

4.11 RECREATION

Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision. Currently there is a deficiency in parkland and recreational facilities in the Santa Margarita community. The Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision would generate an increase in residents and would contribute to this deficiency by adding a need for additional parkland. However, the applicant would be required to pay ~~an in-lieu public open space fee~~ **County Park Impact Fees**, resulting in a Class III, less than significant impact.

Future Development Program. The Future Development Program would generate additional demand for parkland. The Future Development Program, in addition to paying ~~in-lieu public open space fees~~ **County Park Impact Fees**, would include a multi-purpose trail, community park and swimming pool, and golf course. Although the Future Development Program includes the dedication of 5 acres of parkland, including a community swimming pool, Future Development Program residential development that may occur prior to implementation of the parks and recreational facilities could burden existing community recreational facilities. This would be a Class II, significant but mitigable impact. Although the Future Development Program would include a multi-purpose trail, it does not provide public trails that would fully implement the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail through the property. This is a Class II, significant but mitigable, impact related to parks and recreation.

4.11.1 Setting

a. Existing Recreation Facilities. Parks and recreational resources are important to identify and evaluate because they provide an important measure of the physical quality of life in a community. Such resources enhance the community's aesthetic qualities, the health of the community's environment, and residents' perceptions and enjoyment of the region. ~~Community parks are both recreation and open space resources, which can provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation, and can also include natural preserve areas.~~ **Parks provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, while Natural Areas provide places for nature appreciation and resource protection.**

One park currently exists in the community of Santa Margarita. Santa Margarita Community Park, a 2-acre facility, is located at the northwest corner of Estrada Road and H Street. The park includes group and individual picnicking, play equipment, restrooms, parking, and open play areas.

Other recreation opportunities located in town include Santa Margarita Elementary School, which provides sports fields and children's play equipment, equestrian facilities located at the southern end of the Ranch, and tennis facilities located at the community library site. These facilities are not official County recreational uses; however, they provide recreational opportunities to area residents.

Santa Margarita residents additionally have access to the Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park, a County park facility. Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park is located approximately 8 miles southeast of Santa Margarita and provides boating, camping, play equipment, picnicking, fishing, and trails.



Figure 4.11-1 identifies the locations of public parks and recreation facilities in the Santa Margarita area. An inventory of public parks and recreational facilities in Santa Margarita is provided in Table 4.11-1.

Table 4.11-1. Public Park & Recreational Facilities in the Community and Vicinity

Facility	Amenities	Acreage	Location
CURRENT COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES			
Santa Margarita Community Park	Group and individual picnicking, play equipment, restrooms, parking, open play area, and BBQ pit.	2.0	Northwest corner of Estrada Road and H Street.
Santa Margarita Elementary School	Basketball courts, handball courts, sports fields, and children's play equipment.	N/A	21900 H Street, Santa Margarita
Tennis Facilities	Tennis courts	N/A	Santa Margarita Community Library
COUNTY PARKS IN THE VICINITY			
Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park	Boating, camping, play equipment, picnicking, fishing, and trails.	7,122*	Pozo Road, 8 miles east of Santa Margarita
Total Acreage		7,614	

Source: San Luis Obispo County Parks Department.

* This acreage cannot be applied toward Quimby Act parks to population ratio for the community of Santa Margarita.

Note: Santa Margarita Community Park and Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park are San Luis Obispo County park facilities

Bike Routes. The County maintains Class II (on-road) bike routes on West Pozo Road and Highway 58. **Bicycle facilities include bike paths, bike lanes, and bike routes. Bike paths (Class I facilities) are paved pathways for use by bicycles that are separated from roadways. Bike lanes (Class II facilities) are lanes on roadways designated for use by bicycles with special lane markings, pavement legends, and signage. Bike routes (Class III facilities) are designated with signs only. Bike lanes are provided on El Camino Real north of Estrada Avenue. Bicycle routes are designated on Wilhelmina Avenue, I Street, West Pozo Road east of Calf Canyon Highway, and U.S. 101 south of SR 58 (refer to Figure 4.12-2 in Section 4.12, Transportation and Circulation).**

Trails. Several hiking, cycling, and equestrian trails are located in the Santa Margarita vicinity. The East Cuesta Ridge trail is 15-miles long, beginning north of San Luis Obispo and ending near Atascadero (San Luis Obispo Parks Open Space & Trails Foundation). The trail is open to hikers and cyclists. Several trails are also located in the La Panza Range, east of Santa Margarita, and in the Santa Lucia Wilderness, southwest of Santa Margarita.

b. Recreation Standards. The Quimby Act gives the legislative body of a city or county the authority, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land or payment of in-lieu fees, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approval of a tract map or parcel map. The existing Quimby Act parks to population ratio requirement in the County is 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The current population in the County of San Luis Obispo is 260,727 (Department of Finance, October 2005). However, at General Plan build-out, the County population is expected to reach 420,766 (State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "City and County Information," 2000). Therefore, at buildout the County should have approximately 1,262 acres of parkland. The County currently has approximately roughly 1,112 acres of **neighborhood and community** parkland (Jan Di Leo, Written Communication, November 2004). **In addition,** the County maintains over



has roughly 12,000 acres of open space, Natural Areas. †The County will is currently not meeting it's the 3 acres of neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 population standard requirement at buildout of the General Plan as set out by the newly adopted Parks and Recreation Element.

The population of Santa Margarita is approximately 1,325 residents. The community currently has 2 acres of parkland, or approximately 1.5 acres of **neighborhood and community parkland area** per 1,000 residents. This is below the County's standard of 3 acres of **neighborhood and community parkland** per 1,000 residents. At General Plan build-out, which includes 550 additional single-family residences, the population of Santa Margarita will reach approximately 2,551. Based on the standard of three acres per 1,000 residents, Santa Margarita should have approximately 7.7 acres of **neighborhood and community parkland** at buildout. The community of Santa Margarita therefore would not meet **is the County's** parkland standard at full buildout of the General Plan. **The 5-acre community park envisioned as part of the Future Development Program would lower this deficiency to approximately 0.7 acres.**

4.11.2 Impact Analysis

a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds. In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, impacts would be significant if development under the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision or the Future Development Program would result in the any of the following:

- *The project would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or*
- *The project includes recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.*

The County has a standard requirement of three acres of **neighborhood and community parkland** per 1,000 residents. Impacts are significant if a development project causes the County to contain less than three acres of ~~open space/recreation~~ **neighborhood and community parkland** per 1,000 residents, **or otherwise result in inconsistencies with the Quimby Act and the adopted Parks and Recreation Element.** In addition, impacts are significant if the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision or the Future Development Program would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated, or if the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision or the Future Development Program would include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

b. Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision Impacts and Mitigation Measures.

Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision Impact R-1

The proposed implementation of 112 single-family housing units in the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision would generate demand for parkland. The applicant would be required to pay parkland in-lieu fees in the amount established by County Ordinance. With payment of these fees, the



applicant would offset the additional demand for parkland. Impacts would be Class III, less than significant.

Based on the County's standard factor of 2.7 persons per dwelling unit, the 112-unit Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision development would be expected to generate an additional 302 residents. Based on the County standard of 3 acres of parkland and open space per 1,000 residents, the project would generate a need for 0.9 acres of parkland.

The applicant is required to pay an in-lieu public parks fee. Payment of in-lieu park fees would result in funding equivalent to the provision of ~~public~~ **neighborhood and community** parks in accordance with State Quimby Act standards and as required by the County. Following implementation of these project features and payment of Quimby Act park fees, the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision would result in a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures. No mitigation measures are required.

Residual Impacts. Impacts would be less than significant. Refer to Section 4.12, *Transportation and Circulation*, Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision Impact T-4 for a discussion of pedestrian access impacts related to the proposed private pedestrian pathway between the subdivision and existing community.

c. Future Development Program Impacts and Mitigation Measures. The Future Development Program represents potential future buildout of the Santa Margarita Ranch, including the proposed Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision. Refer to Section 4.11.2(b) for a discussion of recreation impacts resulting from the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision independently.

Future Development Program Impact R-1

The implementation of 514 residential units in the Future Development Program would generate demand for parkland. Although the Future Development Program includes the dedication of 5 acres of parkland, including a community swimming pool, Future Development Program residential development that may occur prior to implementation of the parks and recreational facilities could burden existing community recreational facilities. This would be a Class II, significant but mitigable impact.

The Future Development Program would generate an estimated 1,388 additional residents. Based on the County parkland standard, the Future Development Program would generate a need for 4.2 additional acres of parkland. The Future Development Program currently includes a 5-acre community park, swimming pool and a golf course. The golf course would be private and therefore would not contribute to County parkland requirements. Nonetheless, the 5-acre community park would fulfill these requirements. Because no application has been filed for development other than the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision, the timing of development pursuant to the Future Development Program cannot be determined at this time. Therefore, residential development may occur prior to development of the 5-acre community



park and swimming pool. During this interim period prior to construction of the community park, Future Development Program residents could overburden existing community recreational facilities. This is a potentially significant impact.

Construction of recreational facilities may result in impacts to agriculture, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, and visual resources. These impacts are described in the appropriate sections of this EIR. In addition, safety issues related to errant golf balls are discussed in Section 4.9, *Public Safety*.

Mitigation Measures. The following mitigation measure is required:

**Future Development
Program R-1(a)**

Community Park Implementation Timing. The Specific Plan shall specify that the 5-acre community park and swimming pool shall be constructed prior to residential development pursuant to the Future Development Program, subsequent to the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The Specific Plan shall specify the phasing of the community park and swimming pool in advance of residential development. ~~The community park's shall be implemented~~ **acreage and design shall be reviewed and approved by County Parks** prior to the issuance of ~~grading permits for improvement plans or the final map for new residential development proposed under the~~ Specific Plan ~~residential development.~~ **The applicant shall provide an adequate bond/security for completion of the proposed community park and the associated recreation. Prior to occupancy of any of the residential units proposed under the Specific Plan, the park's construction shall be reviewed and approved by County Parks. Monitoring.** Planning and Building shall review the Specific Plan for compliance prior to adoption of **the Specific Plan, and County Parks shall ensure parkland and recreation is adequately constructed prior to occupancy of any new Specific Plan residential development.**

Residual Impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Future Development
Program Impact R-2**

The Future Development Program would include a multi-purpose trail. However, the Future Development Program does not provide public trails that would fully implement the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail through the property. This is a Class II, significant but mitigable, impact related to parks and recreation.

The Future Development Program includes the provision of a public hiking and equestrian trail. As shown in Figure 2-9 (in Section 2.0, *Project Description*), the Future Development Program trail generally follows the east side of Highway 101 from the southern boundary of the Ranch property, curving eastward at Highway 58 toward the community of Santa Margarita. This trail would



connect the community of Santa Margarita to East Cuesta Ridge Trail, and implement a portion of Juan Bautista de Anza Trail, in accordance with the County Trails Plan. However, the Future Development Program does not identify trail connections that would complete the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail through the property, as identified in the County Trails Plan.

Construction of the envisioned trail within the trail concept study area may result in impacts to agriculture, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, and visual resources. These impacts are described in the appropriate sections of this EIR. However, since the precise location of the trail within the trail concept study area has not been determined, precise environmental impacts associated with the trail would be too speculative to address at this time. Environmental impacts associated with implementation of such improvements would be evaluated in separate environmental documentation prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as part of the Specific Plan or individual development review process, as applicable, for future development on the property.

Mitigation Measures. The following mitigation measure is required:

**Future Development
Program R-2(a)**

Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail Connections. As part of the Specific Plan for future development on the Ranch property **and in accordance with the County's adopted Parks and Recreation Element**, the applicant shall dedicate right-of-way for the County's implementation of the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail between the eastern terminus of the envisioned Future Development Program trail concept study area and the trail easements in the northern portion of the property, on the Margarita Farms subdivision site, **and any other trail alignments identified in the Parks and Recreation Element.** The precise trail alignments and features shall be determined in consultation with the County Parks and Recreation Department. **The trail shall be implemented in accordance with County standards concurrently with the start of construction.**

Plan Requirements and Timing. The required trail connection shall be included in the Specific Plan for future Development on the Ranch property. Right-of-way shall be dedicated and the trail shall be implemented in accordance with County standards prior to issuance of grading permits for the first Specific Plan land use development. **Monitoring.** Planning and Building shall review the Specific Plan prior to adoption and verify trail implementation prior to issuance of grading permits for the first Specific Plan land use development.

Residual Impacts. Impacts related to provision of the trail connection would be beneficial. It should be noted that secondary impacts associated with construction of the trail connection (e.g., biological resources impacts, visual impacts) would vary depending on the ultimate location of the trail alignment. Since the precise location of the trail within the trail concept study area has not been determined, precise environmental impacts associated with the trail would be too speculative to address at this time. Environmental impacts associated with



implementation of such improvements would be evaluated in separate environmental documentation prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as part of the Specific Plan or individual development review process, as applicable, for future development on the property.

d. Cumulative Impacts. The evaluation of the Future Development Program, which includes the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision, in this EIR accounts for all of the expected growth in the Santa Margarita area, as it represents buildout of the major landholding that surrounds the existing community, consistent with the Salinas River Area Plan. Therefore, cumulative recreation impacts from buildout of the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision in combination with buildout of the Future Development Program were addressed in the Future Development Program impact analysis above. As future applications for individual Future Development Program projects are submitted at a project level of detail, the precise evaluation of future project cumulative impacts would be coordinated through the required Specific Plan and associated environmental review, or through individual project-level environmental review, as applicable.

