NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Who: County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works

What: A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared and issued for the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works, Toro Creek Road at Toro Creek Bridge Replacement Project. The purpose of this project is to improve public safety by replacing the existing bridge, considered functionally obsolete, with a new bridge that will conform to current standards. In addition to serving residences along Toro Creek Road, the bridge also provides access for wildland firefighting. The proposed bridge replacement would consist of a single span, cast-in-place concrete slab structure measuring 60 feet long and 24 feet wide, with two 10-foot traffic lanes, and concrete barriers. Traffic will be accommodated during construction with a temporary detour bridge adjacent to the existing bridge. Construction activities would occur over a period of 6 months and are anticipated to begin in May 2027. Construction will be scheduled during the non-rainy season when conditions are dry, or creek flows are at their lowest, however creek diversion and dewatering may be required. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure project impacts are less than significant. The project is located within the Salinas River Subarea of the North County Planning Area, Supervisorial District 2, approximately 2 miles north of State Route 41 and west of Atascadero in a rural, unincorporated area of the county.

Where: Copies of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and all the associated documents referenced in the Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for review on the County's website at https://www.slocounty.ca.gov /departments/public-works/forms-documents/environmental-determinations, as well as at the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works, 976 Osos Street, County Government Center Room 206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.

Comments: The 30-day review and comment period for the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration begins on March 10, 2025, and ends on April 9, 2025. Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the review period and should be addressed to: Sal Zaragoza, Environmental Specialist, szaragoza@co.slo.ca.us, County Government Center, Room 206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.

Public Hearing: The County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration. The hearing is tentatively scheduled sometime in 2025. Interested persons can access the Board of Supervisor's agenda at https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/departments/board-of-supervisors/board-meetings,-agendas-and-minutes, to locate the date of the public hearing for this project.

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING

PLN-2039
04/2019

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Title & No. Toro Creek Road Bridge Replacment Project, ED19-255 (300557)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The proposed project could have a "Potentially Significant Impact" for environmental factors checked below. Please refer to the attached pages for discussion on mitigation measures or project revisions to either reduce these impacts to less than significant levels or require further study.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Public Services
☐ Agriculture & Forestry Resources	☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Recreation
☒ Air Quality	☐ Hydrology & Water Quality	☐ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Land Use & Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities & Service Systems
☐ Energy	☒ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☐ Geology & Soils	☐ Population & Housing	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the Environmental Coordinator finds that:

☐ The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Sal Zaragoza	Sal Zaragoza	Sal Zaragoza, Environmental Specialist	2/27/2025
Prepared by (Print)	Signature		Date
Kate Shea	Kate Shea	Kate Shea Environmental Division Manager	2/27/2025
Reviewed by (Print)	Signature		Date

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Environmental Analysis

The County's environmental review process incorporates all of the requirements for completing the Initial Study as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study includes staff's on-site inspection of the project site and surroundings and a detailed review of the information in the file for the project. In addition, available background information is reviewed for each project. Relevant information regarding soil types and characteristics, geologic information, significant vegetation and/or wildlife resources, water availability, wastewater disposal services, existing land uses and surrounding land use categories and other information relevant to the environmental review process are evaluated for each project. Exhibit A includes the references used, as well as the agencies or groups that were contacted as a part of the Initial Study. The County uses the checklist to summarize the results of the research accomplished during the initial environmental review of the project.

Persons, agencies or organizations interested in obtaining more information regarding the environmental review process for a project should contact the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department, 976 Osos Street, Rm. 206, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408-2040 or call (805) 781-5252.

A. Project

DESCRIPTION: The San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works (County) proposes to replace the existing bridge (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] Bridge No. 49C0384) on Toro Creek Road over Toro Creek. The bridge is located west of the City of Atascadero in northern San Luis Obispo County, approximately two miles north of State Route 41, in the North County Planning Area (Salinas River Sub Area) in Supervisorial District #2 (Figure 1- Vicinity Map). The project will improve public safety by replacing the existing bridge, considered functionally obsolete, with a new bridge that will conform to current standards. In addition to serving residences along Toro Creek Road, the bridge also provides access for wildland firefighting.

The approximately 2.16-mile-long portion of Toro Creek Road that is publicly accessible from Highway 41 is maintained by the County and is designated as a minor road. Toro Creek Road extends northwest from Highway 41 through rural privately-owned parcels and the Los Padres National Forest. The roadway contains several switchbacks, and continues through semi-steep, hilly terrain. From the bridge, Toro Creek Road continues westerly towards the City of Morro Bay, however this portion of the road is not publicly accessible and several locked gates block road access through private property.

The existing bridge is a single-lane, single-span, 46 feet long by 12 feet steel I-beam structure with timber deck runners, built in 1950. The steel I-beams are supported on timber sill abutments placed on natural earth. It has been inspected by Caltrans and is eligible for replacement because it is functionally obsolete due to its narrow roadway widths, tight and abrupt curves and limited sight distance for drivers. Additionally, the bridge is exhibiting signs of timber decay and corrosion of steel stringers, and has substandard railings and scour issues at both abutments. The replacement bridge will be approximately 60 feet long and 24 feet wide to accommodate two 10-foot traffic lanes and barriers. The design of the new bridge will accommodate a traffic lane in each direction to conform to current, applicable County, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Caltrans standards.

The project footprint consists of an approximate 4.77-acre area and contains all areas of ground disturbance and potential staging areas (Figures 2 and 5). The proposed project will involve providing a temporary diversion of Toro Creek, constructing a temporary bridge, relocating conflicting utilities, demolishing the existing one-lane bridge, constructing the new bridge and associated roadway approaches, and restoring

impacted stream and riparian habitat. The project will protect a mature sycamore tree in place within the project area. Staging is proposed on previously disturbed areas and would not require additional improvements such as grading or leveling.

In order to remove the existing bridge and construct the new bridge abutments, it may be necessary to temporarily dewater the construction site and divert creek flows to a pipe or pipes for controlled and enclosed conveyance through the construction site limits. Cofferdams would be established in conformance with County specification and subject to regulatory agency approval. The cofferdams would be constructed within the channel banks upstream and downstream of construction activities. Materials to construct the diversion include pipes to convey anticipated flows, sandbags or washed clean gravel bags with plastic sheeting to construct the cofferdams, and/or the use of bladder cofferdams.

A temporary detour will be constructed over the creek to provide through access during construction. The detour over the creek will be located approximately 40 feet south of the existing bridge. The detour road will veer off the existing roadway, free span the creek using a temporary bridge, and then rejoin the roadway. Construction will occur primarily in the dry season, from April to October, to minimize impacts to Toro Creek.

The project is funded in part by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Bridge Program and is being administered by Caltrans. The funding requirements require that the project comply with the Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM) and is designed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) criteria.

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S): County Right-of-Way. Adjacent to APNs 046-221-056 & 046-221-070

Latitude: 35° 27' 42" N **Longitude:** 120° 46' 20" W **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #** 2

B. Existing Setting

Plan Area: North County **Sub:** Salinas River **Comm:** Atascadero

Land Use Category: Rural Lands

Combining Designation: None

Parcel Size: Not applicable

Topography: Nearly level , prominent swale/creek coursing through property

Vegetation: Scattered Oaks; Grasses; Riparian

Existing Uses: Undeveloped; residential; blue line creek

Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:

North: Rural Lands;blue line creek ; undeveloped ***East:*** Rural Lands;undeveloped ; vacant

South: Rural Lands ; agricultural uses; blue line creek residential ***West:*** Rural Lands; vacant undeveloped

C. Environmental Analysis

The Initital Study Checklist provides detailed information about the environmental impacts of the proposed project and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts.

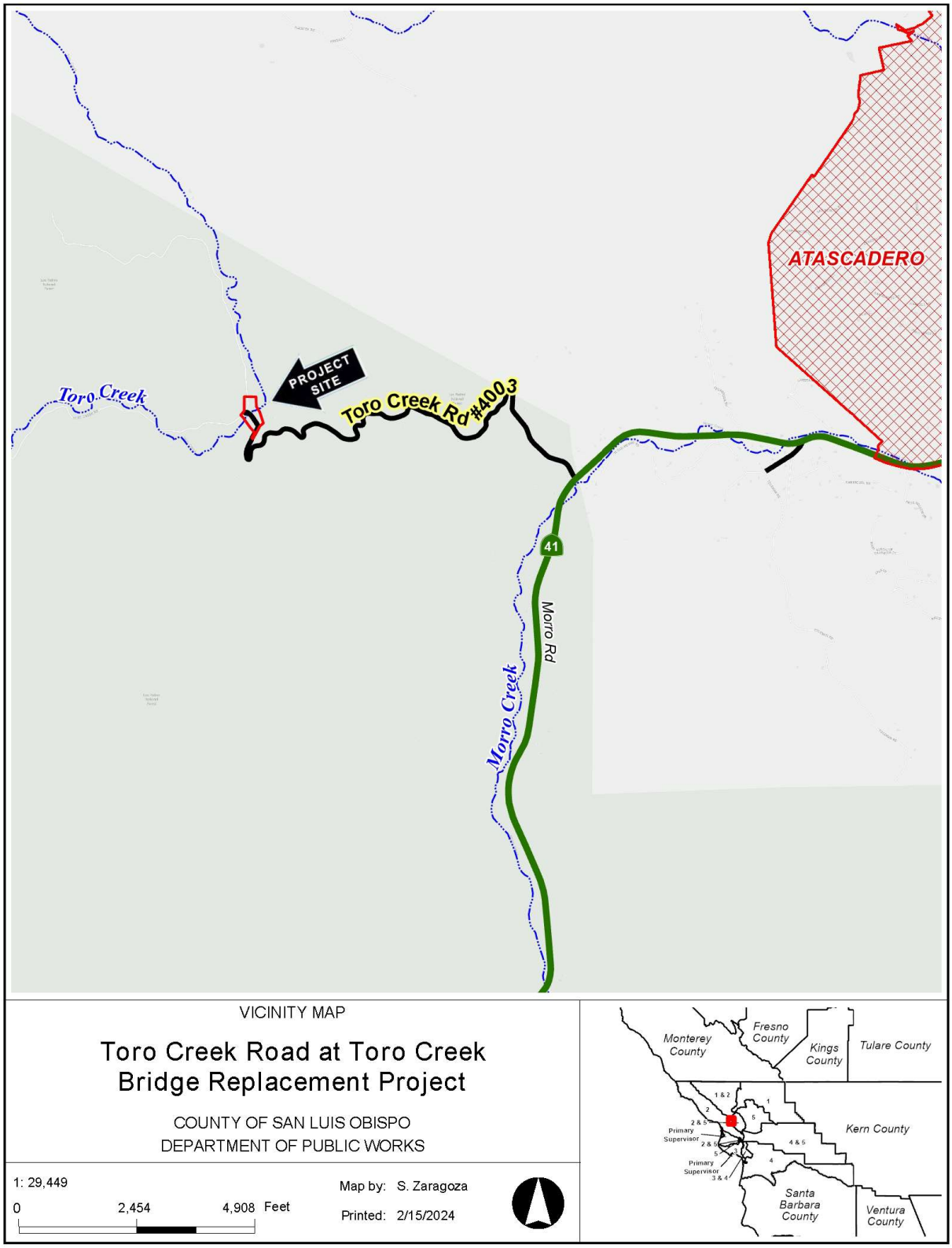

Figure 1 - Vicinity Map

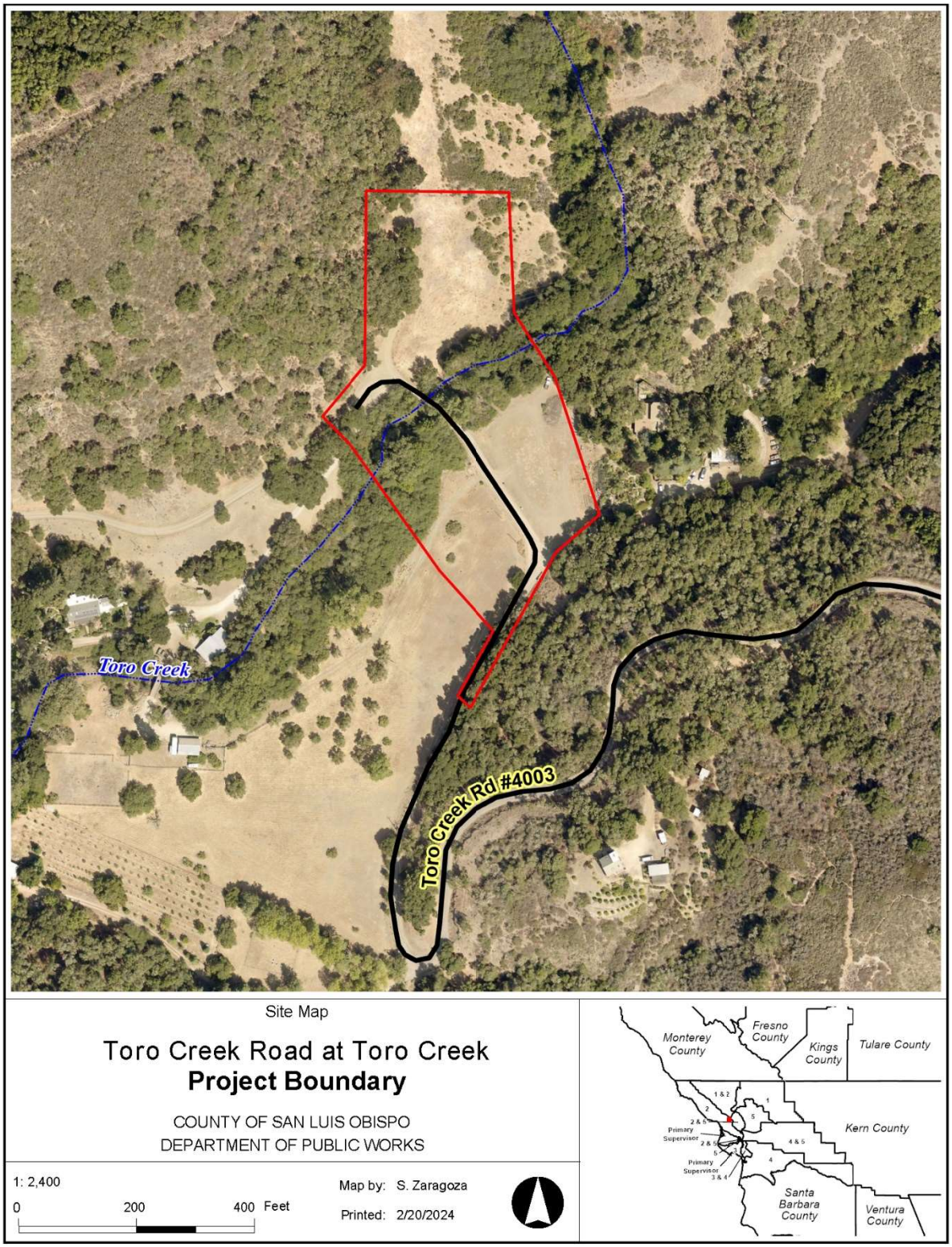

Figure 2. Project Site Map

Figure 3. View of existing bridge on Toro Creek Road.

Figure 4. View of Toro Creek stream channel below existing bridge.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

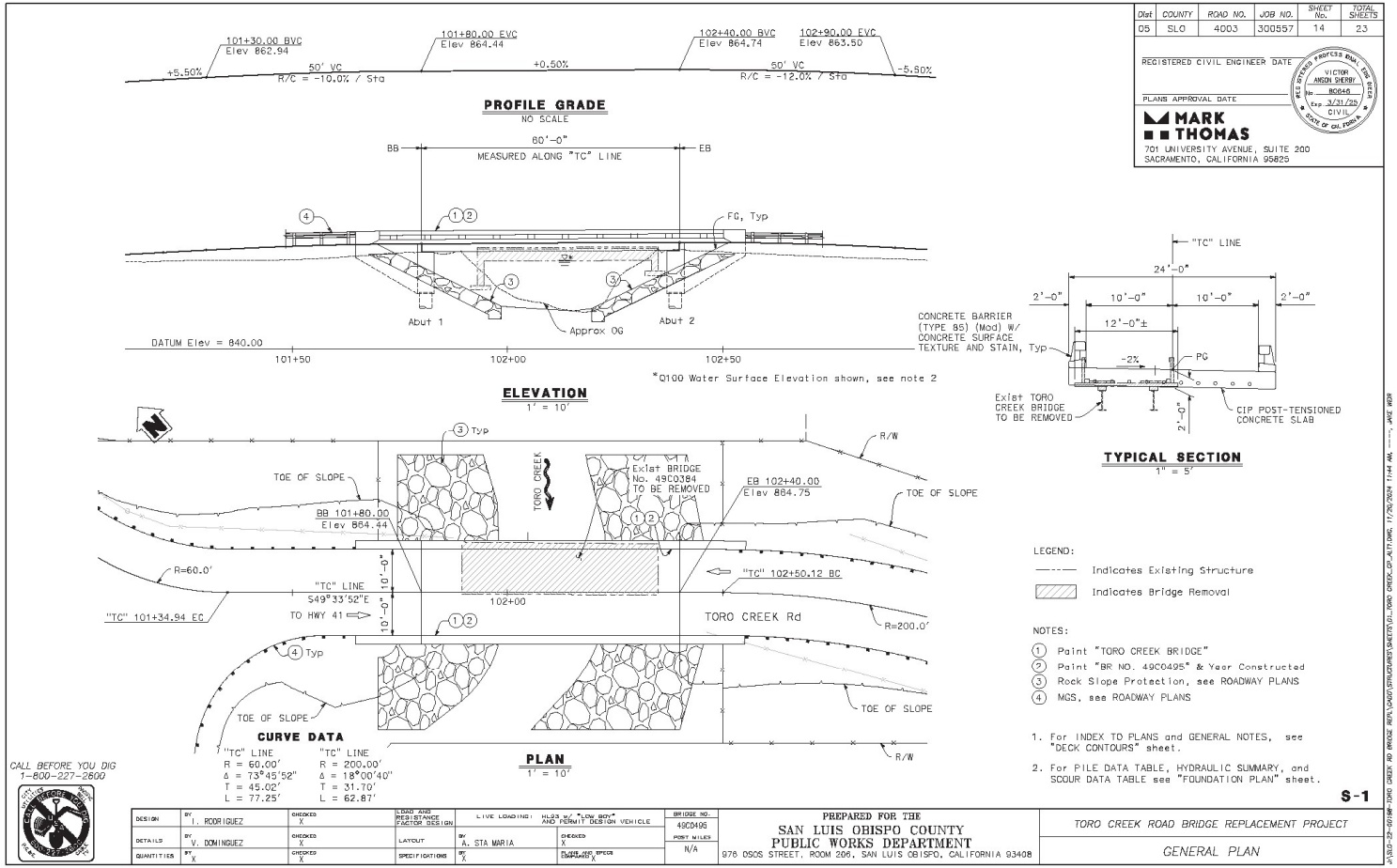

Figure 5. General plan for the proposed bridge replacement.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

I. AESTHETICS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:					
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The project site is located within a natural setting with surrounding views of oak woodland forest, rural residences, agricultural lands, and the Toro Creek stream channel. The project site is positioned within a valley surrounded by steep terrain in all directions. This landform provides ample views of the surrounding Santa Lucia mountains from the project site. However, due to its position within a valley, visibility of the project site is limited to nearby views from Toro Creek Road within the immediate vicinity. The Toro Creek stream channel is bordered by dense riparian vegetation with a closed canopy which limits views of the stream channel beneath the proposed bridge replacement except while crossing Toro Creek by bridge. The project site is located near the end of the County-maintained portion of Toro Creek Road, which is primarily used by local residents travelling by vehicle. Public views of the project site would be mostly by nearby residents, travelling at slow speeds while approaching and crossing the bridge.

Discussion

(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No designated scenic vistas exist within the project area. The proposed bridge replacement will not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista as none exist in the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

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

The project is not within the viewshed from a state scenic highway. Additionally, bridge replacement would not require damage to any rock outcrops or historic buildings. The project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to natural communities including the removal of riparian trees that currently contribute to the visual character of the area. However, per Biological mitigation measures, native trees that are removed would be replanted (See Exhibit B). In addition, a large western sycamore tree located within the footprint of the Project has been identified as an important visual resource to the neighboring community. Therefore, the project has been designed to avoid the removal of this western sycamore tree and will limit impacts to this tree to trimming branches for overhead access. By incorporating these measures into the Project, visual impacts would be less than significant.

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

The project is located in a non-urbanized, publicly accessible area. The project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to the Toro Creek stream channel and riparian corridor that contribute to the visual character of the area. Per Biological mitigation measures, the stream channel would be restored to a natural condition, and native trees that are removed would be replanted (See Exhibit B). Impacts would be less than significant.

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

No lighting, or materials that may create a glare, is proposed for the project. The proposed project will not create a new source of light or glare which could affect day or nighttime views and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed improvements are consistent with the existing level of development within the Toro Creek Road corridor. The improvements would also be compatible with viewer expectations along this transportation corridor and are not expected to result in significant individual or cumulative aesthetic impacts. The new bridge is not expected to significantly impact the aesthetic quality of the relatively undeveloped project area.

The replacement bridge type is a single span slab bridge with a rising vertical profile, and its construction will not create obstructions of the view of any ridgelines as viewed from public roadways. The project is not located on a ridgetop, will not block views of rock outcrops or significant vegetation, or otherwise affect a scenic backdrop. No significant visual impacts would result from the project, and no aesthetic-related mitigation measures are needed for implementation of the project.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Sources

See Exhibit A.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Projects with potential impacts to Prime Farmlands, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance are subject to the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). Agricultural uses such as grazing occur along portions of the southern, eastern and western boundary of the project area. The project is within the Atascadero Agricultural Preserve Area. A review of the California Department of Conservation- California Important Farmland Finder mapping application, determined that no designated or mapped farmlands exist within the project area. The project is underlain by one soil type- the Lodo-Hambright-Millsholm families association 30 to 60% slopes, and is not designated as prime farmland.

There is no managed forest land or timberland within the project site.

Discussion

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

Based on the California Department of Conservation Natural Resource Agency Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the San Luis Obispo County Important Farmland Map (FMMP, 2012), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, the project site does not contain any unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or prime farmland and therefore will have no impact.

(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The project site does not contain any parcels currently under a Williamson Act contract and does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, and therefore will have no impact.

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

The proposed project will not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production as there are no designated forestlands or timberlands within the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project is located south and outside of an area that is designated as the Los Padres National Forest. The proposed project will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use as there are no designated forest lands within the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

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

The project will not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is located in a rural, low intensity agricultural area that consists of agricultural grazing and fields. No agricultural fields or row crops will be impacted by the proposed project. The project area is not identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance that is subject to FPPA

oversight. Further, the site is not located in an area designated as forest land or timberland, or under a Williamson Act contract. As a result, project development would not convert any farmland to non-agricultural use, or forest land to non-forest use, or conflict with existing agricultural, or timberland zoning or Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to agricultural or forestry resources and no mitigation measures are needed.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

II. AIR QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:					
(a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

San Luis Obispo County is in non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter 10 micrometers in size and smaller (PM_{10}) under the California Standards. This means that the state air quality standards for ozone and PM_{10} are not being met. The San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) Clean Air Plan (CAP) provides guidance for long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and countywide programs developed with the goal of reaching acceptable air quality levels. The CAP states that consistency analysis is generally required for large residential and commercial projects or industrial developments. Air quality improvement strategies in the CAP that may potentially be applicable to Public Works projects are those aimed at reducing the use of fossil fuels and reducing vehicle travel.

For project-specific emissions analysis, the current guidance is the County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012). The Handbook provides daily and quarterly air pollutant significance thresholds that apply to project operations and construction, and specifies mitigation measures to address threshold exceedances. These include diesel idling restrictions for on-road and off-road construction vehicles and equipment, control

measures for any grading activities that would generate airborne dust or disturb naturally occurring asbestos, and control measures for disturbance of hydrocarbon-contaminated soils, demolition of asbestos-containing buildings and structures, and demolition of structures coated with lead-based paint.

A New Project Referral was submitted to the APCD and the County received a response in June of 2019. APCD's recommendations are incorporated below.

Discussion

(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The proposed project is not expected to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. The project will not affect vehicle use such as by generating new traffic or increasing vehicle miles. The APCD determined that the construction phase impacts of this project would likely be below the APCD's significance threshold identified in the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (April 2012). The project is consistent with implementation of applicable air quality plans and therefore will have no impact.

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

The proposed project is within an area of San Luis Obispo County that has been designated as an attainment area federally, but as a nonattainment area for ozone and PM10 under the California standards. The proposed project would not result in a cumulative considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. The project would result in short-term construction equipment exhaust and fugitive dust emissions. Construction related pollutants may occur during the proposed bridge replacement, but this does not constitute a considerable regional net increase, as pollutant-producing work would be temporary and compliant with the APCD Air Quality Guidelines.

The use of diesel engines, diesel idling, diesel fuel, and portable equipment 50 horsepower (hp) or greater, if required for construction, would be required to comply with relevant State laws to reduce ozone precursors and diesel particulate matter (Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations (for on-road vehicles) and Section 2449 of the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel regulation (for off-road equipment). These requirements would help ensure the project does not contribute to a considerable net increase of criteria air pollutants. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact.

(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

In accordance with the APCD Handbook, sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminates. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks, playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential dwellings. The proposed project is within 1,000 feet of five residences, and may temporarily expose these sensitive receptors to temporary, construction-related pollutant concentrations including fugitive dust and diesel related exhaust.

Standard dust control measures would be implemented to minimize potential impacts to nearby residences to a less than significant level. These include, for example, covering all stockpiled materials, stabilizing disturbed soils, using wheel washers for construction vehicles, and preventing/sweeping visible soil material on adjacent paved roads. In addition, contractors would be required to comply with the diesel idling restrictions codified into law in Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, which would minimize potential effects of construction-related diesel emissions to a less than significant level.

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

The project is not expected to result in other emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. Project-generated odors (typically associated with construction projects) would be short-term and limited to the immediate construction area.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is likely to result in temporary construction-related air quality impacts, such as fugitive dust and equipment exhaust emissions, but not expected to generate air emissions that would exceed designated air emission thresholds determined by APCD to be significant. Construction activities in close proximity to residences have the potential to expose people to airborne dust and diesel particulates. Implementation of standard construction air quality control measures detailed in Mitigation Measure AIR-1 listed in Exhibit B, would reduce potential air quality effects to less than significant levels.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

III. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Numerous biological field surveys and focused assessments, including seasonally timed on-site botanical surveys, were conducted to classify the baseline site conditions and to assess the potential for presence of special-status plant and wildlife species and their habitats. The analysis included an evaluation of federal, and state listed species known to occur in the region based on a review of occurrences documented within the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and official species lists obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the project. The species described below are limited to those that were determined to have potential to occur within the project limits during construction activities.

The vegetation communities observed within the project limits were classified and further evaluated for their potential to support special-status plant and wildlife species. Descriptions of the vegetation communities observed onsite are provided below. Discussions of jurisdictional waterways, designated critical habitat, and special-status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur within the project limits are also presented.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) for the project comprises 4.77 acres and encompasses all areas of potential ground disturbance (including staging areas) for the proposed action. The BSA is larger in size than the actual project limits to account for buffering around work areas. Actual project impacts would be determined based on the final project design, and the need for access to work areas and construction staging.

Land Cover Types

The BSA consists predominantly of natural landscapes with some development associated with Toro Creek Road and construction of rural residences. Portions of the BSA have been previously altered by low-intensity agricultural use such as grazing and orchards. The dominant vegetation communities present within the

BSA include coast live oak woodland and forest, arroyo willow thickets, coyote brush scrub, coastal sage scrub, and ruderal. The remaining portion of the BSA is comprised of the Toro Creek stream channel, and developed areas (i.e. roadway). The habitat types are described in greater detail below:

Coast live oak woodland and forest is present within the BSA, with coast live oak as the dominant species. Oak woodland and forest forms an open to continuous canopy along portions of the BSA and along the riparian corridor. The understory is a mix of native shrubs, such as California bay, coyote brush, common snowberry, western poison oak, and brown dogwood, as well as native and non-native grasses and herbaceous species. A total of 1.32 acres of coast live oak woodland and forest was identified within the BSA.

The riparian corridor associated with Toro Creek supports scrubby streamside arroyo willow thickets, varying in canopy cover from relatively open to impenetrable. Both shrub and tree forms of arroyo willow are dominant on the banks of the creek, along with western sycamore, and California bay. Coast live oak trees are rooted on the riparian to upland transition above the stream channel. The understory includes poison oak, California blackberry, and snowberry. A total of 0.53 acres of arroyo willow thickets are present in the BSA. Construction access to the project site would occur through this land cover type.

Coyote brush scrub occurs primarily in the northeast portion of the BSA. The vegetation in this cover type consists of scattered coyote brush with ground cover comprised of black mustard, verbena species, American birdsfoot trefoil, and non-native grasses. This type of low-diversity coyote brush scrub is typical of early seral stages transitioning from the past disturbances that occurred within the area to a shrub-dominated plant community. Approximately 0.74 acres of coyote brush scrub exists in the project area.

Coastal Sage Scrub occurs within the northwest portion of the BSA on a steep south facing slope. The plant composition found within this habitat includes poison oak, California sagebrush, black sage, long stem buckwheat, and monkey flower species. Approximately 0.08 acres of coastal sage scrub occur in the project area.

A large portion of the BSA consists of ruderal vegetation associated with road edges and low intensity agricultural areas that are routinely maintained by human-generated disturbances (e.g., mowing, disking, and possible herbicide application). Vegetation in this cover type includes primarily nonnative grasses and forbs that establish quickly after disturbance activities. These include wild oats, bromes, poison hemlock, and English plantain. Areas along the existing roadways are dominated by grass species, while the areas bordering scrub vegetation are dominated by poison hemlock. Because of the consistently disturbed nature of this land cover type, it is not particularly valuable to wildlife species. Approximately 1.7 acres of the BSA is considered ruderal.

The area directly associated with Toro Creek in the BSA is classified as stream channel. Toro Creek is an ephemeral stream, and generally contains flowing water during the wet season (December-June) and dry rocky cobble with emergent vegetation during the dry season (July-November). There are no areas dominated by emergent wetland vegetation outside the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) in the BSA. A total of 0.2 acre of stream channel is present in the BSA. Construction activities, including a temporary stream diversion would occur in this habitat type.

Developed areas within the BSA include paved and graveled roadways (i.e., Toro Creek Road, and residential access roads and driveways). These areas are primarily devoid of vegetation or contain minimal amounts of ruderal species. Because of the highly disturbed nature of this land cover type, it is of little to no value to wildlife. Approximately 0.27 acres of developed/bare ground exist in the BSA.

Jurisdictional Waters

A Jurisdictional Waters Assessment was prepared for this project to delineate federal and state jurisdictional waters within the BSA (County of SLO, 2024). The primary aquatic feature within the BSA is Toro Creek, an ephemeral coastal stream which flows into the Pacific Ocean. Toro Creek is subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdiction and regulation. The area of the stream channel located below the OHWM is within USACE jurisdiction and RWQCB jurisdiction under sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act. The stream channel and riparian banks up to the outer extent of the riparian canopy demarcates CDFW jurisdiction under section 1602 of California Fish and Game Code. No wetlands occur within the BSA.

Critical Habitat and Special Status Land Cover

Designated critical habitat for both South-Central California Coast steelhead (steelhead) and California red-legged frog (CRLF) was identified within the BSA. Critical habitat for steelhead within the BSA includes the Toro Creek stream channel, and critical habitat for CRLF includes the stream channel, adjacent riparian areas, and upland areas within the BSA.

The Coast Live Oak woodland habitat within the BSA is a sensitive habitat type and is protected by California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4 (Senate Bill 1334), which directs counties to evaluate and mitigate for impacts to oak woodlands when reviewing projects under CEQA. No oak tree removals are proposed and no impacts to Coast Live Oak woodland habitat within the BSA will occur as a result of this project.

Special-status Plants

The USFWS official species list and CNDDB records search indicate special-status plant taxa have been documented in the area. However, special status plant species were eliminated from consideration as having potential to occur within the BSA due to lack of suitable habitat, range of elevation, lack of suitable soil type or substrate, or current known distribution. Appropriately timed botanical surveys confirmed that no special status plant species are growing within the BSA.

Special-status Wildlife

The habitat types observed within the BSA provide suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species, as well as migratory birds. Steelhead, Coast Range newt and southwestern pond turtle have been detected within the BSA during field surveys. CRLF and lesser slender salamander were not detected during field surveys but have been documented within 5 miles of the BSA and have the potential to occur within the project area.

South-Central California Coast Steelhead

The South-Central California Coast steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) is the anadromous (ocean-rearing) form of rainbow trout in Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties. Adults migrate up to hundreds of miles from the marine environment into the freshwater streams and rivers of their birth to spawn (typically late winter through early spring). Steelhead require cool, clear, coastal streams and rivers with abundant shade and structure and loose, gravel substrates to spawn. This species is listed as federally threatened and is a CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC). The portion of Toro Creek within the BSA supports suitable steelhead habitat, and steelhead have been observed within the BSA.

California Red-Legged Frog

California red-legged frog, a primarily diurnal frog, is federally listed as threatened and is a CDFW SSC. This species occurs in a variety of lowland and foothill habitat types that include (or are in proximity to) aquatic features, such as ponds or streams with dense or shrubby emergent riparian vegetation, that are required for breeding. The typical CRLF breeding season extends from November through April. The portion of Toro Creek within the BSA supports potentially suitable aquatic breeding and non-breeding habitat for this species. CRLF may use the creek banks that support vegetation as refugia. There is a reported occurrence of CRLF within 2 miles of the project site. Although no CRLF were observed within the project limits and protocol-level survey efforts were not conducted, presence in the BSA is inferred.

Coast Range Newt, Lesser Slender Salamander, South-western Pond Turtle

Coast Range newt, lesser slender salamander, and south-western pond turtle are all CDFW SSC. South-western pond turtle is also federally proposed threatened. Each of these species have been documented within five miles of the project site. Coast Range newt, and south-western pond turtle were detected in the BSA during field surveys. The BSA provides suitable aquatic habitat for all three of these species.

Nesting Birds

A variety of raptor and passerine bird species have the potential to nest within the project area and are protected during the nesting period under the provisions of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code Sections 3502 and 3503.5. Further, eagles are protected year-round under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Many bird species may use the habitat types observed on-site for nesting, especially the bridge structures, and habitats that contain tall trees and dense shrub cover. The arroyo willow thicket within the BSA potentially provides suitable habitat for the federally and state endangered least Bell's vireo, but this species has not been documented nesting within the vicinity of the project site and was not detected during numerous biological field surveys.

Discussion

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

No special-status plant species were observed within or around the BSA during seasonally timed botanical surveys. Therefore, no impacts to special-status plants are anticipated from the project.

Steelhead may be present within the BSA during project implementation and project activities may result in take of this species via injury or death during diversion and dewatering. The project has the potential to result in indirect effects to water quality downstream of the project area from temporary construction impacts.

CRLF may use the banks of Toro Creek and may be present within the BSA during construction, which could result in take via injury or death during dewatering and other ground disturbing-activities. Indirect impacts to CRLF may also occur, including adverse effects to water quality from sedimentation, erosion, or other habitat modifications.

Coast Range newt, lesser slender salamander, and south-western pond turtle all may be present in the aquatic and riparian areas of the BSA and the adjacent upland/dispersal habitat. If these species are present during construction, there is potential for direct impacts during dewatering and other ground-disturbing activities. Indirect impacts may also occur via adverse effects to water quality from sedimentation, erosion, and other habitat modifications.

The typical nesting bird period is February 1 through September 1 and this period is expected to overlap with the anticipated construction schedule to some extent. If nesting birds are present on-site during construction, direct impacts may occur via injury or death during vegetation removal or other ground-disturbing activities. Indirect impacts to nesting bird species may result from construction noise or other general disturbance, which may cause premature fledging of young, nest abandonment, starvation, and reduced health of nestlings. The arroyo willow thicket within the BSA potentially provides suitable habitat for the federally and state endangered least Bell's vireo, but this species has not been documented nesting within the region and was not detected during numerous biological field surveys.

Once completed, the project would not have adverse effects on biological resources. During construction, the project could result in potentially significant impacts to jurisdictional areas and special-status wildlife. Prior to and during construction, implementation of design features like a Diversion and Dewatering Plan, as well as avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, such as crew trainings, qualified biological monitoring and preconstruction surveys, species protection measures, seasonal restrictions, erosion and sedimentation control, and invasive species control, would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

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

Sensitive natural communities in the project area include the creek channel (areas below the OHWM), the riparian bank, and coast live oak woodland habitat within the BSA. The project has been designed to avoid and minimize temporary and permanent impacts to areas below the OHWM and in the riparian community bordering the creek, and to avoid impacts to oak woodland habitat. Based on preliminary project designs, it is anticipated that the project would result in a temporary impact on 0.06 acres and permanent impact of 0.0004 acres below the OHWM. The project is anticipated to have a temporary impact on 0.23 acres and permanent impact of 0.12 acres of riparian bank. Indirect impacts from construction activities would be avoided and minimized with implementation of standard best management practices, including environmentally sensitive area (ESA) fencing, sedimentation and erosion controls, and measures to prevent debris from falling into the channel during construction and bridge demolition activities.

Temporary impacts to riparian habitat would be limited to the minimum necessary to complete construction of the project. Temporarily impacted riparian habitat would be restored in-kind onsite at a 1:1 ratio, to the extent feasible as described within a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) which will be prepared during the permitting phase of the project. Wherever feasible, efforts would be made to trim trees instead of removing them; however, wherever trees are removed within riparian habitat, they will be replanted at a 3:1 ratio as will be discussed in an HMMP.

Permanent impacts to riparian habitat will result from installation of the new bridge approaches, abutments, and rock slope protection (RSP). New impervious surfaces such as the roadway approaches, and concrete bridge abutments, will be mitigated for at a 3:1 ratio and a strategy for mitigation will be discussed in an HMMP. The RSP however, will be bioengineered as vegetated RSP by filling the voids with topsoil, and establishing native riparian vegetation. The vegetated RSP is anticipated to provide in-kind riparian habitat value and impacts to riparian habitat due to installation of RSP are proposed to be replaced in-kind and onsite at a 1:1 ratio, and will be discussed in an HMMP. The final mitigation ratios for jurisdictional areas would be determined during the permitting phase of the project and an HMMP would be finalized prior to acquisition of the permits.

With the inclusion of the Biological Resources Mitigation Measures in Exhibit B, and compliance with all of the various regulatory permit terms and conditions, the potential impacts to sensitive habitat types; including federal and state protected jurisdictional waters, and riparian habitat areas, would be reduced to less than significant levels.

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

A Jurisdictional Waters Assessment was conducted within the BSA, and the primary aquatic feature delineated was the Toro Creek stream channel which contained state and federal jurisdictional waters. However, no wetlands were identified within the BSA.

Implementation of the project is expected to result in temporary and permanent impacts to jurisdictional waters (i.e., impacts below the OHWM of the Toro Creek stream channel). Permanent impacts would result from a small area of RSP placed below the new bridge abutments. Temporary impacts would result from construction access, diversion and dewatering, grading, and falsework required for construction.

Upon completion, the project would not result in changes to the creek bed or flow conditions of Toro Creek. With the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, such as seasonal work restrictions, water quality protection measures, and habitat restoration there would be a less than significant impact to state or federally protected jurisdictional waters.

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

Construction would be conducted during the dry season to avoid potential impacts to aquatic species. In the event water is present during construction, dewatering would be accomplished using temporary cofferdams and a pipe or pipes for controlled enclosed conveyance through the project site. The stream diversion would be implemented in a manner that would avoid significant impact to aquatic species that rely on the creek for migration, nursery, and foraging habitat, and will be subject to approval by regulatory agencies prior to implementation. The project would not alter existing channel conditions, or flow conditions that determine the habitat conditions for steelhead and other aquatic species.

Construction effects on nesting birds would be avoided by conducting pre-construction surveys for nesting birds and waiting to conduct vegetation clearing until active nesting has been completed. With the implementation of the biological mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-17 outlined in Exhibit B, project impacts would be less than significant.

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

Although the project would require removal of native trees, reviews of the North County Area Plan – Salinas Subarea Plan, and Title 22 of the County Code found that the project does not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. No oak trees would be removed in association with the project. Permanently impacted and temporarily disturbed areas would be mitigated for and restored with native plant species appropriate for the area and invasive plant species would be removed.

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

The project site is not subject to any adopted or approved habitat conservation plans and therefore, the project would not conflict with the provisions of any such plans.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed project has the potential to impact federal and state jurisdictional waters, sensitive vegetation communities, special-status wildlife, and nesting birds. Impacts of the project on biological resources would generally be limited to temporary construction impacts.

Biological Opinions from USFWS and NMFS pertaining to CRLF and steelhead, respectively, would be acquired and provide protective measures for these and other species. The proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures BIO 1 through BIO-17 in Exhibit B address impacts to biological resources and reduce them to less than significant levels. These measures include efforts to restore temporarily disturbed areas, implementing erosion control and water quality protection measures, conducting pre-construction surveys for special-status wildlife species, and limiting project boundaries. Biological monitoring conducted by agency-approved biologists would be conducted throughout the construction phase of the project to ensure compliance with the protective measures. A Diversion and Dewatering Plan would also be prepared and submitted for regulatory agency approval prior to implementation. These measures may be refined by regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over the project during the permit acquisition phase. The recommended mitigation measures to address biological resources, while extensive, are typical for a bridge replacement project of this scope and scale.

Sources

See Exhibit A

IV. CULTURAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Setting

A cultural resources investigation was conducted for the project area including an archival records search, and a pedestrian survey. The following inventories were examined for cultural resources: National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, California Historic Resources Inventory. A records search of the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC) was conducted on October 24, 2018. The records search covered a two-mile radius around the project area and included archaeological and historical resources, locations and citations for previous cultural resources studies, as well as a review of the State Office of Historic Preservation's historic properties directory. Twenty-one previously conducted cultural resource surveys have been conducted with a two-mile buffer of the project area with some cultural resources identified, though none were previously conducted within the project area. Historic topographic maps and aerial photographs were also reviewed to assess the potential for historic structural resources and historical archaeological resources. The project area was surveyed for cultural resources in September of 2018 with negative findings.

The Toro Creek Road bridge was built in 1950's and is considered historic in age. Caltrans conducted a historical significance evaluation for this local agency bridge, as part of their Structure Maintenance & Investigations (2018) and found it not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

No historic or archaeological resources were identified within the project area as a result of conducting a records search or focused surface survey of the project area.

Discussion

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

No significant historical resources exist within the project area. While the existing bridge over Toro Creek is considered historic in age, Caltrans evaluated the historic nature of the bridge and determined that it was not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

No previously identified or demarcated archaeological resources are located within the project area. An archaeological survey of the project area, archival research, and a CCIC records search did not yield any archaeological resources. The proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an existing archaeological resource and, therefore will have no impact.

(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

No human remains were identified within the project area. If human remains are inadvertently exposed, the County will follow appropriate standard protocol. The proposed project is not expected to disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

No archaeological resources were encountered or identified in the project area as a result of the record search, background research, and field survey.

Based on this information and given the location of the project area near a water source that was likely utilized prehistorically, the potential to encounter buried unknown archaeological resources during ground-disturbing activities is moderate. There could be impacts to unknown cultural resources from ground-disturbing activities during project construction (an "inadvertent discovery"), which would be a potentially significant impact under CEQA. Therefore, archaeological mitigation measures CR-1 through CR-3 in Exhibit B will be implemented to reduce potentially significant impacts to unknown cultural resources to less than significant levels.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

V. ENERGY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Energy considerations under CEQA are intended to evaluate projects with respect to the goals of decreasing energy consumption and reliance on fossil fuels, and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. Relevant factors for consideration can include energy consumption required for the project, compliance with energy standards, and effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies, electricity demand, and transportation energy requirements. Overall, the construction of this proposed project would not require the creation of a new source of energy and will not impact existing energy sources.

Discussion

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

During construction there may be a temporary consumption of energy resources required for the movement of equipment and materials; however, the duration is limited due to the phasing of construction, and the area of construction is minimal. Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations (e.g., limit engine idling times, require the recycling of construction debris, etc.) would reduce short-term energy demand during the project's construction to the extent feasible, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

State and local agencies regulate the use and consumption of energy through various methods and programs. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the County's adopted Energy Wise Plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed project will have less than significant impacts related to consumption of energy resources and will not conflict with a local or state energy plan during project construction or operation. No energy resources mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(c)	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The project site is located in the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province. The Coast Range was initially formed by uplifts that occurred during the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods of geologic time (greater than 65 million years ago). The Coast Ranges consists of northwest-trending mountain ranges and valleys with many faults. The project is underlain by the Cretaceous-ages Toro Formation which consists of clay shale with thin sandstone layers. The project is primarily located in the mapped Latest Pleistocene to Holocene alluvium, undifferentiated (Qa), geologic formation.

As part of a geotechnical assessment (BSK, 2018) conducted for the project, two borings were drilled near the proposed bridge abutments, the bores encountered approximately 15 to 50 feet of medium dense, clayey sand and stiff sandy clay, underlain by sedimentary rock. The sedimentary rock was decomposed to slightly weathered and very intensely fractured. Rock at abutment 1 was found to be very intensely and highly weathered. The geotechnical study found that the site does not contain soils considered corrosive to foundation elements.

Soils in the project area are mapped as Lodo-Hambright-Millsholm families association, 30-60% slopes. This soil complex has a gravelly and sandy loam texture, and are considered well to excessively drained, with bedrock found between 7 to 18 inches in depth. Based on the Caltrans Acceleration Response Spectrum (ARS) Online tool and Caltrans Fault Database (Caltrans, 2012a), the nearest and controlling deterministic seismic sources are the Oceanic-West Huasna, Rinconada and Cambria fault zones.

Discussion

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

(a-i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting by preventing the construction of buildings used for human occupancy over an area with known faults. The nearest and controlling deterministic seismic sources are the Oceanic-West Huasna, Rinconada and Cambria fault zones (BSK, 2018).

The project site does not contain, nor is it adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone Area, and no known or mapped active faults of Holocene or younger age faults are present within 1,000 feet of the site. The nearest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is located approximately 12.7 miles southeast of the project area -the Los Osos Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, the potential for surface rupture due to faulting occurring beneath the site during the design life of the proposed development is considered extremely low and therefore would have no impact.

(a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

The project area, like most of California, could be subject to such seismic events as strong ground shaking, which could potentially expose people and/or structures to substantially adverse effects. The ground motion characteristics of any future earthquakes in the region would depend on the characteristics of the generating fault, the distance to the epicenter, the magnitude of the earthquake, and the site-specific geologic conditions. Major faults in the region could be a source of strong seismic-related movement at the project site. The site is in an area of moderate seismicity; moderate to strong ground shaking due to a seismic event in the region can be expected during the service life of the bridge structure (BSK, 2018).

While the site is not within a currently established State of California Earthquake Fault Zone for surface fault rupture hazards, the potential for seismic events is still possible. The nearest inactive fault is mapped approximately 0.65-mile north of the project area. The nearest potentially capable (inferred) fault is mapped approximately two miles southwest of the project area.

The possibility of seismic ground shaking may impact the replacement bridge, however the bridge has been designed utilizing Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria (SDC) which specifies the minimum seismic design requirements that are necessary to meet the performance goals for ordinary bridges. When the Design Seismic Hazards are implemented, ordinary bridges designed per these specifications are expected to remain standing during a substantial earthquake but may suffer significant damage. The SDC is a compilation of new and existing seismic design criteria documented in various publications. The goal of this document is to update all the Structure Design manuals on a periodic basis to reflect the current state of practice for seismic bridge design. The implementation of the SCD Standards would result in a less than significant impact.

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

Liquefaction is a condition in which saturated granular soil materials transform from a solid to a liquefied state when subjected to large, rapid loadings such as strong ground shaking during an earthquake. The transformation to a liquid state occurs due to the tendency of granular materials to compact, which

consequently results in increased pore water pressure accompanied by a significant reduction in the effective stress. The change of state occurs most readily in recently deposited (i.e., geologically young) loose to moderately dense granular soils. Liquefaction susceptibility is highly dependent on the density of the soil, and looser soils are generally more susceptible. Furthermore, the consequences of liquefaction are also density dependent. In loose materials, soil liquefaction can result in a significant loss of shear strength, which is often accompanied by large shear deformations. In moderately dense to dense materials, liquefaction may temporarily induce high excess pore water pressures, but the tendency to dilate during shear inhibits major strength loss and large ground deformations.

Based on the soil types and geologic materials found to be present at the site and the depth to groundwater, the potential for liquefaction to occur at the site and to adversely affect the planned improvements is very low (BSK, 2018).

Locally, the existing alluvial soils within the Toro Creek channel may be susceptible to liquefaction, however, the liquefaction potential at the site is considered low. The project is located in a mapped area that has moderate potential for liquefaction risk. Lands outside of the Toro Creek corridor are considered to have a low potential for liquefaction risk. Construction of the project should not increase the potential for liquefaction to occur and the project will be designed to utilize CalTrans SDC, and therefore would have a less than significant impact.

(a-iv) Landslides?

Landslides are the downslope motions of conglomerations of earth materials, bedrock, or combinations of both. The chance of a landslide occurring are elevated by increases in slope gradient, looseness of material, clay content of the bedrock, underground springs, unfavorable slope orientation with existing fault boundaries, human disturbance of the landslide, increases in water content, earthquake forces to help mobilize the mass, and disturbance of the lateral confining forces (Seed, 1979).

The project is located in a mapped area of moderate landside risk potential as the topography is generally flat, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

Grading, vegetation removal, excavation, and placement of fill/pavement materials required for the project could result in temporary soil erosion, sedimentation, and/or stormwater runoff. No substantial changes in the existing site topography will occur and all disturbed areas will be restored to pre-project conditions, to the extent feasible, upon completion of construction activities. When construction is completed, the project site would be restored and revegetated.

Standard Best Management Practices will be implemented during the construction phase of the project to prevent loss of topsoil and erosion. The project will not require excessive grading and is not going to result in significant impacts related to erosion or displacement/loss of topsoil and will therefore result in a less than significant impact.

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

Lateral spread is a potential hazard commonly associated with liquefaction where extensional ground cracking and settlement occur as a response to lateral migration of subsurface liquefiable material. These phenomena typically occur adjacent to free faces such as slopes and creek channels. Because the potential

for liquefaction to occur at the site has been determined to be very low, the potential for lateral spread to occur at the site as a result of a future seismic event is also low.

Subsidence is the sinking of the ground surface caused by the compression of soil layers. Subsidence involves deep seated settlement caused by the compression of soil layers due to the withdrawal of fluid (e.g., oil, natural gas, and water). The settlement can be exacerbated by increased loading, such as from the construction of on-site buildings or the placement of additional fill over compressible layers. This settlement can be mitigated prior to development through the removal and re-compaction of loose soils (Seed, 1979).

The project area is located within the Latest Pleistocene to Holocene alluvium, undifferentiated (Qa) geologic unit. This Geological unit has moderate liquefaction potential, and low landslide potential. It's unlikely that this geologic unit would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse, therefore would have a less than significant impact.

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

Expansive soils swell or heave with increases in moisture content and shrink with decreases in moisture content. Soils in the project area are mapped as Lodo-Hambright-Millsholm families association, 30-60% slopes. This well drained soil complex is not rated for expansiveness. BSK (2018) conducted soil expansion readings at the project site and determined that clayey soils onsite express very low expansive potential with an expansion index of 18.

The project area does not contain soils that are rated with high shrink-swell characteristics (expansive soils), and therefore will have no impact.

(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

The use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are not proposed for the project and therefore will have no impact.

(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

The probability of discovering paleontological resources depends on the geologic formation being excavated, and the depth and volume of the excavation. Sedimentary rocks, such as those sometimes found in coastal areas, usually contain fossils. Granitic rocks usually will not contain fossils. The project is primarily located in the mapped Latest Pleistocene to Holocene alluvium, undifferentiated (Qa), geologic formation. A review of the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP), BerkeleyMapper did not reveal any paleontological resources in the project area- the nearest paleontological locality is located approximately twenty miles to the south east.

No unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features were identified within the project location, and none are known to exist in the area, and therefore will have a less than significant impact. If unique paleontological or geologic features are unearthed during construction, the find will be assessed and documented.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed bridge replacement and related improvements are geotechnically feasible as presently designed. No significant geologic hazards (fault rupture, landslide, collapsible soils etc.) were identified in the immediate site by either published geologic mapping or site reconnaissance (BSK, 2018). BSK found that

the project is feasible geotechnically and there are no major geotechnical concerns for the project, although some scour can be anticipated due to flow in the creek.

Development of the project is required to meet or exceed the most current requirements of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards, which have been developed to establish the minimum requirements necessary for road design to safeguard the public health, safety and general welfare through structural strength, stability, access, and other standards.

Compliance with AASHTO, Caltrans, and other applicable standards typically indicates that risks to people and structures, including those related to unstable soil conditions, were properly safeguarded against. Through compliance with these current standards, the proposed project will be designed to withstand anticipated seismic and geologic stresses according to current established engineering practices. Therefore, potential impacts related to unstable soil conditions are considered less than significant and no mitigation will be required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions are broadly recognized as contributing to an increase in the earth's average surface temperature and long-term changes in climate. Potential GHG emissions associated with the project would be limited to burning fossil fuels from construction vehicles and equipment.

The passage of Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006), recognized the need to reduce GHG emissions and set the GHG reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law codified the statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. This was to be accomplished by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions.

In January 2021, the APCD released interim Greenhouse Gas Guidance (APCD 2021). The interim guidance replaces previous thresholds of significance for GHG emissions that were based on a 2020 planning horizon.

Current recommended options for CEQA consideration of GHG emissions include: (a) consistency with a qualified climate action plan; (b) no net increase; and (c) lead-agency-adopted defensible CEQA GHG emissions thresholds. Generally, these approaches pertain to new commercial and residential development and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which are not relevant for the project.

Discussion

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

As discussed in the Air Quality section, a project referral was submitted to the APCD, and their comments were incorporated into the evaluations in the Air Quality Section. The project would not generate operational air emissions. The project would result in short-term construction equipment exhaust emissions as well as emissions from construction commutes, which result in contributions of GHG emissions. Based on the small scope of the project and the short-term construction duration, construction is not expected to generate greenhouse gas emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment.

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

The project is consistent with the general level of development anticipated and projected in the Clean Air Plan and the County's Energy Wise Plan. Based on the APCD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook, the project will not exceed operational thresholds triggering mitigation. The proposed project would not generate any greenhouse gases beyond those typically associated with construction activities, which will be short term and are considered to have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed project will not generate operational emissions beyond existing levels. Construction emissions would be limited in scale and duration.

As described under the Air Quality section above, Exhibit B includes a list of mitigation measures typically used to mitigate impacts to air quality from construction projects. Standard mitigation measures regarding construction equipment standards and vehicle idling would also help reduce GHG emissions to less than significant levels. No additional mitigation measures specific to GHG are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Setting

The following analysis is based on the Initial Site Assessment (ISA) study prepared for this project (Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2019).

Hazardous Materials Database Search

The purpose of the ISA was to identify potential or known hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and/or contamination (recognized environmental conditions) at the project site. The project area was not listed in any database containing information about known sites that generate, treat, store or dispose of hazardous materials, or sites where a known release of hazardous contamination or incident has occurred. The regulatory and environmental database records and governmental websites reviewed included: State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker, Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources, National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS), California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor, and California Environmental Protection Agency's Cortese List (a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5). The ISA did not identify any petroleum hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyls, or other contaminants of concern within the project area.

Site Reconnaissance

A site reconnaissance survey was conducted of the project area and no hazardous substances or petroleum products, above- or below-ground storage tanks, odors, drums, unidentified substances, polychlorinated biphenyls, or other conditions of concerns such as stains, corrosion, clarifiers, degreasers, pits, ponds, stained soil, stressed vegetation, solid waste/debris, wells, or septic systems were identified.

The site reconnaissance effort identified two pipelines that cross Toro Creek Road approximately 150-feet south of the bridge. One pipeline was marked as Chevron owned and the other pipeline was marked as a high-pressure gas line owned by SoCalGas. Additionally, an old concrete marker was observed adjacent to the west side of Toro Creek Road, and south of the bridge that was marked "Navy Pipe." Due to the lack of reported releases and distance from the bridge (over 100 feet), the nearby pipelines are not expected to impact the project site.

Land Use History

Adjacent properties generally appear to have historically consisted of agricultural land occupied by orchards and may have been used for agricultural purposes from as early as 1949. Agricultural land use is typically associated with the use of organochlorine pesticides (OCPs) and arsenic. With surface water drainage likely flowing toward Toro Creek and the bridge, shallow soil surrounding the bridge abutments and within the proposed project area may be impacted with OCPs and arsenic. Therefore, the adjacent historical agricultural land use is considered a potential recognized environmental condition.

It appears that the project site has historically consisted of a road and/or bridge in right-of-way as early as 1897, and the existing bridge was constructed in 1950. Based on the age of the existing bridge, lead based paint (LBP) and asbestos containing building materials (ACM) may be present at the bridge.

As part of the geotechnical investigation conducted for this project, one sample was tested for the presence of naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) in accordance with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Test Method 435 (BSK, 2018). NOA was not detected in the sample tested at the project site- an exemption form will be filed with the APCD along with the copy of the geologic evaluation as part of the project.

Discussion

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

The project does not propose the use of hazardous materials. However, the Initial Site Assessment determined that a potential exists for LBP, and ACM to be present within the existing bridge structure and aerially deposited lead (ADL), OCP, and arsenic to be present in shallow soil surrounding the project area. As described in HAZ-5 in Exhibit B, surveys will be conducted prior to demolition to determine the presence of LBP, or ACM within the bridge structure or ADL, OCP, and arsenic within the soils surrounding the bridge. If any hazardous materials are identified, proper handling and abatement of hazardous materials would be conducted during demolition. By undertaking these measures, the project would result in a less than significant impact.

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

The APCD identified that the project is located within an area with the potential to contain naturally occurring asbestos. However, serpentine or fibrous material that could contain asbestos were not identified during geotechnical evaluation of the site (BSK, 2018).

No direct or indirect evidence of spills or releases of oil or fuel within the project area, or evidence of storage or distribution of petroleum hydrocarbons were identified in the project site vicinity; however oils, gasoline, lubricants, fuels, and other potentially hazardous substances would be used and stored on-site during construction activities. Should a spill or leak of these materials occur during construction activities, sensitive resources within the project vicinity could be adversely affected (e.g., riparian habitat, agricultural areas, Toro Creek). Such uses will be short-term and subject to standard requirements for the handling of hazardous materials and will have a less than significant impact.

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

No schools exist, or are proposed, within one-quarter mile of the proposed project, and therefore will have no impact related to emitting hazardous emissions, materials substances or waste within one-quarter mile of a school.

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

The proposed project is not found on a site that is listed on the 'Cortese List' (which is a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5), and therefore will have no impact.

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

The proposed project is not located within an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The project would not result in a permanent safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project is not expected to conflict with any regional emergency response or evacuation plan, and therefore will have no impact.

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

The project area is located within a 'very high' fire risk area, and the emergency response time in this location is approximately 15-20 minutes. In June of 2019, a New Project Referral Form was sent to CalFIRE to determine if there were significant concerns associated with the project- no response was received. The project would not change the existing land use. Construction of the new bridge does not present a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, will provide safe access for emergency service vehicles, and will have a less than significant impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Based on the proximity of the project to Toro Creek Road, there is a potential for the soil beneath the project site to be impacted by ADL. Therefore, conducting an ADL assessment within the boundaries of the proposed project area is recommended. In addition, to evaluate if shallow soil within the proposed limits of the bridge replacement project is impacted with OCPs and arsenic at levels that would pose a health risk to those working on the bridge replacement project, the soil samples collected as part of the ADL assessment should also be analyzed for OCPs and arsenic.

Although not considered a Recognized Environmental Condition with regard to the ISA, there is the potential for LBP and ACM to be present at the bridge. Therefore, an LBP and ACM survey should be conducted prior to demolition of the existing bridge. In June of 2019 a New Project Referral Form was submitted to the County of San Luis Obispo Environmental Health Services to determine if there were any significant project-related concerns regarding environmental health issues- no response was received.

The proposed project is not expected to create, emit, use, transport, dispose of, or release hazardous materials that could cause significant health hazards. No schools, airports, or hazardous material sites exist within or adjacent to the project area. The project will not interfere with emergency response plans or cause a significant risk involving wild land fires. The APCD identified that the project is located within a candidate area that potentially has Naturally Occurring Asbestos, subsequent testing did not identify NOA at the project site.

Project site has generally remained unchanged since the time of bridge construction. A field visit of the project area yielded no evidence of underground or aboveground storage tanks, drug lab materials or wastes, staining of the ground or other evidence of substantial spills, or other indicators of the presence of hazardous materials. There was no evidence of mining activity.

By undertaking the mitigation measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-6 in Exhibit B which include testing for ADL, LBP, ACM, OCP, and arsenic, prior to construction, the project would result in a less than significant impact.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The existing bridge spans Toro Creek along Toro Creek Road. The reach of Toro Creek within the project area is an intermittent stream with a 16-foot-wide channel, and runs westerly to the Pacific Ocean. The tributary watershed is composed of rugged coastal hills and is approximately 2,626 acres or 4.1 square miles with an average annual precipitation of approximately 40 to 45 inches. Toro Creek bisects a generally flat valley flanked by mountainous terrain, and the creek channel banks adjacent to the existing bridge abutments are steep embankments.

According to the California Department of Groundwater Resources Bulletin 118, the Project site is not located within a mapped groundwater basin. Surface water in the Project area is expected to flow toward Toro Creek which generally flows to the southwest. Depth to groundwater is expected to fluctuate and generally corresponds with the water level in Toro Creek.

The area of ground disturbance during construction of the project is anticipated to be less than one acre.

Discussion

(a) *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

The Regional Water Quality Control Board will provide regulatory oversight to ensure that the project is compliant with existing water quality standards. The proposed projected is not expected to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

Minimal to moderate amounts of groundwater are expected to be encountered during drilling activities associated with the new bridge construction and may need to be pumped to dewater the work areas; however, this will not impact groundwater supply. The project will have no impact to groundwater supplies or recharge as the project will not draw upon, decrease, or substantially interfere with groundwater recharge.

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

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

Erosional scour, when fast moving waters around a bridge removes sediment from around the bridge foundation, can potentially occur at bridge sites. Siltation is when water becomes dirty as a result of fine mineral particulates in the water. Caltrans has developed the AASHTO design standards to include requirements to address the problem of stream stability, scour and siltation when it comes to bridge design. The proposed project is not expected to result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site, as the Caltrans AASHTO standards specifications and preparation of a Water Pollution Control Plan will be utilized and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

The project is not expected to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, as there is minimal new impervious area being created, therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

The project site is not located within the state Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) coverage area. A Water Pollution Control Plan is required to minimize on-site sedimentation, runoff and erosion and therefore the project will have a less than significant impact.

(c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

In order to construct the new bridge, it may be necessary to temporarily divert creek flow and dewater the construction site for low flow conditions that typically occur between May through October. The design of the diversion will provide for adequate surface water conveyance through appropriate sizing of the diversion pipes and cofferdams used to construct the diversion. All diversion structures would be removed prior to the onset of the rainy season, when high flows typically occur. Due to the appropriate design and implementation of the diversion for construction dewatering, the project will have a less than significant impact.

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

The project is located adjacent to the Toro Creek, regulatory floodway, with portions falling within a mapped undetermined 100-year flood zone. The project is not located in an area subject to tsunamis or seismic seiches (a standing wave in an enclosed or partially enclosed body of water).

Project implementation is not expected to result in significant impacts associated with development in the 100-year Flood Hazard designation because the project is designed in accordance with Caltrans AASHTO standards, and the other applicable standards. Therefore, compliance with the current applicable design standards provides assurance that the project was designed to withstand general risks associated with development within the 100-year Flood Hazard designation. The development footprint within the flood zone is relatively small and potential impacts to the floodplain are considered less than significant.

(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Permits from the Regional Water Quality Control Board will be obtained for occurring within their jurisdiction and all work will comply with the RWQCB policies and plans. The project does not occur within a mapped groundwater basin and no sustainable groundwater management plan is applicable to the project area. The proposed project will be consistent with existing water quality control plans or sustainable groundwater management plans, therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Compliance with AASHTO, Caltrans, and the other applicable standards and specifications will provide assurances that surface and groundwater resources are protected. Preparation and compliance with a Water Pollution Control Plan will also ensure that potential water quality impacts from sedimentation and erosion are avoided and minimized. As specified above for water quality, existing regulations and/or

required plans will adequately address surface water quality impacts during construction and permanent use of the project. No significant impacts to Hydrology and Water Quality are anticipated.

Use of the mitigation measures included in the Biological Resources and Hazards Sections will avoid and reduce the potential project-related impacts to water resources and hydrology to less than significant levels. No hydrology and water quality specific mitigation measures are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The proposed project was reviewed for consistency with policy and/or regulatory documents related to the environment and appropriate land use (e.g., County Land Use Ordinance). The project area is bound by Los Padres National Forest lands. The existing land use at the site is designated as Rural Lands. The areas surrounding the project site's Rural Lands is designated Open Space.

The purpose of Rural Lands is to encourage rural development at very low densities that maximize preservation of open space, watershed, and wildlife habitat area (County of SLO, 2015). The character of Rural Lands is defined as areas outside urban and village areas with existing land uses including limited agriculture, mining and quarry operations, public and private recreation areas, occasional rural residences and vacation cabins, and watershed, wildlife and open space uses (County of SLO, 2015). The County's principle of preserving open space, scenic natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas is consistent with the proposed project (County of SLO, 2015). New land uses are not proposed for the project and project implementation will not modify any existing land uses within the project limits and vicinity.

Discussion

(a) Physically divide an established community?

The project location is in a rural area with a low population. The project area straddles two census blocks, in 2010 the blocks had a population of 36 and 16, respectively. The proposed project is not expected to physically divide an established community and therefore will have no impact.

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

The project is not within or adjacent to any Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan areas. The project is considered consistent and compatible with the existing Rural Land land use designation on-site and in the immediate surrounding areas. The project was found to be consistent with the County's adopted *The Land Use and Circulation Elements of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan-Framework for Planning (Inland)* (2015). The project will not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

No land use inconsistencies were identified and therefore no land use specific mitigation measures are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The project area is located within a rural area located to the west of the city of Atascadero and is bisected by Toro Creek. The project area is generally flat and is situated within and on the terraces of Toro Creek.

Discussion

(a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and residents of the site existing in the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

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

There are no important mineral resource recovery sites located within or adjacent to the project area. The project will not result in the loss of availability of a locally important miner resource recover site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project area does not contain any known valuable mineral resource, or mineral resource recovery sites, therefore no mitigation measures are required, and no mineral resources will be impacted.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XII. NOISE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:					
(a)	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The existing ambient noise environment is characterized by intermittent vehicle noise from Toro Creek Road and various agricultural and residential activities surrounding the project site. Noise-sensitive receptors typically include residences, schools and parks. There are approximately five sensitive noise receptors located within 1,000 feet of the project area. The project is not mapped within the San Luis Obispo County Noise Contour Map (County of San Luis Obispo, 1992).

Discussion

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

The project site is within 1,000 feet of 5 residential dwellings, which are considered sensitive receptors. During construction, project-generated noise may be of concern for the surrounding residential developments. This may include equipment operation, and materials shipments to and from the project site. Existing residences in the immediate area would be subject to short-term, temporary increases in noise associated with project construction. However, the baseline noise environment would be restored upon completion of the project. Therefore, the project will result in temporary increases in noise levels but is not expected to generate permanent long-term increases in noise levels. Through the implementation of measures to limit temporary construction related noise impacts to daytime hours, the project will have a less than significant impact.

(b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Heavy equipment and bridge demolition activities would generate ground borne noise and vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities. No significant vibration inducing construction methods such as impact pile driving would be utilized during construction of the proposed bridge. It is not expected that Toro Creek Road will see a permanent increase in traffic generated noise as part of the proposed project. The project will not generate a permanent source of ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

The proposed project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, therefore there will be no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Impacts related to exceedance of local noise standards would be less than significant. No impacts related to generation of a permanent increase in ambient noise levels are expected. Implementation of the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant construction vibration impact to the surrounding sensitive receptors. Construction activities such as equipment operation and materials delivery will result in temporary increases in noise levels within the vicinity of sensitive receptors, however, noise generating activities will be limited to daytime hours as discussed in Exhibit B, therefore construction related noise will have a less than significant impact.

Construction noise of this nature is exempt from Noise Element mitigation measures and construction activities performed by the Department of Public Works in the road right-of-way are generally exempt from the County's Land Use Ordinance.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Within the sparsely populated project area exists Toro Creek Road, a rural, low-volume, low-speed, unpaved two-lane roadway that provides the only access for scattered rural residences and outbuildings in and along Toro Creek Road. A review of historical aerial imagery has shown that the area has undergone relatively little change or development over time. The project location is in a rural area with a low population. The project area straddles two census blocks, in 2010 the blocks had a population of 36 and 16, respectively.

Discussion

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

The project is in an area that is considered rural and sparsely populated. If the area does experience unplanned population growth, the replacement bridge will have capacity to handle such growth. The project will not induce substantial unplanned population growth and will therefore have no impact.

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

The proposed project will not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing and will not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

No population and housing impacts are anticipated as part of the proposed project, and therefore no population and housing specific mitigation measures are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The project area is in a rural, sparsely populated area located in unincorporated San Luis Obispo County. No public service facilities exist within the project area.

Discussion

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

Fire protection?

The road is a sole access road for a several residences and is an important emergency/fire access road. No fire protection service facilities exist with the project area. The project area is served by CalFire which has a 15-20-minute response time to the project area. The nearest fire station or facility is the Morro Toro station that is located approximately 1.3 miles to the southeast of the project area. The proposed project will maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or performance objectives for fire protection services, and therefore will have no impact.

Police protection?

The surrounding vicinity is served by the County Sheriff; however, no police stations or substations exist within the project area. The nearest police station, or substations are located approximately 5.81 miles to the northeast (Atascadero City Police Department). The proposed bridge replacement project will maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or performance objectives for police protection services, and therefore will have no impact.

Schools?

No schools exist within the project area. The project area is served by the Atascadero Unified School District, and the San Luis Obispo Joint Community College District. The nearest school is located in the city of Atascadero. The proposed bridge replacement project will maintain acceptable service ratios, or performance objectives for any schools, and therefore will have no impact.

Parks?

No parks exist, or are proposed, in the project area and therefore will have no impact.

Other public facilities?

No other public facilities exist within the project area. The proposed bridge replacement project will maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or performance objectives for any other public facilities, and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project will not result in any adverse physical, or cumulative, impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services. No public service specific mitigation measures are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XV. RECREATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

No officially designated parks or trails exist within the project limits, though the surrounding areas is designated Los Padres National Forest Lands, and Open Space land use. The County's Parks and Recreation Element does not show any potential/proposed trails within the project area or conflicts with the proposed project. The project is not proposed in a location that will affect any trail, park, recreational resource, coastal access, and/or recreational use area.

Discussion

(a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No regional parks or recreational facilities exist within or adjacent to the project area, and therefore will have no impact.

(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed project does not include the use, creation, or expansion or of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

No recreational facilities exist or are proposed in the project area. No impacts to recreational facilities are anticipated as the project will not result in physical deterioration of a park; and no recreational facilities are proposed that would have an adverse physical effect on the environment. No recreation specific mitigation measures are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION

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

Setting

Senate Bill 743, which was codified into the Public Resources Code Section 21099, requires communities to achieve a 15% reduction in vehicle miles traveled. This resulted in a change in the CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. As described in the December 2018 Technical Advisory to Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is considered the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts under CEQA, replacing level of service and other similar metrics for consideration of significant environmental effects.

The proposed project is located in a rural area, there are no nearby transit/bus stops and the area does not have walkability enhancing features such as pedestrian/bicycle connections etc. Although the road has a future average daily traffic of only 351 vehicles per day, the road is a sole access road for several residences and is an important emergency/fire access road. It is used by the National Forest Service to protect the Las Padres National Forest. The project will replace a one-lane bridge with a two-lane bridge which has been designed to meet modern safety standards. The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) does not consider this a capacity increase, so this item does not require special approval. There is no collision history at the site in the last ten years, and no significant traffic-related concerns were identified.

Discussion

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

The project does not conflict with any congestion management program or any plans or programs regarding public transit, bicyclist, or pedestrian facilities and therefore will have no impact.

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

Section 15064.3(b) (Criteria for Analyzing Transportation Impacts) of the CEQA Guidelines states that transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on VMT should be presumed to cause less than significant impacts on transportation. The proposed project will not change transportation routes, or the capacity of the existing road and will not result in an increase of VMT or traffic volumes. Aside from a temporary increase in VMT during the construction phase of the project, this transportation project is consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b) and therefore will have no impact.

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

The existing bridge has been determined to be functionally obsolete due to its narrow roadway widths, tight and abrupt curves and limited sight distance for drivers. The new bridge has been designed to alleviate these hazards as it is designed to meet all applicable safety standards. The project will improve roadway safety, therefore will have no impact.

(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

The bridge replacement project will serve to enhance access for fire protection services and emergency access by constructing a new bridge that will be able to accommodate the passage of fully loaded firetrucks. A temporary bridge will be erected during the construction phase of the project to maintain access during construction. The proposed project will enhance and maintain emergency access throughout the course of the project, and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Implementation of the project will not result in any permanent traffic impacts. The project does not conflict with any adopted traffic policies, plans or other transportation programs. No transportation related impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XVII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				

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		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(i)	Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii)	A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The following is based on an Archaeological Survey Report (Uva, 2018):

The project area was prehistorically inhabited by one or both of two Native American groups: the Migueleño Salinan, and the Obispeño Chumash. The location of the boundary between these two groups continues to be the subject of much debate. For San Luis Obispo, the six periods of cultural chronology are as follows: Late (A.D. 1250 to 1769); Middle/Late Transition (A.D. 1000 to 1250); Middle (600 B.C. to A.D. 1000); Early (3500 to 600 B.C.); Millingstone/Early Archaic (8000 to 3500 B.C.); and Paleo-Indian (pre-8000 B.C.).

In order to meet AB52 Cultural Resources requirements, outreach to twelve Native American tribes/tribal members was conducted in September of 2018. The consulted groups include: the Salinan Tribe of San Luis Obispo, Monterey Counties, the Xolon Salinan Tribe, the *yak titᵸu titᵸu yak tiłhini* - Northern Chumash Tribe, the Barbaraeño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (SYBCI), and the Northern Chumash Tribal Council.

Comments were received from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, and the Salinan tribe of San Luis Obispo, Monterey Counties. A copy of the Archaeological Survey Report was requested by the Salinan tribe of San Luis Obispo, Monterey Counties who noted that the Bylon family, a Native American family, had lived in the area. The Northern Chumash Tribal Council had no comments, and the SYBCI deferred comments to the local tribes. No tribal cultural resources were identified within the project area by the interested tribes/individuals.

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Discussion

(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

(a-i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

An archaeological survey, Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands file search, records search and Native American outreach did not identify tribal cultural resources within the project area. No tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, cultural landscape, sacred place or object with cultural value to a Native American tribe exists within the project area. The mitigation measures for an inadvertent discovery listed under cultural resources mitigation measures in Exhibit B will be implemented to ensure a less than significant impact.

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

No resources determined to be significant pursuant to the Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c) or a California Native American tribe exist within the project area and therefore will have no impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Ground-disturbing activities necessary for the project will predominately be limited to previously disturbed areas on-site. While comments were received from several tribes/tribal members, ongoing consultation or onsite monitoring were not requested. Standard mitigation measures listed under cultural resources in Exhibit B are included for the project to ensure that potential impacts to any unknown tribal cultural resources that may be encountered during project development will be avoided and minimized. By implementing these cultural resources mitigation measures, potential impacts associated with tribal cultural archeological resources would be less than significant.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

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XVIII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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Setting

Overhead utilities at the site include ATT communication lines and PG&E powerlines that cross over Toro Creek. Underground utilities at the site include an ATT communication line, a Gas Company high pressure gas line, a Chevron oil line, and a no longer used United States Navy fuel line. The Navy's recorded easement is not abandoned.

Discussion

(a) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The proposed project will not result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Utility relocation of overhead and underground ATT communication lines within the project footprint will be required. All other utilities will remain unimpacted by the project and protected in place during construction. Any potential habitat disturbance associated with the relocation of ATT communication lines that cross over Toro Creek will be restored through biological mitigation measures in Exhibit B, and will not result in significant environmental impacts, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

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

Water may be used during the course of construction and will be provided for via a water truck. The proposed project will not require the utilization of water supplies from a service system and therefore will have no impact.

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

Implementation of the project will not generate wastewater or adversely affect any wastewater facilities. No on-site disposal systems, leach lines, or wastewater systems are proposed as part of this project, and wastewater impacts are considered not applicable and therefore will have no impact.

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

Any waste generated by the project will be trucked to a local landfill that has the capacity and certifications to store the waste. The project will not generate a significant amount of solid waste, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals, and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The proposed project will comply with all federal, state (Title 14, CCR Division 7, §17387, 17388, 17897-17897.24), and local management (San Luis Obispo County Integrated Waste Management Authority) and reduction statues and regulations related to solid waste and will therefore result in a less than significant impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The proposed project will require relocation of existing ATT communication lines that cross over Toro Creek; however, any potential habitat disturbance associated with the relocation of ATT communication lines that cross over Toro Creek will be restored through biological mitigation measures in Exhibit B. All other utilities will be protected in place. The project would have no significant effects on water, wastewater, or other utilities and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XIX. WILDFIRE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:					
(a)	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

No fire protection service facilities exist with the project area. The project area is served by CalFire and Toro Creek Road provides access to the wildland areas beyond the bridge. The nearest fire station or facility is the Morro Toro station that is located approximately 1.3 miles to the southeast of the project area. The project area is located within a 'very high' fire risk area, and the emergency response time in this location is

approximately 15-20 minutes. CalFire was contacted through a New Project Referral Form on June 16, 2019 regarding the proposed project- no comment was received.

Discussion

(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The proposed project is consistent with the adopted San Luis Obispo County Emergency Operations Plan (revised 2016) and will not substantially impair the adopted San Luis Obispo County Fire Department West Atascadero emergency evacuation route plan, and therefore will have no impact.

(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

The project does not present a significant fire safety risk, though it is located within a 'very high' severity risk areas for fire. The new bridge is not expected to exacerbate wildfire risks and therefore will have a less than significant impact.

(c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

While the proposed project will require future maintenance, the extent of which will stem from standard inspections. Typical maintenance includes activities such as pavement sealing, crack repair etc., these types of activities are not expected to exacerbate fire risk that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment and therefore will result in a less than significant impact.

(d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The proposed project is not expected to expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes and therefore will result in a less than significant impact.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is not expected to have any significant impacts to wildfire risk and no mitigation measures are proposed.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

XX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The project setting related to each resource section (aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources etc.) is described in great lengths throughout the various sections the of the Initial Study. The bridge replacement project is expected to have less than significant impacts with the incorporation of mitigation measures.

Discussion

(a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Based on the analysis provided in individual resource sections above, the project has the potential to impact sensitive resources. Incorporation and compliance with biological mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-17 and HAZ-1 through HAZ-6 identified in Exhibit B will ensure that project implementation will not substantially reduce the number of fish and wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plant or animal species. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-3, and adherence to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 would reduce impacts to unknown cultural and/or tribal cultural resources if present within the project area. Standard protection measures described in AIR-1 will address construction-related air quality impacts and the project will not contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or increase energy consumption. Implementation of the project mitigation measures will not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history. Therefore, the anticipated project-related impacts are less than significant with incorporation of the mitigation measures listed in Exhibit B.

(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

The proposed project does not propose a new or different use than the existing use, and because the project site will continue to be used as a road bridge, it is consistent with existing operations, and the anticipated impacts of the project are considered minimal. Short-term construction related impacts will be temporary by the limited duration and scope of the project. The proposed project does not have impacts that will be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. There are no proposed or planned projects known for the area, aside from regular road maintenance. When considered together with the anticipated impacts of this project, are still not cumulatively considerable and would not compound or increase any other environmental impacts. Therefore, all project-related impacts will be less than significant.

(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

The proposed project will not result in environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The anticipated effects of the project will be limited in duration and would not substantially conflict with any adjacent land uses. Implementation of the project will improve the existing infrastructure and result in a net benefit to public safety; therefore, all impacts are considered less than significant.

Conclusion/Mitigation

With the implementation of the project-specific mitigation measures listed in Exhibit B, the proposed project will have a less than significant impact on the environment.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Exhibit A - Initial Study References and Agency Contacts

The County Public Works Department has contacted various agencies for their comments on the proposed project. With respect to the subject application, the following have been contacted (marked with an ☒) and when a response was made, it is either attached or in the application file:

Contacted	Agency	Response
☐	County Public Works Department	**Not Applicable**
☒	County Environmental Health Services	**In File****
☒	County Agricultural Commissioner's Office	**In File****
☐	County Airport Manager	**Not Applicable**
☐	Airport Land Use Commission	**Not Applicable**
☒	Air Pollution Control District	**Attached**
☐	County Sheriff's Department	**Not Applicable**
☐	Regional Water Quality Control Board	**Not Applicable**
☐	CA Coastal Commission	**Not Applicable**
☐	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife	**Not Applicable**
☒	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	**Not Applicable**
☒	CA Department of Transportation	**In File****
☐	Community Services District	**Not Applicable**
☐	Other _____	**Not Applicable**
☐	Other _____	**Not Applicable**

** "No comment" or "No concerns"-type responses are usually not attached

The following checked ("☒") reference materials have been used in the environmental review for the proposed project and are hereby incorporated by reference into the Initial Study. The following information is available at the County Planning and Building Department.

☒ Project File for the Subject Application

County Documents

☐ Coastal Plan Policies
☒ Framework for Planning (Coastal/Inland)
☒ General Plan (Inland/Coastal), includes all maps/elements; more pertinent elements:
- ☒ Agriculture Element
- ☒ Conservation & Open Space Element
- ☐ Economic Element
- ☐ Housing Element
- ☒ Noise Element
- ☒ Parks & Recreation Element/Project List
- ☒ Safety Element

☒ Land Use Ordinance (Inland/Coastal)
☒ Building and Construction Ordinance
☐ Public Facilities Fee Ordinance
☐ Real Property Division Ordinance
☐ Affordable Housing Fund
☐ Airport Land Use Plan
☐ Energy Wise Plan
☒ North County Area Plan/Salinas River SA
☐ Countywide Design Plan
☐ Specific Plan
☐ Annual Resource Summary Report
☐ Circulation Study

Other Documents

☒ Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook
☒ Regional Transportation Plan
☐ Uniform Fire Code
☐ Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)
☒ Archaeological Resources Map
☒ Area of Critical Concerns Map
☒ Special Biological Importance Map
☒ CA Natural Species Diversity Database
☒ Fire Hazard Severity Map
☒ Flood Hazard Maps
☒ Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for SLO County
☒ GIS mapping layers (e.g., habitat, streams, contours, etc.)
☐ Other

In addition, the following project-specific information and/or reference materials have been considered as a part of the Initial Study:

1. BSK Associates, 2018. *Draft Foundation Report Toro Creek Bridge Replacement Project Bridge No. 49C-NEW Toro Creek Road and Forest Route 28S05 Over Toro Creek, Atascadero, San Luis Obispo County, California.* Prepared for County of San Luis Obispo, Department of Public Works. Prepared by BSK Associates in Fresno, CA.

2. BSK Associates, 2023. *Preliminary Foundation Report Toro Creek Bridge Replacement Project Bridge No. 49C-NEW Toro Creek Road and Forest Route 28S05 Over Toro Creek, Atascadero, San Luis Obispo County, California*. Prepared for County of San Luis Obispo, Department of Public Works. Prepared by BSK Associates in Fresno, CA.

3. California Department of Conservation- Important Farmland Finder. Accessed 9/5/19. *https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/*. Hosted by the State of California CA.Gov © 2016.

4. Caltrans Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2018. Structure Maintenance & Investigations Historical Significance- Local Agency Bridges. Accessed September 20, 2018. http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/structur/strmaint/hs_local.pdf

5. County of San Luis Obispo (County of SLO), 1992. *County of San Luis Obispo General Plan- Noise Element, Part I Policy Document.* Prepared by Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc. Adopted by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors May 5, 1992. Available online: https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/getattachment/16c8da3e-c51b-4134-8cff-0ed21a577d2e/Noise-Element.aspx

6. County of San Luis Obispo (County of SLO), 2015. *The Land Use and Circulation Elements of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan- Framework for Planning (Inland).* Adopted by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors September 22, 1980. Accessible online: https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/getattachment/00ca89fa-e35e-4c0f-bac7-ccd9b6c4954e/Framework-for-Planning-Inland.aspx.

7. County of San Luis Obispo (County of SLO), 2024. *Toro Creek Road at Toro Creek Bridge Replacement Project Jurisdictional Waters Assessment*. Prepared for the California Department of Transportation, District 5. Prepared by the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department.

8. National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCRS), 1984. *Soil Survey of San Luis Obispo County, California: Coastal Part.* Prepared by US Department of Agriculture & Soil Conservation Service. Prepared for County of San Luis Obispo.

9. Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2019. *Toro Creek Road Bridge Replacement Project Initial Site Assessment* Prepared for Public Works, San Luis Obispo County. Prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc. in San Luis Obispo.

10. Seed, H.B. 1979. *Soil Liquefaction and Cyclic Mobility Evaluation for Level Ground During Earthquakes*. Journal of Geotechnical Engineering Division, ASCE 105(GT2): 201-255.

11. SLO County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), 2012. CEQA Air Quality Handbook- A Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review. Prepared by Air Pollution

Control District San Luis Obispo County in San Luis Obispo, California.

12. SLO County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), 2021. Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas Guidance for the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District's 2012 CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Prepared by Air Pollution Control District San Luis Obispo County in San Luis Obispo, California.

13. UCMP BerkelyMapper, 2019. University of California Museum of Paleontology, University of California Berkeley Paleontology Collections ©2019. http://berkeleymapper.berkeley.edu/. Accessed 10/21/19

14. Uva, Blaize, 2018 *Archaeological Survey Report- Toro Creek Bridge Replacement Project. Atascadero, San Luis Obispo County BRLO-5949(157)*. Prepared for Caltrans District 5. Prepared by County of San Luis Obispo in San Luis Obispo, California.

Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary

The applicant has agreed to incorporate the following measures into the project. These measures become a part of the project description and therefore become a part of the record of action upon which the environmental determination is based. All development activity must occur in strict compliance with the following mitigation measures. These measures shall be perpetual and run with the land. These measures are binding on all successors in interest of the subject property.

Air Quality Mitigation Measures

AIR-1 Projects with grading areas that are greater than 4 acres or are within 1,000 feet of any sensitive receptor (residences) shall implement the following mitigation measures to manage fugitive dust emissions such that they do not exceed the APCD's 20% opacity limit (APCD Rule 401) or prompt nuisance violations (APCD Rule 402).

a. Limit the amount of the disturbed area as practical;

b. Use of water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever practical. When drought conditions exist and water use is a concern, the contractor or builder should consider the use of an APCD-approved dust suppressant where feasible to reduce the amount of water used for dust control. Please refer to the following link from the San Joaquin Valley Air District for a list of potential dust suppressants: Products Available for Controlling Dust;

c. All dirt stockpile areas should be sprayed daily or covered with tarps or other dust barriers as needed to limit dust emissions;

d. Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project revegetation and landscape plans and/or specifications should be implemented as soon as possible, following completion of any soil disturbing activities;

e. Disturbed ground areas that are planned to be reworked more than one month after initial grading should be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established;

f. All disturbed soil areas not subject to revegetation should be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the APCD;

g. The paved approaches of Toro Creek Road should be paved as soon as possible following the completion of the bridge deck.

h. Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site;

i. All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) in accordance with California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 23114;

j. "Track-Out" is defined as sand or soil that adheres to and/or agglomerates on the exterior surfaces of motor vehicles and/or equipment (including tires) that may then fall onto any highway or street as described in CVC Section 23113 and California Water Code 13304. To prevent 'track out', designate access points and require all employees, subcontractors, and others to use them. Install and operate a 'track-out prevention device' where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto paved streets. The 'track-out prevention device' can be any device or combination of devices that are effective at preventing track out, located at the point of intersection of an unpaved area and a paved road. Rumble strips or steel plate devices need periodic cleaning to be effective. If paved roadways accumulate tracked out soils, the track-out prevention device may need to be modified;

k. Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers shall be used with reclaimed water where feasible. Roads shall be pre-wetted prior to sweeping when feasible;

l. All PM_{10} mitigation measures required should be shown on grading and building plans and/or specifications; and,

m. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons whose responsibility is to ensure any fugitive dust emissions do not result in a nuisance and to enhance the implementation of the mitigation measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints and reduce visible emissions below the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress (for example, wind-blown dust could be generated on an open dirt lot). The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD prior to the start of any grading, earthwork or demolition.

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Prior to construction, the San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department will obtain a Section 404 Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and a Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for project related effects that will occur in areas under state and/or federal jurisdiction.

BIO-2 Prior to construction, all personnel will participate in an environmental awareness training program conducted by a qualified biologist. The program shall include a description of the biological resources within the project area, the boundaries of construction and other pertinent measures to be implemented prior to, during, and after construction.

BIO-3 Prior to construction, the San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department will retain a qualified biological monitor(s) to conduct pre-construction surveys for special-status species, monitor initial ground-disturbance and vegetation removal during construction, and ensure compliance with the avoidance and minimization efforts outlined within all the project environmental documents. Surveys will also be conducted directly before and following any dewatering activities. If special-status species are found, the qualified biologist will halt

project activities, allow the animal(s) to leave the work area on its own volition, and if necessary, will move the species out of harm's way to the nearest suitable habitat outside the project construction area if authorized by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

BIO-4 Construction activities within jurisdictional areas will be conducted during the dry season when stream flows will be at annual lows (typically May 1 through October 31) in any given year, or as otherwise directed by the regulatory agencies. Deviations from this work window can be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

BIO-5 Prior to initiation of any construction activities, including vegetation clearing or grubbing, sturdy high-visibility orange construction fencing or equivalent will be installed to protect the jurisdictional areas adjacent to the designated work areas and to delineate the project limits where activities are allowed to occur. This fencing will be placed so that unnecessary adverse effects to the adjacent habitats are avoided. No construction work (including storage of materials) will occur outside of the specified project limits. The fencing will remain in place during the entire construction period, be monitored periodically by a qualified biologist, and maintained as needed by the contractor.

BIO-6 All trees to remain that are outside of construction or grading activities will be protected in place.

BIO-7 Prior to the onset of work, a plan will be set in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to implement should a spill occur.

BIO-8 During construction, erosion control measures (e.g., silt fencing, fiber rolls, and barriers) will remain available on-site and will be utilized as necessary to prevent erosion and sedimentation in jurisdictional areas. No synthetic plastic mesh products will be used for erosion control and use of these materials on-site is prohibited. Erosion control measures and other suitable Best Management Practices used will be checked to ensure that they are intact and functioning effectively and maintained daily throughout construction. The contractor will also apply adequate dust control techniques, such as site watering, during construction to protect water quality.

BIO-9 During construction, the cleaning and refueling of equipment and vehicles will occur only within a designated staging area and at least 60 feet from aquatic areas. At a minimum, equipment and vehicles will be checked and maintained daily to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills.

BIO-10 During construction, trash will be contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, trash and construction debris will be removed from the work areas.

BIO-11 During construction, no pets will be allowed on the construction site.

BIO-12 Prior to construction, the County will prepare a comprehensive Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) that provides for a 1:1 restoration ratio for temporary effects and a 3:1 enhancement ratio for permanent effects, unless otherwise directed by regulatory agencies. To the extent feasible, mitigation activities will be implemented within the Toro Creek riparian corridor. The HMMP shall specify a 3:1 replanting ratio for native trees removed for construction.

BIO-13 In-stream work will take place between May 1 and October 31 in any given year, when the surface water within Toro Creek is likely to be at seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies. During instream work, a qualified biologist will be retained with experience in steelhead biology and ecology, aquatic habitats, biological monitoring (including diversion/dewatering), and capturing, handling, and relocating fish species. During in-stream work, the biological monitor(s) will continuously monitor placement and removal of any required stream diversions and will capture stranded steelhead and other native fish species and relocate them to suitable habitat, as appropriate. The biologist(s) will capture steelhead stranded as a result of diversion/dewatering and relocate steelhead to the nearest suitable instream habitat. The biologist(s) will note the number of steelhead observed in the affected area, the number of steelhead relocated, and the date and time of the collection and relocation.

BIO-14 During in-stream work, if pumps are incorporated to assist in temporarily dewatering the site, intakes will be completely screened with openings no larger than 0.2-inch to prevent steelhead and other sensitive aquatic species from entering the pump system. Pumps will release the diverted water so that suspended sediment will not re-enter the stream. The form and function of pumps used during the dewatering activities will be checked regularly by a qualified biological monitor to ensure a dry work environment and minimize adverse effects to aquatic species and habitats.

BIO-15 Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that would allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the creek bed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the stream bed upon completion of the project.

BIO-16 Upon completion of Section 7 consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) all measures required by the issued Biological Opinions to protect federally listed species shall be implemented during construction of this project.

BIO-17 To the greatest extent feasible, vegetation removal should be conducted during the non-breeding season for birds (i.e., between September 1 and January 31). Prior to conducting construction activities during the typical nesting season (February 1 to September 1), a qualified biologist shall survey the area within one week prior to activity beginning on site. If an active nest is found, a qualified biologist will establish an appropriate avoidance buffer. Construction within the buffer will be prohibited until the qualified biologist determines that the nest is no longer active.

Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

CR-1 If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work shall be halted in that portion of the project area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological surveys will be needed if the project limits are extended beyond the present survey limits.

CR-2 A pre-construction archaeological briefing will be provided to all construction crews prior to initiating ground disturbing activities. The briefing shall provide guidance on historical and

archaeological resources and appropriate procedures to follow if such finds are inadvertently exposed during the project.

CR-3 As specified by California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, if human remains are found on the project site during construction, the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, shall immediately notify the San Luis Obispo County Coroner's office, and the County Environmental office by telephone. No further excavation or disturbance of the discovery or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains (as determined by an Archaeologist and/or Native American monitor) shall occur until the Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code 5097.98. If such a discovery occurs, a temporary construction exclusion zone shall be established surrounding the area of the discovery so that the area would be protected (as determined by an Archaeologist and/or Native American monitor), and consultation and treatment could occur as prescribed by law. As further defined by State law, the Coroner would determine within two working days of being notified if the remains are subject to his or her authority. If the Coroner recognizes the remains to be Native American, he or she shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission would make a determination as to the Most Likely Descendent (MLD. If Native American remains are discovered, the remains shall be kept in situ ("in place"), or in a secure location in close proximity to where they were found, and the analysis of the remains shall only occur on-site in the presence of a Native American monitor and/or MLD.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Mitigation Measures

HAZ-1 Naturally Occurring Asbestos has been identified by the CARB as a toxic air contaminant. The APCD has identified areas throughout the county where NOA may be present. The following requirements apply because the project site is in a candidate area for NOA. The applicant shall ensure that a geologic evaluation is conducted to determine if the area disturbed is or is not exempt from the CARB Asbestos Air Toxics Control Measure (ATCM) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations (17 CCR 93105) regulation.

a. If the site is not exempt from the requirements of the regulation, all requirements outlined in the Asbestos ATCM. This may include development of an asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan and an Asbestos Health and Safety Program for approval by the APCD; or

b. If the site is exempt, an exemption request must be filed with the APCD.

HAZ-2 Demolition or remodeling of structures coated with lead-based paint is a concern for the APCD. Improper demolition can result in the release of lead-containing particles from the site. Sandblasting or removal of paint by heating with a heat gun can result in significant emissions of lead. Therefore, proper abatement of lead before demolition of these structures must be performed to prevent the release of lead from the site. Depending on removal method, an APCD permit may be required. Contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at 805-781-5912 for more information. For additional information regarding lead abatement, contact the San Luis Obispo County Environmental Health

Department at 805-781-5544 or Cal-OSHA at 818-901-5403. Additional information can also be found online at epa.gov/lead.

HAZ-3 Demolition activities can have potential negative air quality impacts, including issues surrounding proper handling, abatement, and disposal of asbestos-containing material (ACM). ACM could be encountered during the demolition of existing structures. The project may be subject to various regulatory jurisdictions, including the requirements stipulated in the National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (40CFR1, Subpart M- asbestos NESHAP). These requirements include but are not limited to:

a. Written notification to the APCD, within at least 10 business days of activities commencing.

b. Asbestos survey conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant.

c. Applicable removal and disposal requirements of identified ACM.

HAZ-4 Onsite personnel will comply with standards found in the Construction Safety Orders and General Industry Safety Orders as defined by CAL/OSHA.

HAZ-5 During construction, a limited Preliminary Site Investigation will be conducted to collect soil samples in areas planned for soil disturbance. The soil will be tested for aerially deposited lead, pesticides, and metals. Soils containing these materials will be disposed of at a waste facility that accepts contaminated soil.

HAZ-6 Hazardous treated wood waste will be considered hazardous waste and transported to class I hazardous waste landfills for disposal.

Noise Mitigation Measures

NOI-1 The following measures shall be shown on applicable plans and/or specifications and implemented during construction: construction activities involving heavy equipment or heavy-duty truck traffic shall be limited from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No work shall occur on Sundays. No construction shall occur on state holidays (e.g., Thanksgiving, Labor Day). Construction equipment maintenance shall be limited to the same hours. Construction activities that do not generate substantial noise levels are not subject to these restrictions.

Mitigation Monitoring Plan

The purpose of a Mitigation Monitoring Plan is to provide a program to examine, document and record compliance with the environmental plans and specifications pertinent to the proposed project, in order to comply with Section 21081.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This plan provides the standards and methods necessary to ensure and document the implementation of the environmental mitigation measures which have been included in the project description as well as with the conditions of approval placed on project permits. Responsibility for ensuring successful implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan lies with the County of San Luis Obispo, as the project proponent and Lead Agency for the project under CEQA.

If the recommended mitigation measures and monitoring plan are implemented successfully, the potential significant adverse effects stemming from project construction will be reduced to a level of insignificance.

Mitigation monitoring will be carried out by the Environmental Programs Division of the County's Department of Public Works. The Environmental Programs Division provides environmental services to the Department of Public Works, including mitigation compliance and monitoring, with CEQA oversight by the County's Environmental Coordinator.

Upon approval of the CEQA document, and issuance of all required permits, the Environmental Programs Division will assign internal responsibility for compliance with each mitigation measure to one or more members of the project team. Responsible parties include the Environmental Programs Division, the Project Manager (PM), the Resident Engineer (RE), and/or on-site monitors.

Mitigation measures are organized into project design, pre-construction, construction, and post construction tasks. Compliance with mitigation measures is documented in the project file through written reports, accompanied by project photos where necessary. Post construction monitoring of revegetation and other project components is documented by yearly reports, on a schedule typically determined by one or more of the project permits. Depending on the complexity of the post construction mitigation effort, tasks will be carried out by county staff or technical experts under contract to the County. Post construction monitoring is typically conducted for three to five years, depending on permit requirements and success criteria.

Where necessary, construction personnel will be required to attend a crew orientation meeting. The meeting will be conducted by the RE and will be used to acquaint the construction crews with the environmental sensitivities of the project site. The orientation meeting shall place an emphasis on the need for adherence to the mitigation measures and permit conditions as well as the need for cooperation and communication among all parties concerned (i.e., RE, Environmental Programs Division, Environmental Coordinator, construction personnel) in working together to solve problems and arrive at solutions in the field.