



# County of San Diego

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April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## **CEQA Initial Study - Environmental Checklist Form (Based on the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G)**

1. Title; Project Number(s); Environmental Log Number:

Borrego Military Landing Zone Brushing and Clearing Permit; PDS2019-ER-19-05-001

2. Lead agency name and address:

County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services  
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110  
San Diego, CA 92123-1239

3. a. Contact: Nicholas Koutoufidis  
b. Phone number: (858) 495-5329  
c. E-mail: [nicholas.koutoufidis@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:nicholas.koutoufidis@sdcounty.ca.gov)

4. Project location:

The Project site is located south of Palm Canyon Drive (County Highway 22) in the unincorporated community of Borrego Springs (APNs: 199-060-01-00 and 199-060-13-00).

5. Project Applicant name and address:

Sky Dive Perris  
Attn: Melanie Conaster  
525 B Street, Suite 2200  
San Diego, CA 92101

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 6. General Plan        | Rural                  |
| Community Plan:        | Borrego Springs        |
| Land Use Designation:  | Rural Lands 40 (RL-40) |
| Density:               | 1du/ 40 acres          |
| Floor Area Ratio (FAR) | N/A                    |

- 7. Zoning Use Regulation: Rural Residential  
Minimum Lot Size: 1 du/ 6000sf  
Special Area Regulation: N/A

- 8. Description of project:  
On June 24, 2019, the County determined that the drop zone use is considered a Public Passive Park/Recreational Area, which is an Essential Service use. Under the Rural Residential Use Regulations, Essential Services are allowed on the property by-right. It has been determined by PDS that the activity has no incidental buildings or structures and entails the use of an outdoor area that is intended for low intensity passive recreational use by a small group, consisting of only military clients affiliated with government entities.

The proposed Borrego Military Landing Zone Brushing and Clearing Permit project (Project) is an Administrative Permit (AD) for Brushing and Clearing to correct a violation resulting in disturbance of 17.07 acres of land area. The Project will mitigate for the disturbed land to bring the site into compliance.

It is appropriate to only be evaluating the brushing and clearing mitigation for the site because the military drop zone use has already been determined to be allowed by-right.

The Project site is located at 1747 Palm Canyon Drive in the Borrego Springs Community Plan within the unincorporated community of the County of San Diego. The site is subject to the General Plan Regional Category Rural, Land Use Designation Rural Lands 40 (RL-40). Zoning for the site is Rural Residential (RR).

The Project consists of an Administrative Permit for brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land. The site is currently developed with a single family residence in the northeast corner of the site to remain. Access for the Project would be provided from Palm Canyon Drive.

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

Lands surrounding the Project site are zoned for residential use and are currently vacant. The Borrego Valley Airport is directly north of the site to the north of Palm Canyon Drive. Borrego Springs Elementary is approximately 0.8 miles to the west, and a golf course is located approximately 1.28 miles to the southwest.

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

<b>Permit Type/Action</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Administrative Permit Grading and Clearing	County of San Diego
Water District Approval	
Fire District Approval	

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

YES

NO

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, public lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and to reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process (see Public Resources Code §21083.3.2). Information is also available from the Native American Heritage Commission’s Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code §5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code §21082.3(e) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

**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"/> <u>Aesthetics</u>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Agriculture and Forest Resources</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Air Quality</u>                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Biological Resources</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Cultural Resources</u>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Energy Use</u>                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Geology &amp; Soils</u>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</u>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Hazards &amp; Haz. Materials</u>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Hydrology &amp; Water Quality</u>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Land Use &amp; Planning</u>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mineral Resources</u>                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Noise</u>                           | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Population &amp; Housing</u>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Public Services</u>                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Recreation</u>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Transportation</u>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tribal Cultural Resources</u>          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Utilities &amp; Service Systems</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Wildfire</u>                         | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mandatory Findings of Significance</u> |

**DETERMINATION:** (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services 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, Planning & Development Services 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, Planning & Development Services finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.



Signature

Nicholas Koutoufidis

Printed Name

4.10.20

Date

Land Use/Environmental Planner

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. “Less Than Significant With 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:

**Less than Significant Impact:** 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.

As described in the General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (GPU EIR; County of San Diego 2011), the County contains visual resources affording opportunities for scenic vistas in every community. Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs) are identified within the GPU EIR and are the closest that the County comes to specifically designating scenic vistas. Many public roads in the County currently have views of RCAs or expanses of natural resources that would have the potential to be considered scenic vistas. Numerous public trails are also available throughout the County. New development can often have the potential to obstruct, interrupt, or detract from a scenic vista.

The Project site is located at 1747 Palm Canyon Drive within the community of Borrego Springs in the unincorporated County of San Diego. The Borrego Valley Airport is directly north of the Project site. The surrounding land is characterized by vacant land intermixed with sporadic industrial and residential development. The 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 includes Palm Canyon Drive, a portion of County Highway 22 which was determined by the County General Plan to be a County Scenic Highway. The Project proposes an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for the brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land. The northern edge of the cleared area is approximately 110 feet from the edge of the public right-of-way (County Highway 22). Thus, the Project would afford minimal views to viewer groups travelling along Highway 22, primarily including motorists, and to a lesser extent, recreationalists, such as walkers, bikers and hikers.

Additionally, the Project would be consistent with existing surrounding development, including sporadic cleared areas and sparse development associated with industrial and residential land uses, and would not detract from any scenic vista for the reasons mentioned above.

As mentioned above, RCAs are identified within the GPU EIR and are the closest that the County comes to specifically designating scenic vistas. Pursuant to review by County Staff of GIS Aerial Imagery, there are no currently identified RCAs within the Borrego Springs Community Plan Area. The closest RCA to the Project site is the San Ysidro Mountains RCA which is located approximately 9.1 miles west of the Project site, however, due to distance and intervening topography, it would not afford any views of the Project site.

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 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:** 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. The dimension of a scenic highway is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision, but a reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon. The scenic highway corridor extends to the visual limits of the landscape abutting the scenic highway.

The Project is not located near or visible within the composite viewshed of a State Scenic Highway, however it is adjacent to County Highway 22 which has been designated by the County General Plan as a County Scenic Highway. As described above in l.a., the northern edge of the cleared area is approximately 110 feet from the edge of the public right-of-way, and thus would provide minimal views to viewer groups of the Project site.

The Project site is adjacent to the Borrego Valley Airport and has existing residential development on-site. The Project is for an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres on-site, which is minimally visible from County Highway 22, pursuant to a site visit by County Staff on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. Additionally, the Project is consistent with existing use types including existing cleared areas associated with residential and industrial development, as well as consistent with community character, characterized by and would not result in substantial damage to scenic resources.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views at the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced

from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized, area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 Project is compatible with the existing natural environment, which is characterized by low desert valley consisting of a number of vegetation types, including desert scrub and riparian forest (mesquite bosque), as well as the existing built environment, characterized by sporadic cleared areas and development associated with residential and industrial land uses. Viewer groups of the Project site would include motorists, and to a lesser extent, recreationalists, such as walkers, bikers and hikers. As indicated in response 1(a), the viewer exposure to the site is limited due to the distance of the cleared area from the edge of the public right-of-way. Therefore, the Project would not degrade the visual character of the area and would be compatible with existing surrounding land uses.

Therefore, the Project within the landscape would not detract from or contract with the existing visual character and/or quality of 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 Proposed Project is located within Zone B as identified by the San Diego County Light Pollution Code (at least twenty miles of the Mount Laguna Observatory or the Palomar Observatory) and would not adversely affect nighttime views or astronomical observations because the Project would be required to conform to the Light Pollution Code (Section 51.201-51.209). The Project does not propose any outdoor lighting or any structures which could produce glare. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.



**II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY 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:** The Project site contains lands designated by the Farmland mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) as Prime Soils. Additionally, the site contains loA (Indio silt loam, saline, 0 to 2 percent slopes) and MpA2 (Mecca fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, eroded), which are candidate soils designated by the County General Plan as Soils of Statewide Importance and Prime Soils, respectively. However, the site is located in a desert basin, outside of the service area by the County Water Authority, and has a water rating of low. Therefore, the site would not be considered to be a viable agricultural resource and no potentially significant project or cumulative level conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance to a non-agricultural use would occur 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 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 zoned Rural Residential (RR), which is primarily a residential zone but can also allow for limited agricultural uses. The Borrego Springs Community Plan Area is widely zoned General Rural (S92), which is a residential and agriculture zone which is intended to provide approximate controls for land which is rugged terrain, watershed, dependent on ground water for a water supply, desert, susceptible to fire and erosion, or subject to other environmental constraints. Borrego Springs has traditionally supported agriculture, however agricultural operations have been concentrated to the northern end of the valley, where alluvial sediment provides nutrient rich soil and the conversion of mountainous terrain shelters crops from desert winds. The Project site is located approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the highest concentration of agricultural lands within the Borrego Springs CPA.

The Project site is not under a Williamson Act Contract or part of an agricultural preserve. The nearest preserve land and lands under contract are located approximately 12.1 miles southwest of the Project site, within the North Mountain Community Plan Area.

Additionally, the Project is directly adjacent to an existing airport (Borrego Valley Airport) and within the ALUCP for the Borrego Valley Airport, and thus would not be compatible with an agricultural operation due to existing interface conflicts. Therefore, the Project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 does not contain forest lands or timberland. The County of San Diego does not have any existing Timberland Production Zones. In addition, the Project is consistent with existing zoning and a rezone of the property is not proposed. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland or timberland production zones.

d) Result in the loss of forest land, conversion of forest land to non-forest use, or involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 does not contain any forest lands as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g), therefore Project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use. Portions of the Cleveland National Forest are located approximately 16.5 miles to the west of the Project site. However, Project implementation would not result in the disturbance, loss or conversion of these resources to a non-forest use because no off-site improvements are proposed for the Project and the use is allowed per current zoning and the General Plan.

e) 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 |
|---|--|

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project site and surrounding area contains lands designated as containing Prime Soils and Soils of Statewide of Statewide Importance. However, as discussed above in responses II.a. and II.b., the Project is located within a Desert Basin outside of the boundaries of the County Water Authority and thus would not be considered a viable agricultural resource due to site dependency on groundwater and current overdraft of the Borrego Valley Aquifer. Additionally, as discussed in response II.b., the site is directly adjacent to the Borrego Valley Airport and within the ALUCP for the airport and a future agricultural operation would present interface conflicts with the existing airport operations. Therefore, the Project would not result in the conversion of Important Farmland or other agricultural resources to a non-agricultural use.

**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)?

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan and thus anticipated in SANDAG growth projections used in development of the RAQS and SIP. Operation of the Project would result in emissions of ozone precursors that were considered as a part of the RAQS based on growth projections. As such, the Project is not expected to conflict with either the RAQS or the SIP. Moreover, the Average Daily Trips (ADT) for the Project would be less than 200, far below the screening levels, and subsequently would not violate ambient air quality standards. 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. The Project falls below the screening levels and is consistent with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, thus the Project would not violate ambient air quality standards.

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

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less than Significant Impact

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       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.

**No Impact:** The Project does not propose any operation or activity that has the potential to create pollutant emissions. No substantial increase in vehicular trips is anticipated as a result of the Project. Further, there are no substantial grading operations associated with the construction of the Project. 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)?

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less than Significant Impact  
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       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 (O<sub>3</sub>). 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 (PM<sub>10</sub>) under the CAAQS. O<sub>3</sub> is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) 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 PM<sub>10</sub> 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.

**No Impact:** The Project does not propose any construction and/or operation that have the potential to emit any criteria air pollutants. No significant increase in vehicular trips is anticipated as a result of the Project. Further, there are no substantial grading operations associated with the construction of the Project. As such, the Project will not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of PM<sub>10</sub>, or any O<sub>3</sub> 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:

**No Impact:** Based a site visit conducted by County Staff on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019 , sensitive receptors and point sources of toxic emissions have not been identified within a quarter-mile (the radius determined by the SCAQMD in which the dilution of pollutants is typically significant) of the proposed Project. Furthermore, no point-source emissions of air pollutants (other than vehicle emissions) 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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 Wildlife or U.S. 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:** Based on an analysis of the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) records, the County's Comprehensive Matrix of Sensitive Species, site photos, and a Biological Resources Letter Report dated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 prepared by Dudek, it has been determined that the site, and surrounding area, supports native vegetation, including desert saltbush scrub and disturbed desert saltbush scrub. Staff has determined the removal of the 5.11 acres of desert saltbush scrub and 11.97 acres of disturbed desert saltbush scrub will not result in substantial adverse effects with the incorporation of mitigation. The County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Biological Resources establish mitigation ratios for lands outside of the County's adopted MSCP. The Project impacts to desert saltbush scrub and disturbed desert saltbush scrub are required to be mitigated for at a 2:1 ratio. The proposed mitigation consists of the purchase of 34.16 acres of off-site mitigation land. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation.

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 Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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:** Based the Biological Resources Letter Report dated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and prepared by Dudek, it has been determined that the Project site contains riparian habitat within the Project boundaries. However, the areas proposed for development would avoid direct impacts to any portion of the riparian habitat. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

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:** Based the Biological Resources Letter Report dated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and site visit on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 conducted and prepared by Dudek, no U.S Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, or County RPO jurisdictional areas were detected in the Project area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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 Project includes brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land and would not place any new structures on the Project site. Based on an analysis of the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) records, the County's Comprehensive Matrix of Sensitive Species, site photos, and a Biological Resources Letter Report dated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 prepared by Dudek, the site lacks suitable nesting habitat for migratory birds. Interference with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, and impedance with the use of native wildlife nursery sites are not expected as a result of Project implementation.

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:** Refer to the attached Ordinance Compliance Checklist dated April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for further information on consistency with any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan, including, Habitat Management Plans (HMP), Special Area Management Plans (SAMP), or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources including the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), Biological Mitigation Ordinance, Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO), Habitat Loss Permit (HLP).

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES** -- Would the project:

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 an Administrative Permit to correct a brushing and clearing violation. A total of 17.07 acres were cleared without benefit of permit. Based on an analysis of County of San Diego archaeology resource files, historic records, maps, and aerial photographs by County of San Diego staff archaeologist, Donna Beddow, it has been determined that the Project site does not and did not contain any historical resources. Therefore, the Project would not result in impacts to historical resources.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 is an Administrative Permit to correct a brushing and clearing violation. A total of 17.07 acres were cleared without benefit of permit. The Project will be conditioned with a Cultural Impact Fee to be paid to the Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee (KCRC) for the violation since there is no longer the opportunity to survey the area that was impacted to determine whether archaeological resources were present.

Staff archaeologist, Donna Beddow, has reviewed County of San Diego archaeology resource files, archaeological records, maps, and aerial photographs and has determined that no known archaeological resources are or were present within the Project site. In addition, staff archaeologist, Bridget Lawrence, conducted a site visit on September 23, 2019 and no resources were identified. No additional ground disturbing activities are proposed; therefore, archaeological monitoring is not required.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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**



The Project is an Administrative Permit to correct a brushing and clearing violation. A total of 17.07 acres were cleared without benefit of permit. The Project will be conditioned with a Cultural Impact Fee for the clearing violation since there is no longer the opportunity to survey the area that was impacted to determine whether archaeological resources (including human remains) were present.

Staff archaeologist, Donna Beddow, has reviewed County of San Diego archaeology resource files, archaeological records, maps, and aerial photographs and has determined that no known archaeological resources are or were present within the Project site. In addition, staff archaeologist, Bridget Lawrence, conducted a site visit on September 23, 2019 and no resources were identified.

**VI. ENERGY** – Would the project:

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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                               |

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project would result in the use of electricity, petroleum, and other consumption of energy resources during the initial clearing phase of the Project; as clearing would be performed by machinery, however, the consumption is not expected to be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary for the following reasons.

The Project includes brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land area. The initial clearing would be performed by machinery, however the upkeep would be maintained manually and would not require any energy use. The Project is below thresholds set for air quality standards as well as GHG standards. Please see responses for section III. Air Quality and VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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                               |

**Less than Significant Impact:** As described above, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change. As such, the Project would be consistent with County goals and policies included in the County General Plan that address greenhouse gas reductions. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with emissions reduction targets of Assembly Bill 32 and the Global Warming Solutions Act. Thus, the Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of greenhouse gas emissions.

**VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS** -- Would the project:

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
- i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 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 would be no impact from the exposure of people 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 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 buildings or other structures. Therefore the Project would not result in any 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                               |

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project site is located within a "Potential Liquefaction Area" as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. The Project is for Brushing and Clearing of 17.07 acres of land and does not include any grading or building of structures. Therefore, effects from liquefaction would be less than significant.

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 Project site is not 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. Since the Project is not located within an identified Landslide Susceptibility Area and the geologic environment has a low probability to become unstable, the Project would have a less than significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to potential adverse effects from 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 entisols and mollisols that have a soil erodibility rating of severe. However, the Project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil because the Project would be required to comply with the Watershed Protection Ordinance (WPO) which would ensure that the Project would not result in any unprotected erodible soils, would not alter existing drainage patterns, and would not develop steep slopes.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in an on- or off-site landslide, 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:** As indicated in response (a)(iv), the site is not located within a “Landslide Susceptibility Area” as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. With regards to lateral spreading, it is a principal effect from liquefaction. The Project site is relatively flat, and no grading is proposed on the Project site. Additionally, no structures are proposed as part of the Project. Therefore the Project would have less than significant impacts from landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 contain expansive soils as defined by Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994). The soils on-site are Indio silt loam and Mecca fine sandy loam. These soils have a shrink-swell behavior of low and represent no substantial risks to life or property. Therefore, the Project would 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?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project would not require the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater treatment systems. Therefore, the Project would have no impact from soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or wastewater disposal systems.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological 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:

San Diego County has a variety of geologic environments and geologic processes which generally occur in other parts of the state, country, and the world. However, some features stand out as being unique in one way or another within the boundaries of the County.

**Less Than Significant:** The site does not contain any unique geologic features that have been listed in the County’s Guidelines for Determining Significance for Unique Geology Resources nor does the site support any known geologic characteristics that have the potential to support unique geologic features.

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. Excavating into undisturbed ground beneath the soil horizons may cause a significant impact if unique paleontological resources are encountered. The Project site has low potential for containing paleontological resources. The Project is an Administrative Permit to correct a brushing and clearing violation. Excavation into the substratum or soil horizons has not taken place as a result of the clearing violation; therefore, no impacts have occurred. No additional ground disturbing activities are proposed; therefore, paleontological monitoring is not required.

**VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project**

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 is an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for brushing and clearing. The Project had the potential to produce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions during initial clearing. However, the Project falls below the screening criteria that were developed to identify project types and sizes that would have less than cumulatively considerable GHG emissions.

GHG Overview

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are said to result in an increase in the earth’s average surface temperature commonly referred to as global warming. This rise in global temperature is associated with long-term changes in precipitation, temperature, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth’s climate system, known as climate change. These changes are now broadly attributed to GHG emissions, particularly those emissions that result from the human production and use of fossil fuels.

GHGs include carbon dioxide, methane, halocarbons, and nitrous oxide, among others. Human induced GHG emissions are a result of energy production and consumption, and personal vehicle use, among other sources. Climate changes resulting from GHG emissions could produce an array of adverse environmental impacts including water supply shortages, severe drought, increased flooding, sea level rise, air pollution from increased formation of ground level ozone and particulate matter, ecosystem changes, increased wildfire risk, agricultural impacts, ocean and terrestrial species impacts, among other adverse effects.

In 2006, the State passed the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly referred to as Assembly Bill (AB) 32, which set the GHG emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law requires that by 2020, State emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions.

Senate Bill (SB) 375, passed in 2008, links transportation and land use planning with global warming. It requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set regional targets for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. Under this law, if regions develop integrated land use, housing, and transportation plans that meet SB 375 targets, new projects in these regions can be relieved of certain review requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) has prepared a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which are elements of the San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan. The strategy identifies how regional GHG reduction targets, as established by the CARB, will be achieved through development patterns, transportation infrastructure investments, and/or transportation measures or policies that are determined to be feasible. The County of San Diego has also adopted various GHG related goals and policies in the General Plan

It should be noted that an individual project's GHG emissions would generally not result in direct impacts under CEQA, as the climate change issue is global in nature; however, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(f) states that an environmental impact report (EIR) shall analyze GHG emissions resulting from a proposed project when the incremental contribution of those emissions may be cumulatively considerable.

The Project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

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

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

**Less than Significant Impact:** As discussed in Section VIII(a) above, the proposed Project's emissions would be below the 900 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per year screening level. As such, the Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG. Impacts would be less than significant

**IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** -- Would the project:

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 would 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.

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

**No Impact:** As stated above under response IX(a), the proposed Project would 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, and therefore could not result in the upset and accident conditions which would release hazardous materials. In addition, the Project does not propose to demolish any existing structures onsite and therefore would not create a hazard related to the release of asbestos, lead based paint or other hazardous materials from demolition activities.

c) 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 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 is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Borrego Springs Elementary is the nearest school to the site and is located approximately 0.8 miles to the west of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not have a significant effect on an existing or proposed school. Furthermore, the Project does not propose the handling, storage, or transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, the Project would not have a significant effect on an existing or proposed school.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, 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 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:** Based on a regulatory database 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 industrial uses, a gas station or vehicle repair shop. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 is located within an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Borrego Valley Airport) and is consistent with the plan. Additionally, the Project does not propose any construction, and thus would 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 would not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the proposed 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

**No Impact:** The Dam Evacuation Plan will not be interfered with because the Project is not located within a dam inundation zone.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 is adjacent to wildlands that have the potential to support wildland fires. However, the Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires because the Project would comply with the regulations specified in the Consolidated Fire Code for the 16 Fire Protection Districts in the County of San Diego. Therefore, based on the location of the Project site and review of the Project by County staff, through compliance with the Consolidated Fire Code and through compliance with the San Diego County Fire Authority, the Project is not anticipated to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving hazardous wildland fires. Moreover, the Project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact, because all past, present and future projects in the surrounding area are required to comply with the Consolidated Fire Code.

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?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 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 would produce or collect animal waste, such as equestrian facilities, livestock agricultural operations (chicken coops, dairies etc.), solid waste facility or other similar uses. Therefore, the Project would not substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies.

**X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY** -- Would the project:

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 is to correct a violation for brushing and clearing of 17.07 of land area on the Project site. Minimum required construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) which would be applied to the Project include fiber rolls (straw wattles) and a stabilized construction entrance. In addition, a Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP), dated August 2019, has been prepared to demonstrate that the Project would comply with all operational requirements. The Project proposed and would be required to implement source control and site design measures as described in the SWQMP.

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                               |

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project site is located within the Borrego Sink (722.13) Sub-basin within the Anza Borrego Hydrologic Unit. According to the Clean Water Act section 303(d) list, a portion of this watershed is impaired. Constituents of concern in the in Salton Sea include nutrients, salinity, and selenium. The Project could contribute to release of these pollutants; however the Project would comply with the WPO and implement site design measures, source control BMPs, and treatment control BMPs to prevent a significant increase of pollutants to receiving waters.

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                               |

**Less than Significant Impact:** As stated in responses 9(a) and 9(b) above, implementation of BMPs and compliance with required ordinances will ensure that Project impacts are less than significant.

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project would not require the use of groundwater for any purpose, including irrigation, domestic or commercial demands. Therefore, no impact to groundwater resources or groundwater management is anticipated.

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

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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                               |

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project proposes brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land area. No grading or construction is proposed as a part of the Project. Due to these factors, it has been found that the proposed Project would not result in significantly increased erosion or sedimentation potential and would not alter any drainage patterns of the site or area on- or off-site.

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

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

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       No Impact

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project does not propose any new impervious areas and would 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 proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable alteration or a drainage pattern or increase in the rate or amount of runoff, because the Project would not substantially increase water surface elevation or runoff exiting the site, as detailed above.

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

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

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project does not propose to create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems. As described in response X.c.ii, the Project does not propose any new impervious areas and would not substantially increase runoff on- or off-site. Therefore, the Project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of stormwater drainage systems or contribute to polluted runoff.

(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

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

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project is an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land on the Project site. The Project would not increase impervious areas which would impede or redirect flood flows nor are structures proposed which could impede or redirect flood flows. Additionally, the Project would not alter the existing site in a way which could alter the course of a stream or river, nor have streams or rivers been identified on the Project site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Discussion/Explanation:

i. FLOOD HAZARD

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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         |

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project site is located within a FEMA mapped floodplain. However, the Project does not propose the construction of any structures which would contribute to a release of pollutants from Project inundation.

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. 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.

g) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management 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:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project is located within the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin (Borrego Basin), however the Project would not require the use of any groundwater resources. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

**XI. 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 Project is for an Administrative Permit (AD) to correct a violation for brushing and clearing within the Borrego Springs Community Plan Area of the County of San Diego General Plan. The Project is subject to the General Plan Rural Regional Category and the Rural 40 (RL-40) Land Use Designation. The Project is also subject to the policies of the Borrego Springs Community Plan. The Property is zoned Rural Residential (RR) which permits brushing and clearing with an AD permit pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance Section 2185. The proposed Project does not conflict with any adopted land use plan, policy or regulation and complies with the MSCP, RPO, and CEQA. Furthermore, it is consistent with the County of San Diego Guidelines for Significance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**XII. 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 is outside the Western San Diego County Production-Consumption Zone area 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) for mineral resources.

The Project site has not been identified as containing a known mineral resource. Additionally, the site is directly adjacent to airport lands and contains an existing residence on site. Therefore, future extraction of mineral resources would be incompatible with existing surrounding land uses. A future mining operation at the proposed Project site would likely create a significant impact to neighboring properties for issues such as noise, air quality, traffic, and possibly other impacts. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value since the mineral resource has already been lost due to incompatible land uses.

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 proposed Project site is not located in an area that has MRZ-2 designated lands or is located within 1,300 feet of such lands. Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resource(s). 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 would occur as a result of the Project.

**XIII. NOISE** -- Would the project result in:

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 area surrounding the Project site consists of parcels that are zoned Variable Residential (S92), Rural Residential (RR), and Open Space (S80). The Project would not expose people to potentially significant noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the General Plan, Noise Ordinance, or other applicable standards for the following reasons:

General Plan – Noise Element

General Plan – Noise Element: Policy 4b addresses noise sensitive areas and requires projects to comply with a Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 60 decibels (dBA) or increase of 10 dB (CNEL) over pre-existing noise. Projects which could produce noise in excess of 60 dB(A) are required to incorporate design measures or mitigation as necessary to comply with the Noise Element. The Project is not expected to expose any on- and off-site, existing, or planned noise sensitive areas to noise in excess of 60 dB(A) or increase of 10 dB (CNEL) over the pre-existing noise.

Noise Ordinance – Section 36.404

Non-transportation noise generated by the Project is not expected to exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.404) at or beyond the Project's property line. The site is zoned Rural Residential (RR) that has a one-hour average sound limit of 50



dBA and 45 dBA nighttime noise levels. The adjacent properties are zoned General Rural (S92) and Open Space (S80) and have a one-hour average sound limit of 50 dBA and 45 dBA nighttime noise levels. Based on review by County staff, the Project's noise levels are not anticipated to exceed the County Noise Standards because the Project does not involve any noise producing equipment that would exceed applicable noise levels at the adjoining property line.

Noise Ordinance – Section 36.409

The Project will not generate construction noise that may exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.409) because the Project is not proposing any construction or grading activities. Also, the Project is not expected to expose existing or planned noise sensitive areas, including the proposed Project site, to noise 10 dB CNEL over existing ambient noise levels

Finally, the Project's conformance to the County of San Diego General Plan Noise Element and County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36-404 and 36.410) ensures the Project will not create cumulatively considerable noise impacts, because the Project will not exceed the local noise standards for noise sensitive areas; and the Project will not exceed the applicable noise level limits at the property line or construction noise limits, derived from State regulation to address human health and quality of life concerns. Therefore, the Project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exposure of persons or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, and applicable standards of other agencies.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 include any new receptors which would be sensitive to low ambient vibration. As indicated in response XIII.a, the Project would not expose existing or planned noise sensitive areas in the vicinity to a substantial permanent increase in noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the County of San Diego General Plan, County of San Diego Noise Ordinance, or other applicable local, State, and Federal noise control.

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

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

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project is located within the Borrego Valley Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan area and is located adjacent to the Borrego Valley Airport. The Project is an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres, and would not introduce any new residents or permanent workers to the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not expose people in the Project area to excessive airport-related noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

**XIV. 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)?

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**No Impact:** The Project would 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?

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**No Impact:** The Project site currently contains a single-family residence that would remain. Therefore, the Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing requiring the construction of replacement housing.

**XV. 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 proposes an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for brushing and clearing of 17.07 acres of land area on the Project site. 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 would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment because the Project would not require new or significantly altered services or facilities to be constructed.

**XVI. 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 types, including 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.

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 include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, the construction or expansion of recreational facilities associated with the proposed Project would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

**XVII. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC** -- Would the project:

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of the effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths and mass transit?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance for Traffic and Transportation (Guidelines) establish measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. These Guidelines incorporate standards from the County of San Diego Public Road Standards and Mobility Element, the County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee Program and the Congestion Management Program.

**Less Than Significant:** The Project would result in less than 200 ADT. The Project would not have a direct impact related to a conflict with any performance measures establishing measures of effectiveness of the circulation system because the Project trips do not exceed any of the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for direct impacts related to Traffic and Transportation. As identified in the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Traffic and Transportation, the Project trips would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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:

Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines details new regulations, effective statewide July 1, 2020 that sets forth specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. Generally, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. Other relevant considerations may include the effects of the project on transit and non-motorized travel. Except as provided regarding roadway capacity, a project's effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact.

**No Impact:** The County of San Diego has not adopted a threshold for VMT and is not expected to until July 2020, when the provisions of the section apply statewide. Since the VMT threshold is yet to be adopted by the County, no impact would occur.

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 changes to roadways and would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 would not result in inadequate emergency access. The Project site is not served by a dead-end road that exceeds the maximum cumulative length permitted by the San Diego County Consolidated Fire Code, therefore, the proposed Project has adequate emergency access. Additionally, roads used to access the Project site meet all County standards.

**XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES** -- Would the project:

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

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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         |

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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:** Pursuant to AB-52, consultation was initiated with culturally affiliated tribes. No tribal cultural resources were identified during consultation. As such, there are no impacts to tribal cultural resources.

**XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS** -- Would the project:

- a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <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 include new or expanded water, stormwater, or wastewater treatment facilities or the construction of such facilities. Additionally the Project would not require new or expanded electric power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact associated with the construction of new or expanded facilities.

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 would not require permanent water supplies. Therefore, the Project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project site.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**No Impact:** The Project would not require any wastewater treatment. Therefore, the Project would not interfere with any wastewater treatment provider's service capacity.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less Than Significant Impact:** Implementation of the Project is unlikely to generate solid waste. However, 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 21440et 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 potential solid waste disposal needs.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact** Implementation of the Project is unlikely to generate solid waste. However, 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 would deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility and therefore, would comply with Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

- f) 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 would discharge any wastewater to sanitary sewer or on-site wastewater systems (septic). Therefore, the Project would not exceed any wastewater treatment requirements.

- g) 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 would not require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant environmental effects from the construction or expansion of stormwater drainage facilities.

**XX. WILDFIRE** – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

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



- |                          |  |                                     |                              |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <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 in and surrounded by lands in a moderate fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ). However, the Project would not substantially impair any adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The nearest fire station is approximately 2.4 miles from the Project site. A review of regulatory databases by County staff indicates an expected emergency response travel time of 5 to 10 minutes, which meets the General Plan Safety Element standard for lands designated as Rural Land (RL-40) of greater than 20 minutes. Therefore, the Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

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

- |                          |  |                                     |                              |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <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                    |

**No Impact:** The Project is for an Administrative Permit to correct a violation for on-site brushing and clearing and does not propose permanent occupancy by any persons. Additionally, the Project would not exacerbate wildfire risk due to slope, prevailing winds or other factors because the Project site is relatively flat. Therefore the Project would not result in significant effects from slope or prevailing winds, and would not exacerbate wildfire risks.

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

- |                          |  |                                     |                              |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <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                    |

**No Impact:** No installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure, such as roads, fuel breaks, or emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities would be required for Project implementation. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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

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

- Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated       No Impact

**Less than Significant Impact:** The Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides because the Project is located on land which is relatively flat. Additionally, the Project site is not located within a "Landslide Susceptibility Area" as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards.

The Project site is located within a FEMA mapped floodplain; however the Project does not propose any structures, nor would any changes to drainage patterns occur as a result of the Project. Therefore, due to the above stated reasons, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire instability or drainage changes. Impacts would be less than significant.

**XXI. 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?

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated:** 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 desert saltbush scrub and disturbed desert saltbush scrub. However, mitigation has been included that clearly reduces these effects to a level below significance. This mitigation includes purchase of off-site mitigation land. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, significant effects associated with the Project would result. Therefore, the 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)?

- Potentially Significant Impact       Less than Significant Impact  
 Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated       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/MAP NUMBER
Borrego Solar Farm	PDS2009-3300-09-012; PDS2009-3300-09-013; PDS2009-3300-09-014, PDS2014-VAR-14-004
Desert Green Solar Farm	PDS2012-3301-09-012-01
SDGE Borrego Springs	PDS2017-MUP-03-077M1

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 XIX 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 were determined to be potentially significant cumulative effects related to Biological Resources. However, mitigation has been included that clearly reduces these cumulative effects to a level below significance. This mitigation includes:

- Biological Resources

As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, 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?

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

Discussion/Explanation:

**Less than Significant Impact:** 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, VII. Geology and Soils,

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, X Hydrology and Water Quality XIII. Noise, XIV. Population and Housing, and XVII. Transportation and Traffic. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with the Project. Therefore, the Project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

## XXII. 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](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov). For County regulation refer to [www.amlegal.com](http://www.amlegal.com). All other references are available upon request.

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