



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

RENÉE E. BAHL
DIRECTOR

www.sdparks.org

Administrative Office: (858) 694-3030
Fax: (858) 495-5841
Reservations: (858) 565-3600

February 12, 2009
Revised June 1, 2009

CEQA Initial Study - Environmental Checklist Form (Based on the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G Rev. 10/04)

1. Project Title:

El Monte Trail and Equestrian Staging Area

2. Lead agency name and address:

County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation
9150 Chesapeake Drive, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92123

3. a. Contact: Megan Hamilton, Project Manager
b. Phone number: (858) 966-1377
c. E-mail: megan.hamilton@sdcounty.ca.gov.

4. Project location:

The project is at El Monte County Park located at 15805 El Monte Road, Lakeside an unincorporated community of San Diego County (see attached Figures 1 and 2). The project is within the South County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP).

Thomas Brothers Coordinates: Page 1213, Grid A/6

5. Project Sponsor name and address:

County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation
9150 Chesapeake Drive, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92123

6. General Plan Designation:

(24) Impact Sensitive

7. Zoning:

S80, Open Space

8. Description of project:

The project proposes to establish a new multi-use trail and equestrian staging area at El Monte Park. The proposed trail will connect to an existing trail easement – the Flume Trail - dedicated as part of the Blossom Valley Estates development that adjoins El Monte Park to the south. The trail will wind in an approximate northwest direction, traversing an undeveloped hillside before entering the developed park area west of an oak grove. The trail will then cross El Monte Road at an existing crossing in order to connect to a proposed staging area on the north side of the road. The trail tread will be four feet wide and a natural surface. Brush management in the form of trimming may occur within one feet of either side of the trail tread to meet Community Trails Master Plan design guidelines for Type B trails. The proposed equestrian staging area would replace an existing baseball/batting area. The new staging area will feature a natural surface parking lot and will remove an existing batting backstop.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting (Briefly describe the project's surroundings):

El Monte Park is an 87.66-acre day-use park acquired in 1951 by the County of San Diego. The central portion of the Park is developed with a ranger station, picnic areas, ball fields, and parking lots. The Park's southern section is an undeveloped hillside dominated by coastal sage scrub habitat that is recovering from the 2003 wildfires that burned the surrounding areas. To the north of El Monte Road, the Park contains a former ball field adjacent to coast live oak habitat.

There are scattered rural residential and agricultural uses as well as a sand mine along El Monte Road approaching the Park. To the north and east of the Park, steep lands rise from the valley floor to El Capitan Mountain and El Capitan Open Space Preserve. El Monte Road dead ends at El Capitan Reservoir approximately two miles to the east. To the south of the Park is undeveloped steep land preserved within a biological open space easement.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

None

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project and involve at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or a “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated,” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology & Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Haz. Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use & Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities & Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)
 On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Parks and Recreation finds that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Parks and Recreation finds that 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.
- On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Parks and Recreation finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.



June 1, 2009

 Signature

 Date

Megan Hamilton

 Printed Name

Group Program Manager, DPR

 Title

INSTRUCTIONS ON EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Potential Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

A vista is a view from a particular location or composite views along a roadway or trail. Scenic vistas often refer to views of natural lands, but may also be compositions of natural and developed areas, or even entirely of developed and unnatural areas, such as a scenic vista of a rural town and surrounding agricultural lands. What is scenic to one person may not be scenic to another, so the assessment of what constitutes a scenic vista must consider the perceptions of a variety of viewer groups.

The items that can be seen within a vista are visual resources. Adverse impacts to individual visual resources or the addition of structures or developed areas may or may not adversely affect the vista. Determining the level of impact to a scenic vista requires analyzing the changes to the vista as a whole and also to individual visual resources.

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed project is located near or within the viewshed of a scenic vista. The viewshed and visible components of the landscape within that viewshed, including the underlying landform and overlaying land cover, establish the visual environment for the scenic vista. The visual environment of the subject scenic vista extends from Lake Jennings Park Road to the west along the valley floor that is traversed by El Monte Road to El Capitan Reservoir to the east.

The project proposes a trail on a hillside covered by coastal sage scrub habitat on the south side of El Monte Road and the developed portion of El Monte Park. The tread of the trail will be two- to four-foot wide and is not expected to be highly visible from either El Monte Road or El Monte Park. Therefore, the proposed project will not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

The project will not result in cumulative impacts on a scenic vista because the proposed project viewshed and past, present and future projects within that viewshed were evaluated to determine their cumulative effects. Refer to XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance for a comprehensive list of the projects considered. Those projects listed in Section XVII are located within the scenic vista's viewshed and will not contribute to a cumulative impact because the cumulatively related projects do not propose substantial landform modification nor block existing views. Additionally, there is a reclamation plan 07-001, MUP07-008 that will improve the scenic vista. Therefore, the project will not result in adverse project or cumulative impacts 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: State scenic highways refer to those highways that are officially designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as scenic ([Caltrans - California Scenic Highway Program](#)). Generally, the area defined within a State scenic highway is the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. There are no scenic highways designated within the vicinity of El Monte Park. Therefore, the proposed project will not have any substantial adverse effect on a scenic resource within a State scenic highway.

- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Visual character is the objective composition of the visible landscape within a viewshed. Visual character is based on the organization of the pattern elements line, form, color, and texture. Visual character is commonly discussed in terms of dominance, scale, diversity and continuity. Visual quality is the viewer's perception of the visual environment and varies based on exposure, sensitivity and expectation of the viewers. The existing visual character and quality of the project site and surrounding area can be characterized as a valley floor surrounded by steep undeveloped open space areas. The project proposes a trail which will disturb some vegetation on a hillside south of El Monte Road. However, visual impacts are expected to be minimal as the tread of the trail will vary from between two and four feet and thus will not be highly visible.

The project will not result in cumulative impacts on visual character or quality because the entire existing viewshed and a list of past, present and future projects within that viewshed were evaluated. Refer to XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance for a comprehensive list of the projects considered. Those projects listed in Section XVII are located within the viewshed surrounding the project and will not contribute to a cumulative impact because none of the cumulatively related projects will construct structures that will block views or be incompatible with the existing visual environment. Therefore, the project will not result in any adverse project or cumulative level effect on visual character or quality on-site or in the surrounding area.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not propose any use of outdoor lighting and no buildings are proposed and thus there can be no associated light reflection/glare. Therefore, the project will not create any new sources of light pollution that could contribute to skyglow, light trespass or glare and adversely affect day or nighttime views in area.

II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Within the project vicinity there are lands designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance and grazing land. A portion of El Monte Park on the north side of El Monte Road is designated as Farmland of Local Importance, but the majority is designated as 'other'. The project will not convert agricultural resources to non-agricultural use. The trail will traverse lands designated as 'other' pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The proposed equestrian staging area is proposed on lands designated as Farmland of Local Importance. However, these lands are within an existing County Park and there is an existing ball field where the staging area is proposed. Agricultural uses are not envisioned within the County Park which has been dedicated for recreational uses. Therefore, there will be no potentially significant impacts to or cumulative level conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance to a non-agricultural use as a result of this project.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site is zoned S80 Open Space, which is not considered to be an agricultural zone. Additionally, the project site's land is not under a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, the project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract.

- c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Important Farmland or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project proposes an equestrian staging area within an area that is designated as Farmland of Local Importance. However, the changes proposed to the existing environment associated with this project will not result in the conversion of agricultural resources to non-agricultural uses as this area is within a County Park and has already been disturbed due to a ball field. Additionally, a staging area will not preclude the establishment of agriculture in areas surrounding the County Park.

III. AIR QUALITY -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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 San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) or applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Operation of the project will not result in an increase of criteria pollutant emissions compared to the existing use of the subject area that was anticipated by the RAQS. The project will not emit toxic air contaminants as identified by the California Air Resources Board. Therefore, the project will not conflict or obstruct with the implementation of the RAQS nor the SIP on a project or cumulative level.

- b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

In general, air quality impacts from land use projects are the result of emissions from motor vehicles, and from short-term construction activities associated with such projects. The San Diego County Land Use Environment Group (LUEG) has established guidelines for determining significance which incorporate the Air Pollution Control District's (SDAPCD) established screening-level criteria for all new source review (NSR) in APCD Rule 20.2. These screening-level criteria can be used as numeric methods to demonstrate that a project's total emissions (e.g., stationary and fugitive emissions, as well as emissions from mobile sources) would not result in a significant impact to air quality. Since APCD does not have screening-level criteria for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), the use of the screening level for reactive organic compounds (ROC) from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) for the Coachella Valley (which are more appropriate for the San Diego Air Basin) are used.

Less Than Significant Impact: The project may use machinery to build the trail. However, grading operations will implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) which will require the implementation of dust control measures. Emissions from the use of any equipment would be minimal, temporary and localized, resulting in pollutant emissions below the screening-level criteria established by the LUEG guidelines for determining significance. In addition, the vehicle trips generated from the project will result in approximately 60 Average Daily Trips (ADTs), which is not considered significant. According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans, projects that generate less than 2,000 ADT are below the screening-level criteria established by the guidelines for criteria pollutants. As such, the project will not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

- c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

San Diego County is presently in non-attainment for the 1-hour concentrations under the California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS) for Ozone (O₃). San Diego County is also presently in non-attainment for the annual geometric mean and for the

24-hour concentrations of Particulate Matter less than or equal to 10 microns (PM₁₀) under the CAAQS. O₃ is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) react in the presence of sunlight. VOC sources include any source that burns fuels (e.g., gasoline, natural gas, wood, oil); solvents; petroleum processing and storage; and pesticides. Sources of PM₁₀ in both urban and rural areas include: motor vehicles, wood burning stoves and fireplaces, dust from construction, landfills, agriculture, wildfires, brush/waste burning, and industrial sources of windblown dust from open lands.

Less than Significant Impact: Air quality emissions associated with the project include emissions of PM₁₀, NO_x and VOCs from construction/grading activities, and also as the result of increase of traffic from project implementation. However, grading operations associated with the construction of the project will be minimal and will require the implementation of dust control measures. Emissions from the construction phase would be minimal, localized and temporary resulting in PM₁₀ and VOC emissions below the screening-level criteria established by the LUEG guidelines for determining significance. The vehicle trips generated from the project will result in approximately 60 Average Daily Trips (ADTs), which is not considered significant. According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans, projects that generate less than 2,000 ADT are below the screening-level criteria established by the LUEG guidelines for determining significance. Given that short-term emissions resulting from grading activities will be minimal and that the proposed project is anticipated to generate only 60 ADTs, emissions associated with the proposed project are not expected to create a cumulatively considerable impact nor a considerable net increase of PM₁₀, or any O₃ precursors.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (Preschool-12th Grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. The County of San Diego also considers residences as sensitive receptors since they house children and the elderly.

No Impact: No point-source emissions of air pollutants are associated with the project. As such, the project will not expose sensitive populations to excessive levels of air pollutants.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
|---|---|

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: No potential sources of objectionable odors have been identified in association with the proposed project. As such, no impact from odors is anticipated.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- 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?

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated: Based on an analysis of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB 2008), the County’s Geographic Information System (GIS) records, the County’s Comprehensive Matrix of Sensitive Species, and a Biological Resources Report dated July 7, 2008, prepared by ICF Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc., the project site supports native habitat including southern coast live oak riparian woodland, open coast live oak woodland, and Diegan coastal sage scrub.

There are several sensitive plant and animal species that have been identified in the area. The following plant species were observed within the project survey area: San Diego sunflower (*Viguiera laciniata*), California black walnut (*Juglans californica*), and Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*). Of these species, only San Diego sunflower plants were observed within the proposed project impact areas. No impacts to individual California black walnut or Engelmann oaks will occur as a result of the proposed project. Construction of the proposed trail could directly impact up to 17 San Diego sunflower plants, however, these plants will be avoided through site-specific project design.

Two sensitive wildlife species were observed or detected within the survey area; southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), and turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*). Potential impacts to suitable habitat for these species associated with development of the proposed trail and staging area would be limited to 0.66 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub habitat. In addition, a small portion of the proposed trail winds through 0.03 acre of coast live oak woodland. However, construction of the trail would not remove or otherwise affect mature oak trees or oak tree recruitment as trail impacts are considered minimal and all work through coast live oak woodland will be achieved by hand. The staging area will remain unpaved with natural substrates, and the trail areas will be

native soil and rock. The physical changes to habitat within the Park would not impact the regional long-term survival of species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status such as those species observed on-site or with a high potential to occur.

The project site is within the range of two sensitive invertebrate species, Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) and Hermes copper (*Lycaena hermes*). However, based on a habitat assessment and historical data, the potential for Quino to occur onsite is low. The potential for Hermes was also rated as low because no individuals have been detected in the project vicinity. However, the species host plant, spiny redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*) will be avoided by project design. The federally threatened coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), was not observed during the 2008 surveys, but was rated with a moderate potential to occur onsite. Historical data suggests the potential for the species to occur onsite is low as the project area is towards the eastern known range of the species and the elevation is too high. However, if trail construction occurs during the gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 to August 15 annually), prior to any habitat clearing of coastal sage scrub, the County will conduct protocol surveys for gnatcatchers to confirm their absence from the project area.

Impacts to 0.66 acre of coastal sage scrub (Tier II) habitat will be mitigated on-site through the planting of oak trees (Tier I habitat). The area will be initially irrigated to ensure oak tree establishment and will be monitored and managed in accordance with the Resource Management Plan for El Monte County Park (under preparation). Additionally the area will be fenced and public access will be restricted within a future trail easement that will connect to future trail easements to the north. In order to mitigate potentially significant indirect impacts to nesting success of protected raptors and migratory bird species, seasonal construction restrictions will be adhered to. Vegetation clearing or grading on the project site shall be restricted during the breeding/nesting season from February 1 through August 15 annually unless pre-construction surveys verify no nests are present in the vicinity of the work.

The undeveloped areas of the Park, which include the proposed project area, are included in the MSCP preserve system. The County proposes to fence the staging area and to manage the park trail within the preserve in accordance with a Resource Management Plan that includes Area Specific Management Directives that will be prepared by the County. Ongoing management of the Park will identify unauthorized trail use or other adverse effects associated with increased human use (e.g., trash, off-road activity). Such issues will be addressed through construction of fence segments, installation of signs, maintenance of trash receptacles, or other means to prevent impacts resulting from increased human use on the site or competition from domestic animals.

Therefore, as a result of project design considerations and mitigation measures discussed above, potential direct or indirect impacts to listed wildlife or County Group I or II wildlife species or their habitats have been reduced to less than significant.

By conforming to the BMO and the MSCP Subarea Plan, this project's mitigation helps to meet the goals, on a cumulative basis, described in Section 4.2 of the Subarea Plan.

The Wildlife agencies annually review the cumulative conservation and habitat loss approved by the County pursuant to the Subarea Plan thus ensuring that approval of projects within the MSCP are not cumulatively considerable.

- 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?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated: Direct impacts to sensitive habitat associated with development of the proposed trail and staging area and associated brush clearing would consist of 0.66 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub. Project impacts to riparian habitat on-site within the San Diego riverbed have been avoided. A small portion of the trail winds through 0.03 acre of coast live oak woodland adjacent to the developed portion of the Park. However, construction of the trail would not remove or otherwise affect mature oak trees or oak tree recruitment as trail impacts are considered minimal and all work through coast live oak woodland will be achieved by hand. Therefore, no significant impacts to the trees will result from trail construction or use. However, impacts to coastal sage scrub, a native vegetation community would be considered significant and will require mitigation. Significant impacts to 0.66 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub associated with construction of the proposed trail will be mitigated to a level of less than significant by on-site restoration at a ratio of 1.5:1, for a total of 1.0 acres.

The County of San Diego Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO) states that mitigation for impacts to vegetation communities within the MSCP Subarea shall be within a habitat tier equal to or greater than the impact site. Therefore, proposed mitigation for impacts to 0.66 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub (Tier II habitat) will consist of on-site planting of coast live oaks within a disturbed portion of the Park in order to restore a total of 1.0 acres of live oak woodland (Tier I habitat). Coast live oak plantings will be supplemented with irrigation water from an existing on-site well for up to two years in order to ensure their establishment.

Construction of the proposed trail and staging area could also result in impacts to sensitive habitat by increasing human access to the site. Such human-related impacts could include destruction of vegetation through trampling and unauthorized off-trail use. Impacts associated with increased human activity on the site and competition from domestic animals would be considered potentially significant. The project may result in the introduction of pests or exotic species to the site. In order to mitigate for potential impacts to sensitive habitat through increasing human access to the site, the County proposes to manage the Preserve in accordance with a Resource Management Plan that will be prepared by the County. Ongoing management of the Park will identify

unauthorized trail use or other adverse effects associated with increased human use (e.g., trash). Such issues will be addressed through construction of fence segments, installation of signs, or other means to prevent impacts resulting from increased human use at the Park or competition from domestic animals.

Thus, through project design considerations and mitigation measures, the project will not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

By conforming to the BMO and the MSCP Subarea Plan, this project's mitigation helps to meet the goals, on a cumulative basis, described in Section 4.2 of the Subarea Plan. The wildlife agencies annually review the cumulative conservation and habitat loss approved by the County pursuant to the Subarea Plan thus ensuring that approval of projects within the MSCP are not cumulatively considerable.

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The upper San Diego River, which is regulated by USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB, is located approximately 300 feet north of the proposed staging area boundary. Construction of the staging area and a portion of the proposed trail would occur within this proximity to the river, as does El Monte Road and the entrance to the park headquarters. However, no culverts, existing grade, or drainage changes, or intensive land use changes (e.g., installing impervious surfaces) would occur that would be likely to result in any significant impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and waterways under any of the applicable guidelines.

Development of the trail and staging area is not expected to result in draw down of the groundwater table to the detriment of ground-water dependent habitat (typically a drop of three feet or more from historical groundwater levels). Establishment of the staging area would not include additional drilling or installation of a new well, and water would not be provided within the staging area. Additional minimal water use for a limited time of up to two years may occur at the Park for irrigation of planted oak trees associated with the project, but this is not expected to result in significant impacts to existing groundwater levels or associated wetlands vegetation. Therefore, impacts to wetlands vegetation associated with groundwater use are not expected.

The proposed project preserves an existing 300-foot vegetated buffer between the north edge of the proposed staging area and the south edge of the low-flow channel of the

San Diego River. This buffer size is suitable to preserve the core buffer, habitat and hydrologic functions of the intermittent, low-gradient braided channel system that occurs within the upper watershed of the river. The proposed project will also leave the staging area pervious to surface water infiltration. No significant impacts to the riparian buffer on the project site will occur as a result of the proposed project.

The project will not impact through, discharging into, directly removing, filling, or hydrologically interrupting, any federally protected wetlands supported on the project site. The project proposes complete avoidance. Also, the project is preserving an existing 300-foot buffer to protect the wetland habitat from potential indirect impacts. Therefore, no significant impacts will occur to wetlands or waters of the U.S. as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers.

- 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?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The Park is in a relatively undeveloped area in San Diego County and abuts large preserve areas such as the Cleveland National Forest and the El Capitan Open Space Preserve. The Park occurs within the east-west trending upper San Diego River valley which provides local movement for a wide range of wildlife including mule deer, coyote, bobcat, and mountain lion. The Park is located adjacent to developed land, but may be considered to be adjacent to a core area or regional linkage of importance.

However, the proposed project would not interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife as impacts would be limited to a fenced 1.4-acre unpaved staging area and approximately one mile of native substrate trail up to four-feet wide with two-feet of brush management area along each side. Total impacts to 0.66 acre of sensitive habitats and 1.52 acres of disturbed/developed lands in the Park would not impact wildlife mobility, and mitigation measures, such as avoiding work during the bird breeding season, will ensure that there will be no interference with a wildlife nursery site. These limited impacts also would not prevent or interfere with connectivity to adjacent preserve areas in the Cleveland National Forest, the El Capitan Open Space Preserve or adjacent lower reaches of the San Diego River. Thus, impacts to wildlife movement or nursery sites as a result of the proposed project are considered to be less than significant.

- e) Conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat

conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project site is located within the County of San Diego South County MSCP Subarea Plan Area. The proposed trail and equestrian staging area have been found to be consistent with the provisions of the MSCP Subarea Plan adopted in October 1997. The proposed multi-use trail and staging area are compatible with the “Public Access and Recreation” land uses allowed within the preserve as specified in Section 1.9.2 of the Subarea Plan. MSCP Conformance Findings dated February 12, 2009 have been prepared for the project.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in 15064.5?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: Based on an analysis of records and a survey of the property by archaeologists William T. Eckhardt, Andrea Craft, Mike DeGiovine, and Native American archaeologist/monitor Gabriel Kitche, Jr. on February 26, 2008, it has been determined that there is one historical resource within the project site, a tunnel façade for the 1889 San Diego Flume (CA-SDI-11296). A cultural resources report entitled, *Cultural Resources Phase I Survey and Inventory of the Proposed Trail and Equestrian Staging Areas El Monte Regional Park, San Diego County, California*, prepared by Stacey C. Jordan, Ph.D., and William T. Eckhardt, with contributions by Andrea M. Craft and Theodore G. Cooley, dated May 2008 evaluated this historical resource based on a review of historical records including literature reviews, Native American consultation, historic map checks, field survey, resource documentation and an architectural evaluation. This historical site has not been previously evaluated for resource importance, and resource testing to evaluate this resource was not conducted as part of the survey and inventory effort. However, a significance evaluation is currently in progress as part of the development of an Area Specific Management Directive for the Park.

The San Diego Flume tunnel façade is a newly recorded element to a previously recorded linear resource that once extended some 35 miles from Boulder Creek to La Mesa Reservoir and is a potentially significant resource. The historic tunnel façade

feature of the 1889 San Diego Flume is representative of that particular time and period of economic development and engineering enterprise. The southern terminus of the proposed trail alignment arrives to the location of this resource on the east; however, the proposed trail alignment avoids the tunnel façade by up to 30 feet, or the maximum distance feasible given topographic constraints (i.e., grade requirements) and the need to connect to an existing off-site trail easement, and will not directly impact this resource. Any potential indirect impacts from increased human access to the area will be mitigated by placement of signs along the trail that read, "Please Stay on Trail". Thus, the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: Based on an analysis of records and a survey of the property by archaeologists William T. Eckhardt, Andrea Craft, Mike DeGiovine, and Native American archaeologist/monitor Gabriel Kitche, Jr. on February 26, 2008, it has been determined that there are archaeological resources within the project site. These resources include three granitic outcrops bearing prehistoric bedrock milling features (CA-SDI-13,606). A cultural resources report entitled, *Cultural Resources Phase I Survey and Inventory of the Proposed Trail and Equestrian Staging Areas El Monte Regional Park, San Diego County, California*, prepared by Stacey C. Jordan, Ph.D., and William T. Eckhardt, with contributions by Andrea M. Craft and Theodore G. Cooley, dated May 2008 evaluated the archaeological resources based on a review of historical records including literature reviews, Native American consultation, historic map checks, field survey, resource documentation and an architectural evaluation. These milling features have not been previously evaluated for resource importance, and resource testing to evaluate these resources was not conducted as part of the survey and inventory effort. However, a significance evaluation is currently in progress as part of the development of a Resource Management Plan for the Park.

The prehistoric bedrock milling site is previously recorded and is a potentially significant resource. The bedrock milling features represent the worksites and tools of Late Prehistoric Diegueño/Kumeyaay peoples who occupied the region prior to the mid-nineteenth century. Careful examination of all visible surface areas surrounding each loci failed to identify any associated artifact scatter. Based on the topography surrounding these outcrops, there is little likelihood that cultural deposits are present in the immediate surroundings. The proposed project will not directly impact this resource. Any potential indirect impacts have been reduced to a level below significant with implementation of project design considerations which avoid the site by more than 100

feet, the maximum distance feasible given topographic constraints (i.e., grade requirements) and the need to connect to an existing off-site trail easement. Additional mitigation measures include the presence of an archaeological monitor for all ground disturbing activities that will take place near the existing cultural resource sites within the Park. If an intact cultural deposit is found during monitoring, a more extensive testing program will be implemented, or a new alignment will be chosen, and a Native American monitor will be contacted to aid in identification and evaluation of the resource. All artifacts and associated records that may be discovered during monitoring shall be appropriately curated with an appropriate institution.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: A review of the County’s Paleontological Resources Maps and data on San Diego County’s geologic formations indicates that the project is located on geological formations that potentially contain unique paleontological resources. Although there may be some soil disturbance associated with construction of the proposed trail and staging area, there will be no significant grading or excavation at depths greater than 10 feet below the existing ground level. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, there will be a qualified archaeological monitor present during ground disturbance activities that will take place near the existing cultural resource sites within the Park.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Based on an analysis of records and a survey of the property by archaeologists William T. Eckhardt, Andrea Craft, Mike DeGiovine, and Native American archaeologist/monitor Gabriel Kitche, Jr. on February 26, 2008, it has been determined that the project will not disturb any human remains because the project site does not include a formal cemetery or any archaeological resources that might contain interred human remains. The results of the survey are provided in an archaeological survey report entitled, *Cultural Resources Phase I Survey and Inventory of the Proposed Trail and Equestrian Staging Areas El Monte Regional Park, San Diego*

County, California, prepared by Stacey C. Jordan, Ph.D., and William T. Eckhardt, with contributions by Andrea M. Craft and Theodore G. Cooley, dated May 2008.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to 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.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is not located in a fault rupture hazard zone identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42, Revised 1997, Fault-Rupture Hazards Zones in California, or located within any other area with substantial evidence of a known fault. Therefore, there will be no impact from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from a known fault-rupture hazard zone as a result of this project.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The *Uniform Building Code* (UBC) and the *California Building Code* (CBC) classifies all San Diego County with the highest seismic zone criteria, Zone 4. However, the proposed project is not located within 5 kilometers of the centerline of a known active-fault zone as defined within the *Uniform Building Code's Maps of Known Active Fault Near-Source Zones in California*. The project does not propose structures, only the construction of a trail. Therefore, the project will not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Incorporated

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: Although there may be some areas within the project area that are located within a “Potential Liquefaction Area” as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards, the scope of the project is such that there will be no structures built and no exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects.

iv. Landslides?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The site is located within a “Landslide Susceptibility Area” as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. Landslide Susceptibility Areas were developed based on landslide risk profiles included in the *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, San Diego, CA* (URS, 2004). Landslide risk areas from this plan were based on data including steep slopes (greater than 25%); soil series data (SANDAG based on USGS 1970s series); soil-slip susceptibility from USGS; and Landslide Hazard Zone Maps (limited to western portion of the County) developed by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology (DMG). Also included within Landslide Susceptibility Areas are gabbroic soils on slopes steeper than 15% in grade because these soils are slide prone. However, the area does not show evidence of either pre-existing or potential conditions that could become unstable and result in landslides. The project is for the construction of a trail and staging area. No structures are proposed and there will be no landform modification (except for some small ground disturbance to build a trail approximately two to four feet wide). Therefore, there will be no potentially significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from adverse effects of landslides.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: According to the Soil Survey of San Diego County, the soils on-site are identified as Cieneba coarse sandy loam, Cieneba-Fallbrook rocky sandy loams, Tujunga sand and riverwash that have a soil erodibility rating of “moderate” or “severe” as indicated by the Soil Survey for the San Diego Area, prepared

by the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Forest Service dated December 1973. However, the project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil for the following reasons:

- The project will not result in unprotected erodible soils; will not alter existing drainage patterns; is not located in a floodplain, wetland, or significant drainage feature; and will not develop steep slopes.
- The project will implement BMPs to ensure sediment does not erode from the proposed project site.
- The project does not involve grading.

Due to these factors, it has been found that the project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil on a project level.

In addition, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact because all the of past, present and future projects included on the list of projects that involve grading or land disturbance are required to follow the requirements of: the San Diego County Code of Regulations, Title 8, Zoning and Land Use Regulations, Division 7, Sections 87.414 (DRAINAGE - EROSION PREVENTION) and 87.417 (PLANTING); California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), San Diego Region Order No. R9-2007-0001, NPDES No. CAS0108758, issued January 24, 2007; County Watershed Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance (WPO) (Ord. No. 9926 revised March 2008); and County Storm Water Standards Manual adopted on February 20, 2002, and amended August 5, 2003 (Ordinance No. 9589). Refer to XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance for a comprehensive list of the projects considered.

- c) Will the project produce unstable geological conditions that will result in adverse impacts resulting from landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project may result in minimal amounts of site disturbance associated with the construction of a trail. The proposed project would not be considered a project that would produce unstable geological conditions. For further information refer to VI. Geology and Soils, Question a., i-iv listed above.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
|---|---|

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not contain expansive soils as defined by Table 18-I-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994). The soils on-site are Cieneba coarse sandy loam, Cieneba-Fallbrook rocky sandy loams, Tujunga sand and riverwash. These soils have a shrink-swell behavior of low and represent no substantial risks to life or property. In addition, the project will not have any significant impacts because the project does not involve structures. Therefore, the project will not create a substantial risk to life or property. This was confirmed by staff review of the Soil Survey for the San Diego Area, prepared by the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Forest Service dated December 1973.

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

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the construction of a multi-use trail and an equestrian staging area. The project does not propose any septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems since no wastewater will be generated.

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:

- a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project will not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment because it does not propose the storage, use, transport, emission, or disposal of Hazardous Substances, nor are Hazardous Substances proposed or currently in use in the immediate vicinity. In addition, the project does not propose to

demolish any existing structures on-site and therefore would not create a hazard related to the release of asbestos, lead based paint or other hazardous materials from demolition activities.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, nor will it emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Therefore, the project will not have any effect on an existing or proposed school.

- c) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, or is otherwise known to have been subject to a release of hazardous substances and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Based on a site visit and records search, the project site has not been subject to a release of hazardous substances. The project site is not included in any of the following lists or databases: the State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances sites list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5., the San Diego County Hazardous Materials Establishment database, the San Diego County DEH Site Assessment and Mitigation (SAM) Case Listing, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program Database ("CalSites" Envirostor Database), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System (RCRIS) listing, the EPA's Superfund CERCLIS database or the EPA's National Priorities List (NPL). Additionally, the project does not propose structures for human occupancy or significant linear excavation within 1,000 feet of an open, abandoned, or closed landfill, is not located on or within 250 feet of the boundary of a parcel identified as containing burn ash (from the historic burning of trash), is not on or within 1,000 feet of a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS), does not contain a leaking Underground Storage Tank, and is not located on a site with the potential for contamination from historic uses such as intensive agriculture, industrial uses, a gas station or vehicle repair shop. Therefore, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment.

- d) 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 for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), or within two miles of a public airport. Also, the project does not propose construction of any structure equal to or greater than 150 feet in height, constituting a safety hazard to aircraft and/or operations from an airport or heliport. Therefore, the project will not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

- e) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not within one mile of a private airstrip. As a result, the project will not constitute a safety hazard 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?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following sections summarize the project's consistency with applicable emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

- i. OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY PLAN AND MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN:

Less Than Significant Impact: The Operational Area Emergency Plan is a comprehensive emergency plan that defines responsibilities, establishes an emergency organization, defines lines of communications, and is designed to be part of the statewide Standardized Emergency Management System. The Operational Area Emergency Plan provides guidance for emergency planning and requires subsequent plans to be established by each jurisdiction that has responsibilities in a disaster situation. The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an overview of the risk assessment process, identifies hazards present in the jurisdiction, hazard profiles, and vulnerability assessments. The plan also identifies goals, objectives and actions for each jurisdiction in the County of San Diego, including all cities and the County unincorporated areas. The project will not interfere with this plan because it will not prohibit subsequent plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out.

ii. SAN DIEGO COUNTY NUCLEAR POWER STATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The San Diego County Nuclear Power Station Emergency Response Plan will not be interfered with by the project due to the location of the project, plant and the specific requirements of the plan. The emergency plan for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station includes an emergency planning zone within a 10-mile radius. All land area within 10 miles of the plant is not within the jurisdiction of the unincorporated County and as such a project in the unincorporated area is not expected to interfere with any response or evacuation.

iii. OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY ELEMENT

No Impact: The Oil Spill Contingency Element will not be interfered with because the project is not located along the coastal zone or coastline.

iv. EMERGENCY WATER CONTINGENCIES ANNEX AND ENERGY SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The Emergency Water Contingencies Annex and Energy Shortage Response Plan will not be interfered with because the project does not propose altering major water or energy supply infrastructure, such as the California Aqueduct.

v. DAM EVACUATION PLAN

Less Than Significant Impact: The Dam Evacuation Plan for El Capitan Dam will not be interfered with because even though the staging area and a portion of the trail is located within a dam inundation zone, the project is not a unique institution that would be difficult to safely evaluate in the event of a dam failure. Unique institutions, as defined by the Office of Emergency Services, include hospitals, schools, skilled nursing facilities, retirement homes, mental health care facilities, care facilities for patients with disabilities, adult and childcare facilities, jails/detention facilities, stadiums, arenas, amphitheatres, or a similar use. Since the project does not propose a unique institution

in a dam inundation zone, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with the implementation of an emergency response plan.

- g) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed project is within habitat that may be considered wildlands that have the potential to support wildland fires. However, the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires because no habitable structures are proposed.

- h) Propose a use, or place residents adjacent to an existing or reasonably foreseeable use that would substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies, which are capable of transmitting significant public health diseases or nuisances?

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not involve or support uses that allow water to stand for a period of 72 hours (3 days) or more (e.g. artificial lakes, agricultural irrigation ponds). Also, the project does not involve or support uses that will produce or collect animal waste, such as agricultural operations (chicken coops, dairies etc.), solid waste facility or other similar uses. Therefore, the project will not substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies.

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

- a) Violate any waste discharge requirements?

- Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant Impact
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project will be required to implement site design measures and/or source control BMPs and/or treatment control BMPs to reduce potential pollutants to the maximum extent practicable from entering storm water runoff. BMPs will include, but are not limited to, features such as stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, permeable surfaces, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls would be specified to minimize surface transport of sediments. These measures will enable the project to meet waste discharge requirements as required by the Land-Use Planning for New Development and Redevelopment Component of the San Diego Municipal Permit (RWQCB San Diego Region Order No. R9-2007-0001), as implemented by the San Diego County Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program (JURMP) and Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP).

Finally, the project's conformance to the waste discharge requirements listed above ensures the project will not create cumulatively considerable water quality impacts related to waste discharge because, through the permit, the project will conform to Countywide watershed standards in the JURMP and SUSMP, derived from State regulation to address human health and water quality concerns. Therefore, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact to water quality from waste discharges.

b) Is the project tributary to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list? If so, could the project result in an increase in any pollutant for which the water body is already impaired?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project lies within 907.15 El Monte hydrologic subarea within the San Diego River hydrologic area. According to the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list, July 2003, a portion of this watershed at the Pacific Ocean and mouth of the San Diego River is impaired for coliform bacteria. Constituents of concern in the San Dieguito watershed include coliform bacteria, total dissolved solids, nutrients, petroleum chemicals, toxics, and trash. The project proposes the following activities that are associated with these pollutants: minimal amounts of ground disturbance associated with a trail and staging area. However, site design measures and/or source control BMPs and/or treatment control BMPs will be employed such that potential pollutants will be reduced in any runoff to the maximum extent practicable so as not to increase the level of these pollutants in receiving waters. BMPs will include, but are not limited to, features such as stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, permeable surfaces, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls would be specified to minimize surface transport of sediments.

The proposed BMPs are consistent with regional surface water and storm water planning and permitting process that has been established to improve the overall water

quality in County watersheds. As a result, the project will not contribute to a cumulative impact to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Regional surface water and storm water permitting regulation for County of San Diego, Incorporated Cities of San Diego County, and San Diego Unified Port District includes the following: California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), San Diego Region Order No. R9-2007-0001, NPDES No. CAS0108758, issued January 24, 2007; County Watershed Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance (WPO) (Ord. No. 9926 revised March 2008); and County Storm Water Standards Manual adopted on February 20, 2002, and amended August 5, 2003 (Ordinance No. 9589). The stated purposes of these ordinances are to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the County of San Diego residents; to protect water resources and to improve water quality; to cause the use of management practices by the County and its citizens that will reduce the adverse effects of polluted runoff discharges on waters of the state; to secure benefits from the use of storm water as a resource; and to ensure the County is compliant with applicable state and federal laws. Ordinance No. 9926 (WPO) has discharge prohibitions, and requirements that vary depending on type of land use activity and location in the County. Ordinance No. 9589 is Appendix A of Ordinance No. 9926 (WPO) and sets out in more detail, by project category, what Dischargers must do to comply with the Ordinance and to receive permits for projects and activities that are subject to the Ordinance. Collectively, these regulations establish standards for projects to follow which intend to improve water quality from headwaters to the deltas of each watershed in the County. Each project subject to WPO is required to prepare a Storm water Management Plan that details a project's pollutant discharge contribution to a given watershed and propose BMPs or design measures to mitigate any impacts that may occur in the watershed.

c) Could the proposed project cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The Regional Water Quality Control Board has designated water quality objectives for waters of the San Diego Region as outlined in Chapter 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan (Plan). The water quality objectives are necessary to protect the existing and potential beneficial uses of each hydrologic unit as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan.

The project lies within the San Diego hydrologic unit that has the following existing and potential beneficial uses for inland surface waters, coastal waters, reservoirs and lakes, and ground water: municipal and domestic supply; agricultural supply; industrial process supply, industrial service supply; hydropower generation; contact water recreation; non-contact water recreation; warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; wildlife

habitat; commercial and sport fishing; estuarine habitat; marine habitat; migration of aquatic organisms; shellfish harvesting; and, rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat.

The project proposes construction of a trail and staging area. Site design measures and/or source control BMPs and/or treatment control BMPs will be employed to reduce potential pollutants in runoff to the maximum extent practicable, such that the proposed project will not cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses. BMPs will include, but are not limited to, features such as stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, permeable surfaces, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls would be specified to minimize surface transport of sediments.

The proposed BMPs are consistent with regional surface water, storm water and groundwater planning and permitting process that has been established to improve the overall water quality in County watersheds. As a result, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses. Refer to Section VIII., Hydrology and Water Quality, Question b, for more information on regional surface water and storm water planning and permitting process.

- d) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Development of the proposed trail and staging area does not require a water supply, and water would not be provided within the staging area. In addition, the project does not involve operations that would interfere substantially with groundwater recharge including, but not limited to the following: the project does not involve regional diversion of water to another groundwater basin; or diversion or channelization of a stream course or waterway with impervious layers, such as concrete lining or culverts, for substantial distances (e.g. ¼ mile).

There is an existing well on-site which is used for irrigation purposes, and additional limited water use from this well may occur at the Park to supplement planted oaks within the one-acre mitigation area. However, this minimal water use would only be required to aid in the establishment of planted oak trees and would be required for no more than two years. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge.

e) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project proposes the construction of a trail and staging area. The proposed project will implement site design measures, source control, and/or treatment control BMPs to reduce potential pollutants, including sediment from erosion or siltation, to the maximum extent practicable. BMPs are required during construction activities and will include, but are not limited to features such as stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, permeable surfaces, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls would be specified to minimize surface transport of sediments. These measures will control erosion and sedimentation and satisfy waste discharge requirements as required by the Land-Use Planning for New Development and Redevelopment Component of the San Diego Municipal Permit (SDRWQCB Order No. R9-2007-0001), as implemented by the San Diego County Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program (JURMP) and Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP). Due to these factors, it has been found that the project will not result in significantly increased erosion or sedimentation potential and will not alter any drainage patterns of the site or area on- or off-site. In addition, because erosion and sedimentation will be controlled within the boundaries of the project, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. For further information on soil erosion refer to VI., Geology and Soils, Question b.

f) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed project will not significantly alter established drainage patterns or significantly increase the amount of runoff for the following reasons:

- Trails have been designed to follow contours.
- Staging area will not involve grading and will have a permeable surface.

Therefore, the project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site. Moreover, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable alteration or a drainage pattern or increase in the rate or amount of runoff, because the project will not substantially increase water surface elevation or runoff exiting the site, as detailed above.

g) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: There are no existing or planned storm water drainage systems proposed by the project, nor does the project require such systems.

h) Provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project does not propose polluted runoff. To ensure that sediment does not leave the site, the following site design measures and/or source control BMPs and/or treatment control BMPs will be employed such that potential pollutants will be reduced in runoff to the maximum extent practicable: stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, use of permeable surfaces, and silt fencing. Refer to VIII Hydrology and Water Quality Questions a, b, c, for further information.

i) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, including County Floodplain Maps?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not involve the placement of housing.

j) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: No structures are proposed and, therefore, no impact will occur.

k) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the construction of a trail and staging area and does not propose structures and, thus, will not expose people to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding.

l) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site lies within a mapped dam inundation area for a major dam/reservoir within San Diego County. However, the project is for the construction of a trail and staging area and, therefore, the project will not expose people to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding.

m) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

i. SEICHE

No Impact: The project site is not located along the shoreline of a lake or reservoir; therefore, could not be inundated by a seiche. Additionally, the project is for the construction of a trail and staging area and therefore will not expose people or structures to the risk of inundation by seiche.

ii. TSUNAMI

No Impact: The project site is located more than a mile from the coast; therefore, in the event of a tsunami, would not be inundated.

iii. MUDFLOW

No Impact: Mudflow is type of landslide. The site is rated as generally susceptible to a landslide zone. However, the project proposes minimal land disturbance that will expose a small amount of unprotected soils and it is not anticipated that the project will expose people or property to inundation due to a mudflow.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING -- Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not propose the introduction of new infrastructure such as major roadways or water supply systems, or utilities to the area. Therefore, the proposed project will not significantly disrupt or divide the established community.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact:

The proposed project is subject to the Regional Land Use Element Policy 2.6 Special Purpose Designations and General Plan Land Use Designation (24) Impact Sensitive. The project is consistent with the General Plan because trail systems are anticipated by the 24 Land Use Designation that provides for limited recreational uses. The project is subject to the policies of the Lakeside Community Plan. The Lakeside Community Plan includes policies and recommendations to maximize recreational use of public lands and provide systems of trails for horseback riding, bicycling, and hiking. In addition, the General Plan commits to continue to provide and expand the variety of trail experiences, including staging areas, and provide connections to other public trail systems pursuant to Countywide Trail Policies 1.1 and 1.3. The proposed project is consistent with the policies of the Lakeside Community Plan. The property is zoned S80 Open Space which is intended for recreation areas and permits projects with minimal impact on the natural environment pursuant to The Zoning Ordinance Section 2800; therefore, the proposed project is consistent with plan and zone. Additionally, the project adheres to the Lakeside Trails and Pathway Plan and community-specific trail design guidelines contained within the Community Trails Master Plan.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- 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?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project site or land within the vicinity of a site has been classified by the California Department of Conservation – Division of Mines and Geology (Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego Production-Consumption Region, 1997) as an area of “Identified Mineral Resource Significance” (MRZ-2) and an area of “Potential Mineral Resource Significance” (MRZ-3). However, implementation of the project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value since the project will not exclude future mineral extraction.

- 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site is not considered to be an Extractive Use Zone (S-82) nor does it have an Impact Sensitive Land Use Designation (24) with an Extractive Land

Use Overlay (25) (County Land Use Element, 2000). Consequently, the site has not been delineated as a locally important resource recovery site nor will the construction of a trail and staging area result in a loss of availability of locally important resources.

Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of locally important mineral resource recovery (extraction) site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan will occur as a result of this project.

XI. NOISE -- Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for construction of a trail and staging area and does not support any noise-generating equipment. Therefore, the project will not expose people to or generate any noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the County of San Diego Noise Element of the General Plan or Noise Ordinances, and other applicable local, State, and Federal noise control regulations.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not propose any of the following land uses that can be impacted by groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

1. Buildings where low ambient vibration is essential for interior operation, including research and manufacturing facilities with special vibration constraints.
2. Residences and buildings where people normally sleep including hotels, hospitals, residences and where low ambient vibration is preferred.
3. Civic and institutional land uses including schools, churches, libraries, other institutions, and quiet office where low ambient vibration is preferred.
4. Concert halls for symphonies or other special use facilities where low ambient vibration is preferred.

Also, the project does not propose any major, new or expanded infrastructure such as mass transit, highways or major roadways or intensive extractive industry that could generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels on-site or in the surrounding area.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for construction of a trail and staging area and does not support any noise-generating equipment. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in existing ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for construction of a trail and staging area and will not support any noise-generating equipment. Also, any temporary increase over existing ambient levels when equipment is used to construct the trail is not expected to exceed the noise limits of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36-410). Equipment operations will occur only during permitted hours of operation pursuant to Section 36-410. Also, the project will not operate equipment in excess of 75 dB for more than 8 hours during a 24-hour period. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in existing ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for airports or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. Therefore, the project will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within a one-mile vicinity of a private airstrip; therefore, the project will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:

a) Induce substantial 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)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not induce substantial population growth in an area because the project does not propose any physical or regulatory change that would remove a restriction to or encourage population growth in an area including, but limited to the following: new or extended infrastructure or public facilities; new commercial or industrial facilities; large-scale residential development; accelerated conversion of homes to commercial or multi-family use; or regulatory changes including General Plan amendments, specific plan amendments, zone reclassifications, sewer or water annexations; or LAFCO annexation actions.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not displace any existing housing since the site is currently vacant.

- c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not displace a substantial number of people since the site is currently vacant.

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

- 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 service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

- i. Fire protection?
- ii. Police protection?
- iii. Schools?
- iv. Parks?
- v. Other public facilities?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not involve the construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities including but not limited to fire protection facilities, sheriff facilities, schools, or parks in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios or objectives for any public services. Therefore, the project will not have an adverse physical effect on the environment because the project does not require new or significantly altered services or facilities to be constructed.

XIV. RECREATION

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not propose any residential use, included but not limited to a residential subdivision, mobile home park, or construction for a single-family residence that may increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity. The project will enhance an existing neighborhood and regional park by providing trail connectivity and access.

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not propose any residential use, included but not limited to a residential subdivision, mobile home park, or construction for a single-family residence that may increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity. The project itself is an expansion of recreational uses.

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:

a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The proposed staging area will accommodate up to five horse trailers and ten cars. Access to the proposed trail and staging area along El Monte Road is provided via Lake Jennings Park Road. While San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) trip generation tables are typically used to estimate trip generation for land development projects, the SANDAG “Brief Guide for Vehicular Generation Rates” does not include a rate/category that would apply to the proposed staging area and trail. Therefore, it was assumed that day users of the equestrian staging area would stay for at least two to four hours to utilize the proposed trail. Local residents in the area would also use the trail, but due to the location of the Park within an equestrian community and the proximity of residents, many would walk to the trailhead and their access would not necessitate a vehicular trip.

Conservatively assuming the staging area would, on average, fill to capacity twice daily, 10 trailers and 20 cars would be serviced daily. Assuming two trips per vehicle (one inbound trip and one outbound trip); the staging area would generate 60 vehicular trips. Recreational trips will peak during weekends and holidays and reduced usage will occur on the typical weekday. Very few trips will occur during the weekday peak periods. It is not anticipated that El Monte Road or Lake Jennings Park Road are operating at a LOS E or F. Additionally, the number of additional trips is not enough to surpass significance guidelines or require mitigation. Given the minor increase in the number of trips resulting from the proposed project, implementation of the proposed project will not result in a significant traffic impact to the existing road network.

b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the County congestion management agency and/or as identified by the County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee Program for designated roads or highways?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: As indicated above, it is conservatively assumed that the project will add 60 vehicular trips to El Monte Road and Lake Jennings Park Road. The proposed project will add less than the County of San Diego traffic threshold guidelines of 100 trips to Circulation Element roads projected to operate at LOS F and less than 200 trips to Circulation Element Roads projected to operate at LOS E. The proposed project will not cause the traffic impact threshold guidelines established by the County of San Diego to be exceeded. The proposed project will not prevent the planned Circulation Element road system from operating at its planned level of service at buildout. Implementation of the proposed project will not result in a significant traffic impact to the planned road network.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is located outside of an Airport Influence Area and is not located within two miles of a public or public use airport; therefore, the project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns.

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

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The proposed project will not significantly alter traffic safety on El Monte Road. A safe and adequate sight distance will be provided at all staging area driveway entrances to the satisfaction of the Director of the County of San Diego Department of Public Works. The proposed project will not place incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) on existing roadways. Therefore, the project will not significantly increase hazards due to design features or incompatible uses.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not result in inadequate emergency access. The project is for a trail and staging area and does not require emergency access.

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

- Potentially Significant Impact
- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
- Less than Significant Impact
- No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The staging area will provide parking for up to five horse trailers and ten cars. The parking capacity will meet current and anticipated future trail use requirements based on low volume staging area requirements as discussed in the Community Trails Master Plan (2005) and experience with other staging areas within County Parks. Overflow parking will be available during the week south of El Monte Road within existing parking lots at the Park. Overflow parking is also available within the El Monte Road right of way.

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is for the development of a trail and equestrian staging area. The implementation will not result in any construction or new road design features; therefore, will not conflict with policies regarding alternative transportation.

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not involve any uses that will discharge any wastewater to sanitary sewer or on-site wastewater systems (septic). Therefore, the project will not exceed any wastewater treatment requirements.

b) 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not include new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities. In addition, the project does not require the construction or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities.

- c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project does not include new or expanded storm water drainage facilities.

- d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project may require limited irrigation for up to two years for establishment of planted oaks to ensure restoration sites are successful. Water supply would be from an existing on-site irrigation well. Therefore, the project will have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project.

- e) 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project for the development of a trail and equestrian staging area will not produce any wastewater; therefore, the project will not interfere with any wastewater treatment providers' service capacity.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Implementation of the project may generate solid waste associated with the removal of trash and debris from the proposed trail and equestrian staging area. All solid waste facilities, including landfills require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County Department of Environmental Health, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440 et seq.). There are five, permitted active landfills in San Diego County with remaining capacity. Therefore, there is sufficient existing permitted solid waste capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: Implementation of the project may generate solid waste associated with the removal of trash and debris from the proposed trail and equestrian staging area. All solid waste facilities, including landfills require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County Department of Environmental Health, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440 et seq.). The project will deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility and therefore, will comply with Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

a) Does the project have the potential to 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?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential to 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, 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 were considered in the response to each question in sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the project’s potential for significant cumulative effects. Resources that have been evaluated as significant would be potentially impacted by the project, particularly biological and cultural resources. However, mitigation has been included that clearly reduces these effects to a level below significance. This mitigation includes avoidance of the bird breeding season, on-site habitat restoration, presence of an archaeological monitor during land disturbance activities near cultural sites, installation of signs, and management of the Park in accordance with the Resource Management Plan being prepared by the County. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- 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)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following list of past, present and future projects were considered and evaluated as a part of this Initial Study:

PROJECT NAME	PERMIT STATUS
Blossom Valley Estates	Approved
El Monte Valley Nature Park	In progress

Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse cumulative effects were considered in the response to each question in sections I through XVI of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the projects potential for incremental effects that are cumulatively considerable. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are cumulative effects associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in sections I. Aesthetics, III. Air Quality, VI. Geology and Soils, VII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, VIII Hydrology and Water Quality XI. Noise, XII. Population and Housing, and XV. Transportation and Traffic. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

XVIII. REFERENCES USED IN THE COMPLETION OF THE INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

All references to Federal, State and local regulation are available on the Internet. For Federal regulation refer to <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/>. For State regulation refer to www.leginfo.ca.gov. For County regulation refer to www.amlegal.com. All other references are available upon request.

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