster property, and several historic and current permits related to management of the Santa Margarita reservoir and Salinas Dam were also reviewed. The general effects of the project were compared to applicable regulations and other data in order to determine the likelihood of compliance by the project with all applicable requirements.

4.13.5 Significance Criteria

The Initial Study prepared for this project addresses water quality and supply issues in terms of five issues or questions to determine if the proposed project would do any of the following:

a. Violate any water quality standards; and/or

b. Discharge into surface waters or otherwise alter surface water quality (e.g., turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, etc.); and/or

c. Change the quality of groundwater (e.g., saltwater intrusion, nitrogen-loading, etc.); and/or

d. Change the quantity or movement of available surface or groundwater: and/or

e. Adversely affect community water service provider.

4.13.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The criteria listed above were used to assess the effects of the project and to define any potential impacts and appropriate mitigation measures.

<u>Alteration of Runoff Water</u>

This issue related to the impact criteria “a” and “b” noted above. The project will include the grading and construction of the access road, retaining walls, water system, and excavations and rock processing associated with the quarry. All of these activities will involve ground disturbance with the possibility of increasing erosion and discharging sediments and contaminants associated with grading and construction activities. Rock crushing and storage will occur within the processing area, and heavy equipment will operate regularly on the site. The project does not include a fuel storage tank, but heavy equipment will be used and stored on-site and will be fueled and serviced by mobile providers on-site. These aspects of the

project involve the use of hazardous materials (fuel, oil) that would adversely affect surface water quality if improperly discharged. This is a potential significant impact that can be mitigated.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual Impact
IMPACT WQ-1: Alteration of Runoff Water. The project would disturb an area of approximately 41 acres, draining towards Moreno Creek (entrance road and Phases 1A and 1B), and in the northern unnamed creek drainage towards the Salinas River. The grading and quarry activities may introduce pollutants including sediment, and materials associated with quarrying and rock processing, into these surface waters through stormwater runoff and/or dry season releases.	**MM WQ-1a: Alteration of Runoff Water/Construction Activities.** The applicant/quarry operator shall submit appropriate Permit Registration Documents (PRD) to the SWRCB to provide coverage of the construction of the project (utilities, entrance road, and completion of construction through the end of Phase 1B or other point as appropriate under the Statewide General Permit for Construction (SWRCB Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002, or more current permit). Evidence of such coverage shall be provided to the County prior to the start of construction. All measures to control stormwater runoff and minimize discharges identified in the PRDs and related plans shall be timely implemented during construction. **MM WQ-1b: Alteration of Runoff Water/Mining Activities.** The applicant/quarry operator shall submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) and related Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to the SWRCB to provide coverage of the surface mine as an industrial use under the Statewide General Permit for Industrial Uses (SWRCB Order No. 97-03-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000001, or more current permit). Evidence of such coverage shall be provided to the County prior to the start of Phase 1A. Measures to control stormwater runoff and minimize discharges identified in the documentation related to this permit shall be implemented, and be subject to monitoring and verification as provided in the permit. Alternatively, this condition may be met through compliance with the County Stormwater Management provisions of Section 20.10.155 of the Land Use Ordinance. **MM WQ-1c: Alteration of Runoff Water/Equipment Maintenance.** The applicant/quarry operator shall provide parking areas for equipment and servicing of equipment, and storage areas for any hazardous materials or other pollutants kept on-site, that have controlled drainage such that in the event of an accidental spill pollutant runoff to off-site surface water will not occur.	Less than significant

Alteration of Groundwater

This issue is related to criterion "c" noted above, dealing with effects on the quality of groundwater. The project will include the construction of a septic and leach field system to provide domestic wastewater treatment for approximately five workers on-site. This is considered a potential significant discharge to groundwater that can be mitigated through appropriate design and construction of the system, and is discussed in Section 4.11 of this EIR as Impact and Mitigation WW-1. Alteration of groundwater is a potential significant impact that can be mitigated.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual Impact
IMPACT WQ-2: Alteration of Groundwater. The project will discharge septic effluent via an on-site leach field, which has potential to contaminate groundwater.	**MM WQ-2: Alteration of Groundwater.** Mitigation Measure WW-1 (Section 4.12) serves as adequate mitigation for Impact WQ-2.	Less than significant

Increased Use of Surface Water

This issue relates to criteria "d" and "e" above dealing with changing the quality or movement of surface or groundwater, and affecting other water suppliers. As presented in the Water Supply Assessment for the project (see Appendix F) the proposed quarry will use about 4,000 gallons of water per day for dust control, about 500 gallons per day for domestic purposes, and up to 1,000 gallons per day for irrigating revegetation as part of the mine reclamation, for a total of 5,500 gallons per day. This total is about 5 afy. Water for the quarry use would be drawn from a shallow well about 80 feet from the Salinas River in the ranch compound of the property owner, identified as "Well A." A pumping test on Well A demonstrated its ability to provide a minimum of 25 gallons per minute, which is more than sufficient for the proposed use. The water drawn from the well is part of the subsurface flow in the Salinas River and is part of the riparian rights water that has been used on the property for many years. Combined with the existing recent uses by the two residences and ranch activities on the property (approximately 2 afy), the estimated total water use on the property would be approximately 7 afy. Thus, the quarry project would more than triple the current water use on the property. This amount is lower than the water used in previous agricultural activities on the property, and much lower than the potential use indicated in the Statements of Diversion and Use (over 94 afy). The total projected water use with the quarry project and current uses (7 afy) is very much lower than the lowest base flows maintained in the Salinas River near the project vicinity (about 800 afy).

The Oster property is not within the boundaries of a district or other water supplier, and is about three miles from CSA 23, which serves the Santa Margarita area. Since the wells used by CSA 23 relies on shallow water in Santa Margarita Creek, and much deeper water beneath Yerba Buena Creek, the project is not expected to have any effect on the CSA water supply. The project is also not expected to affect surface flows or groundwater in the Moreno Creek drainage, which is upstream from the point near the Salinas River where Well A is located. Thus, the effects of the proposed quarry on the use of surface water would be less than significant.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual Impact
IMPACT WQ-3: Increased Use of Surface Water. The project will increase total water use on the property from approximately 2 afy to 7 afy. This amount may potentially require an increase in the use of surface water.	**MM WQ-3:** Since this effect is less than significant, no mitigation is required.	Less than significant

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual Impact
IMPACT WQ-4: Effect on Community Water Service Provider. This project could potentially affect a nearby water service provider such as CSA 23 in Santa Margarita.	**MM WQ-4:** Since this effect is less than significant, no mitigation is required.	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 promote mineral extraction, it is reasonable to expect that future quarries will be approved and constructed in this area. The La Panza Granitics EX1 Combining Designation is within the Upper Salinas River watershed, and includes the drainage basin of Moreno Creek along Parkhill Road west of the proposed quarry.

In the larger region of the Upper Salinas River watershed, several instances of surface water contamination related to non-point sources have led to the designation of this portion of the Salinas River as an impaired water body. As discussed in Section 4.13.1 above, the water quality problems have been associated with a combination of urban and intensive agricultural uses that occur much farther north (downstream) in the watershed. The available data shown in Table 4.13-2 indicate generally good water quality in the vicinity of the project. This fact, coupled with the implementation of requirements that will avoid or minimize the potential for pollutant discharges to surface waters (Mitigation Measures WQ-1a and 1b), indicate that the cumulative effect of the project with other water quality influences in its surrounding area would be less than significant.

The base flows in the Salinas River result from rainfall and runoff in its watershed upstream from the project site and from periodic releases that are mandated by the SWRCB permit for the Santa Margarita Reservoir. These releases are designed to ensure the protection of all downstream surface and shallow subsurface water uses that existed prior to construction of the dam and reservoir in the 1940s. The project will not significantly affect flows in the river, and will not contribute a substantial fraction towards cumulative use of water from the Salinas River. The Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry also uses water from surface and underflow in the Salinas River. Water use by Hanson includes about 300 afy for wet crushing and processing, but most of this water is re-cycled and re-used. The net consumption for processing is about 30 afy. An additional 55 afy is used for dust control, and the proposed expansion of the Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry will require an additional 2-3 afy. Thus, the total anticipated net water consumption expected at the Hanson facility is about 88 afy all of which comes from the Salinas River (Golder Associates 2012:4). Since the minimum or base flow in the Salinas River is about 800 afy, this net use along with that proposed by the

Oster/Las Pilitas Quarry and other uses (e.g., residential and agricultural) is still less than significant.

Most of the land in the Upper Salinas River watershed in the project vicinity is within the RL-Rural Lands category, so widespread land development is not anticipated. Future agricultural development will be limited to flatter lands, where vineyards or other more intense uses may occur. On the steeper lands more characteristic of the watershed in the project vicinity, only limited grazing might be expected. Based on this pattern of uses, water shortages are not expected in the portion of the Upper Salinas River watershed that includes the project vicinity. Although not proposed as the water source for the project, the existing Oster ranch obtains much of its water for cattle and other irrigation uses from Moreno Creek. This water from Moreno Creek is not pumped at the Oster property; it flows naturally from a concrete spring box constructed in the creek bed just south of SR 58. It is possible that in a very dry year, substantial pumping of water from Moreno Creek by upstream residences along Parkhill Road could reduce this flow and water supply in Moreno Creek at the Oster property. This has reportedly never happened before, but if it did, the adversely affected user would be the Oster property – because this is a riparian use, not a groundwater withdrawal by pumping. The proposed quarry project is not planned to use water from this source, so it will not affect, or be affected by, any users along Parkhill Road. In the event that the quarry did rely on this Moreno Creek supply, just as the Oster agricultural operations do, it could not adversely affect upstream users or contribute to any short-term declines in water levels along Parkhill Road, due to its location downstream from these users.

In summary, due to the reliable water supply provided by the Salinas River, and the nature of the topography and land uses within the La Panza Granitics region, potential cumulative impacts related to Water Quality and Supply are less than significant.

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measure	Residual impact
IMPACT WQ-5: Cumulative Effects Related to Water Quality and Supply. The project, in conjunction with the nearby Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry and other uses, will continue the use of surface and shallow subsurface water from the Salinas River. This water use could potentially and adversely affect upstream users or contribute to any short-term declines in water levels along Parkhill Road, due to its location.	**MM WQ-5: Cumulative Effects Related to Water Quality and Supply.** Since this effect is less than significant, no mitigation is required.	Less than significant

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