



Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

**Project Title & No. Wilson and AT&T Mobility Wireless Facility / Conditional Use Permit ED18-144 (DRC2018-00130)**

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

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

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

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

- The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Matthew Ringel	September 4, 2020
Prepared by (Print)	Signature
	Date
Lacey Minnick	September 4, 2020
Reviewed by (Print)	Signature
	Date

For Steve McMasters, Principal  
Environmental Specialist

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### Project Environmental Analysis

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

Persons, agencies or organizations interested in obtaining more information regarding the environmental review process for a project should contact the County of San Luis Obispo Planning Department, 976 Osos Street, Rm. 200, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408-2040 or call (805) 781-5600.

### A. Project

**DESCRIPTION:** A hearing to consider a request by Michael J. Wilson and AT&T Mobility for a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2018-00130) to allow for the construction and operation of a wireless communications facility consisting of nine panel antennas, thirty-six remote radio units, seven surge suppression units, one microwave antenna, and associated equipment and hardware. The proposed equipment would be located within an 24-foot wide and 26-foot tall cylinder portion of a new 60-foot tall faux elevated water tank within a 40-foot by 55-foot lease area, surrounded by a 8-foot tall wooden fence enclosure. The enclosed lease area also includes a 20kW diesel standby emergency generator and 190-gallon fuel tank. The proposed project will result in the disturbance of approximately 47,300 square feet (including utility trenching and access road improvements) and 1,000 cubic yards of cut and fill on an approximately 19-acre parcel. The proposed project is within the Agriculture land use category and is located at 3939 El Pomar Drive, approximately 5 miles east of the community of Templeton. The site is in the El Pomar-Estrella Sub Area of the North County Planning Area.

**ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S):** 033-281-056

**Latitude:** 35° 33' 21.77" N      **Longitude:** 120° 37' 51.69" W      **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #**      5

### B. Existing Setting

**Plan Area:** North County      **Sub:** El Pomar/Estrella      **Comm:** Rural

**Land Use Category:** Agriculture

**Combining Designation:** None

**Parcel Size:** 19 acres

**Topography:** Gently rolling to moderately sloping

**Vegetation:** Scattered Oaks, Grasses, Urban-built up

**Existing Uses:** Single-family residences(s) agricultural uses

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### Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:

**North:** Agriculture; Agriculture (vineyards)

**East:** Agriculture; Undeveloped

**South:** Agriculture; Undeveloped

**West:** Residential Rural; Single-Family Residences

### C. Environmental Analysis

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

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### I. AESTHETICS

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

#### Setting

The project is located south of El Pomar Dr, east of Redondo Lane, and approximately 3.8 miles east of the community of Templeton. The project site is within a predominantly rural agricultural area and is located on gently rolling to moderately sloping topography surrounded by sparsely developed large agricultural parcels. A single-family residence, driveway, small accessory structures, and agriculture orchards are located on the project parcel. The surrounding visual setting includes agricultural fields with scattered rural residences. The surrounding land is primarily used for agricultural cultivation. No nearby roadways have been designated as scenic highways.

Section 22.30.180 of the Land Use Ordinance establishes the following screening standard for wireless communications facilities:

All facilities shall be screened with vegetation or landscaping. Where screening with vegetation is not feasible, the facilities shall be disguised to resemble rural, pastoral architecture (ex: windmills, barns, trees) or other features determined to blend with the surrounding area and be finished in a texture and color deemed unobtrusive to the neighborhood in which it is located.

Conservation and Open Space Element Policy VR 9.3 states:

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Locate, design and screen communications facilities, including towers, antennas, and associated equipment and buildings in order to avoid views of them in scenic areas, minimize their appearance and visually blend with the surrounding natural and built environments. Locate such facilities to avoid ridge tops where they would silhouette against the sky as viewed from major public view corridors and locations.

Conservation and Open Space Element Policy VR 9.4 states:

Encourage collocation of communications facilities (one or more carriers sharing a site, tower, or equipment) when feasible and where it would avoid or minimize adverse visual effects.

### *Discussion*

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

A scenic vista is generally defined as a high-quality view displaying good aesthetic and compositional values that can be seen from public viewpoints. Some scenic vistas are officially or informally designated by public agencies or other organizations. A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista would occur if the project would significantly degrade the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads or other public areas. A proposed project's potential effect on a scenic vista is largely dependent upon the degree to which it would complement or contrast with the natural setting, the degree to which it would be noticeable in the existing environment, and whether it detracts from or complements the scenic vista.

The project site is located in a rural area accessed by a driveway off El Pomar Drive which serves as the primary public view of the project site. The project vicinity has an appealing rural and agricultural character but is not officially or informally designated as a scenic vista. The proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on visual resources as seen from El Pomar Drive, since it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential and agricultural landscape.

The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from key viewing angles along El Pomar Drive, and the photo-simulations demonstrate that the facility will be primarily visible from El Pomar Drive. However, since the facility is designed to mimic the appearance of an agrarian-style elevated water tank, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. The proposed perimeter fence blends in with the character of the surrounding residential/agrarian setting since it is a wooden fence. To reduce visual impacts, the proposed facility is located on the southeast corner of a hillside, rather than the hilltop. The site is minorly tucked into the hillside with a retaining wall. To further reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance. Therefore, impacts to the quality of the visual character of the area would be less than significant with mitigation.

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

The project is not located within a state scenic highway design corridor or along a scenic roadway and no scenic resources are known to exist on site. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

The proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on visual resources since it would introduce a new use which could be visually incompatible with the character of the surrounding rural residential landscape. The project site is located in a rural area accessed by a driveway off El Pomar Drive, which serves as the primary public key viewing area of the project site. The applicant submitted photo-simulations of the proposed facility from key viewing angles along El Pomar Drive. The photo-simulations demonstrate that the site will be visible from the road. However, since the facility is designed to appear like an agrarian-style elevated water tank, it will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area and landscape. The proposed equipment enclosure is in character with the surrounding agrarian setting since it is enclosed by a wooden fence. In order to reduce visual impacts, the project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance. Therefore, impacts to the quality of the visual character of the area would be less than significant with mitigation.

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

The proposed project would not result in the installation of lighting. The water tank would appear as a natural aged-wood tank, which would not result in substantial glare. Therefore, impacts relating to nighttime lighting and glare would be less than significant.

### Conclusion

Although the proposed communications facility is not a use that is inherently compatible with the character of the surrounding residential/agrarian landscape, the proposed project is a stealth design that would blend with existing natural features of the landscape. Since the proposed facility would visually blend with the landscape, it would not be readily discernible as a wireless communications facility. This is consistent with the visual screening standard for wireless communications facilities which requires facilities to either be completely screened by vegetation or disguised to resemble natural or built features of the landscape. In order to reduce visual impacts, the project has been proposed on a hillside and tucked into the slope with a minor retaining wall. Furthermore, the proposed project is subject to mitigation measures that require the applicant to use colors and materials that are characteristic of an agrarian-style water tank and equipment shelter. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential visual impacts to a level of insignificance.

### Mitigation

**AES-1** **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:

- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.

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- b. All of the antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
- c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.

**AES-2**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.

**AES-3**      **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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*In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:*

(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The following area-specific elements relate to the property's importance for agricultural production:

**Land Use Category:** Agriculture

**Historic/Existing Commercial Crops:** None



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**State Classification:** Farmland of Statewide Importance

**In Agricultural Preserve?** Yes, El Pomar Agricultural Preserve Area

**Under Williamson Act contract?** No

Based on the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and the San Luis Obispo County Important Farmland Map (DOC 2019), the project site contains "Farmland of Statewide Importance". The soil types and characteristics subject to disturbance from this project include:

Linne-Calodo complex (9 - 30 % slope). This moderately sloping soil is considered not well drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock, slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class IV when irrigated.

Lockwood-Concepcion complex (2 - 9% slope).

Lockwood. This gently sloping soil is considered well drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class II when irrigated.

Concepcion. This gently sloping soil is considered very poorly drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and low shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class II when irrigated.

Lockwood-Concepcion complex (9 - 15 % slope).

Lockwood. This moderately sloping soil is considered moderately drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class III when irrigated.

Concepcion. This moderately sloping soil is considered very poorly drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and low shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class III when irrigated.

Nacimiento-Los Osos complex (9 - 30 % slope). This moderately sloping, fine loamy soil is considered not well drained. The soil has moderate erodibility and moderate shrink-swell characteristics, as well as having potential septic system constraints due to: steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock, slow percolation. The soil is considered Class IV without irrigation and Class IV when irrigated.

### *Discussion*

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

Based on information provided by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, the proposed project would be located on a parcel containing soils which are designated as "Farmland of Statewide Importance". The proposed wireless communications facility, however, will not be located atop soils designated as such. Therefore, no farmland of importance will be converted, and there will be no impact related to these farmland classifications.

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

The parcel is not under a Williamson Act contract. The parcel is zoned for agricultural use; however, the land that the wireless communications facility would be placed on is not currently in agricultural use. Moreover, the small footprint and design of the facility would result in a less than significant impact to agriculture. Therefore, the project's impacts to existing zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act contracts would be less than significant.

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

*Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

The project site is not zoned for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Protection, and is not listed as Private Timberland or Public Land with Forest by the CDFW. There is no forest land onsite, and the proposed project would have *no impacts* to forest and timberland.

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

As listed above in impact threshold a, the construction and use of the telecommunications tower would not affect Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or forest land. As noted in impact threshold c-d, the project site is not located on or near any areas zoned for forest land, timberland, and are not listed as Private Timberlands or Public Lands with Forests by the CDFW. Since the proposed project would not result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest use, there would be *no impact*.

### *Conclusion*

The project would not directly or indirectly result in the conversion of farmland, forest land, or timber land to non-agricultural uses or non-forest uses and would not conflict with agricultural zoning or otherwise adversely affect agricultural resources or uses. No significant impacts to agricultural resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### III. AIR QUALITY

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

#### Setting

The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) under the jurisdiction of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). The SLOAPCD has developed and updated a CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012) and clarification memorandum (2017) to evaluate project specific impacts and help determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result. To evaluate long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and establish countywide programs to reach acceptable air quality levels, a Clean Air Plan has been adopted (Prepared by SLOAPCD).

Use of heavy equipment and earth moving operations during project construction can generate fugitive dust and engine combustion emissions that may have substantial temporary impacts on local air quality and climate change. Operational impacts are focused primarily on the indirect emissions (i.e., motor vehicles) associated with residential, commercial and industrial development. General screening criteria used by the SLOAPCD to determine the type and scope of projects requiring an air quality assessment, and/or mitigation, is presented in Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, due to the population that occupies the uses and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. The nearest offsite sensitive receptor to the project is a residence located approximately 445 feet to the northeast (APN 033-281-056).

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### Discussion

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

As proposed, the project would result in the disturbance of approximately 47,300 square feet. This will result in the creation of construction dust, as well as short- and long-term vehicle emissions. The project would be moving less than 1,200 cubic yards/day of material and would disturb less than four acres of area, and therefore would be below the general thresholds triggering construction-related mitigation.

The proposed project would require disturbance within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptors (i.e. single-family residence). Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of dust, potentially affecting local residents and businesses in close proximity to the project site. Dust complaints could result in violation of the SLOAPCD's nuisance rules, a potentially significant air quality impact. As such, the project would be subject to expanded fugitive dust control measures in addition to primary measures pursuant to Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.160.C (Construction Procedures, Air Quality Controls). These measures shall be shown on all grading and building plans in accordance with LUO Section 22.53.160C. Compliance with these measures would ensure fugitive dust emissions are adequately controlled to below 20 percent opacity limit as identified in the SLOAPCD's 401 Visible Emissions rule and that dust is not emitted offsite.

From an operational standpoint, based on Table 1-1 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012), the project would not exceed operational thresholds triggering mitigation.

The project is consistent with the general level of development anticipated and projected in the Clean Air Plan. Additionally, the project is required to incorporate the air quality control measures outlined in Section 22.52.160 C of the County's Land Use Ordinance. Therefore, impacts related to the implementation of an air quality plan would be *less than significant*.

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

San Luis Obispo County is currently designated as nonattainment status for federal ozone, state ozone, and state PM<sub>10</sub> standards. With regards to federal ozone standards, only the eastern portion of the county is designated nonattainment. The project would not result in a noticeable increase in vehicular traffic since long-term maintenance and operational trips associated with the facility would be minimal. Therefore, impacts related to a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant would be *less than significant*.

(c) *Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

The proposed project would require disturbance within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptors (i.e. single-family residences). Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of dust, potentially affecting local residents and businesses in close proximity to the project site. Dust complaints could result in violation of the SLOAPCD's nuisance rules, a potentially significant air quality impact.

As such, the project would be subject to expanded fugitive dust control mitigation measures during the construction of the project, in addition to primary measures pursuant to Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.160.C (Construction Procedures, Air Quality Controls). These measures shall be shown on all grading and building plans in accordance with LUO Section 22.53.160C. Compliance with these

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measures would ensure fugitive dust emissions are adequately controlled to below 20 percent opacity limit as identified in the SLOAPCD's 401 Visible Emissions rule and that dust is not emitted offsite. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential air quality impacts to a level of insignificance.

Through the incorporation of the measures outlined in Section 22.52.160.C, and construction-related mitigation measures, impacts would be minimized to *less than significant* levels.

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

The project would not result in the generation of other emissions, such as those leading to odors, and the project site is not within proximity of a land use that could expose a substantial number of people to other emissions produced from the project site. Therefore, *no impacts* are expected to occur.

### Conclusion

The project would be consistent with the County Clean Air Plan and would not result in cumulatively considerable emissions of any criteria pollutant for which the County is in non-attainment. The project is required to be in compliance with County Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.160.C (Construction Procedures, Air Quality Controls) requirements and would therefore not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or result in other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people. To further reduce the project's potential impact on sensitive receptors, the applicant is subject to construction-related mitigation measures. These measures, identified in detail in the mitigation summary table (Exhibit B), would reduce the project's potential air quality impacts to a level of insignificance.

### Mitigation

#### AQ-1

**At the time of application for construction or grading permit**, the applicant shall demonstrate that the Standard Construction Measures shall be met. Standard Construction Measures based on Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) CEQA Handbook (2012), to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from construction equipment. The applicant shall incorporate into the project the following "standard" construction mitigation measures:

- a. Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications;
- b. Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with Air Resources Board (ARB) certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road);
- c. Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation;
- d. Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation;
- e. Construction or trucking companies with fleets that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NOx exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance;
- f. All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs

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shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5 minute idling limit;

- g. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted;
- h. Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 500 feet of sensitive receptors;
- i. Electrify equipment when feasible;
- j. Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and,
- k. Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The project site is located in a rural area approximately 5 miles to the east of the community of Templeton, and it is currently developed with a single-family residence, driveway, small accessory structures, and



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agriculture orchards located onsite. Vegetation onsite consists of cultivated fruit trees, scattered oak trees, and various grasses. The nearest waterway is the Salinas River, approximately 3.3 miles west of the project site. The project site has been previously disturbed by anthropogenic activity. A Biological Resources Impact Analysis was prepared for the project by Environmental Assessment Specialists (EAS), INC in April 2018. The report identified special status plant and animal species that have the potential to exist on or near the project parcel.

### *Discussion*

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

As per the Biological Resource Impact Analysis (January 2020), several special status species have the potential to exist in the vicinity of the proposed project. However, due to the previous disturbance of the project site, the project site does not contain habitat that would support any of these species. Therefore, it is unlikely that special status species would occur on the project site and impacts to special status species will be less than significant.

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

There are no mapped blue line creeks and no riparian vegetation or other sensitive natural communities within or immediately adjacent to the proposed areas of disturbance. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities and no impacts would occur.

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

No wetland characteristics were identified around the project site. Additionally, during application for construction permits, a drainage, sedimentation, erosion plan will be required and will be reviewed by the Department of Public Works (per Land Use Ordinance section 22.52.110). With these actions included, impacts to wetlands will 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?*

The project is not located in close proximity to any waterbodies that support migratory fish populations. The project site is not within an established wildlife corridor, and the lack of suitable habitat makes the potential for migratory animals to occur on the site low. As per the Biological Resource Impact Analysis (January 2020), the project site vicinity contains trees and shrubs suitable for nesting birds. However, the immediate project location will not impact any existing trees or shrubs, therefore, impacts to possible nesting birds will be less than significant.

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

The County of San Luis Obispo has adopted an oak woodland preservation ordinance; however, the project is not proposing the removal of oak trees or construction within 1.5 times the dripline of oak



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trees. Therefore, the project would have no impacts on local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

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

There is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan adopted that includes the project site. Therefore, there will be no impact.

### *Conclusion*

The project is not expected to result in significant biological impacts.

### *Mitigation*

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The project is located in an area historically occupied by two Native American tribes, the northernmost subdivision of the Chumash, the Obispeño (after Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa), and the Salinan. However, the precise location of the boundary between the Chumashan-speaking Obispeño Chumash and their northern neighbors, the Hokaan-speaking Playanos Salinan, is currently the subject of debate, as those boundaries may have changed over time.

San Luis Obispo county possesses a rich and diverse cultural heritage and therefore has a wealth of historic and prehistoric resources, including sites and buildings associated with Native American inhabitation, Spanish missionaries, immigrant settlers, and military branches of the United States.

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).
2. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

Pursuant to CEQA, a resource included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in an historical resource survey shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.

Potential for the presence or regular activities of the Native American increases in close proximity to reliable water sources. The project parcel is within 300 feet of a blue line creek, however the area proposed for grading and development is not within the 300-foot buffer.

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Due to the project's location outside of the County's standard 300-foot buffer, limited ground disturbance, and the location of the project on land previously disturbed by agricultural activities, no cultural resources survey was requested. A Cultural Resources Constraints Analysis was conducted for the El Pomar / Estrella Sub Planning Area which identified 21 recorded archaeological sites and five significant historic structures.

No paleontological resources are known to exist in the area.

### *Discussion*

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

No resources have been found on site which would be considered a "historical resource" according to § 15064.5. Therefore, the project would have *no impact* on historical resources.

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

No resources are present on the project site which would be considered an "archaeological resource" according to § 15064.5. It was determined unlikely that any archaeological resources would be present on site due to the nature of current and historical site activities (agricultural operations). In the unlikely event resources are uncovered during grading activities, implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources) would be required, which states:

In the event archeological resources are unearthed or discovered during any construction activities, the following standards apply:

A. Construction activities shall cease, and the Department shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.

B. In the event archeological resources are found to include human remains, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the County Coroner shall be notified in addition to the Department so proper disposition may be accomplished.

Based on the low known sensitivity of the project site, and with implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040, impacts to archaeological resources would be *less than significant*.

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

The nearest cemetery, the Templeton Cemetery, is located 4.5 miles to the northwest of the project site. No human remains are known to exist on the project site, and it is not expected that any should be encountered through ground movement resulting from the proposed project. No cultural resources are known to exist on the project site. Based on the low known sensitivity of the project site, and with implementation of LUO Section 22.10.040, impacts to human remains are expected to be *less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

County land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.040 includes a provision that construction work cease in the event resources are unearthed with work allowed to continue once the issue is resolved. No significant archaeological or historical resource impacts are expected to occur.

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### *Mitigation*

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### VI. ENERGY

	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### *Setting*

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for urban and rural communities within the County of San Luis Obispo. Approximately 33% of electricity provided by PG&E is sourced from renewable resources and an additional 45% is sourced from greenhouse gas-free resources (PG&E, 2019).

The County has adopted a Conservation and Open Space Element that establishes goals and policies that aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled, conserve water, increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This element provides the basis and direction for the development of the County’s EnergyWise Plan (EWP), which outlines in greater detail the County’s strategy to reduce government and community-wide greenhouse gas emissions through a number of goals, measures, and actions, including energy efficiency and development and use of renewable energy resources.

The EWP established the goal to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions to 15% below 2006 baseline levels by 2020. Two of the six community-wide goals identified to accomplish this were to “[a]ddress future energy needs through increased conservation and efficiency in all sectors” and “[i]ncrease the production of renewable energy from small-scale and commercial-scale renewable energy installations to account for 10% of local energy use by 2020.” In addition, the County has published an EnergyWise Plan 2016 Update to summarize progress toward implementing measures established in the EWP and outline overall trends in energy use and emissions since the baseline year of the EWP inventory (2006).

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent version of which are referred to as the *2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*. These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements.

The County LUO includes a Renewable Energy Area combining designation to encourage and support the development of local renewable energy resources, conserving energy resources and decreasing reliance on environmentally costly energy sources. This designation is intended to identify areas of the county where

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renewable energy production is favorable and establish procedures to streamline the environmental review and processing of land use permits for solar electric facilities (SEFs). The LUO establishes criteria for project eligibility, required application content for SEFs proposed within this designation, permit requirements, and development standards (LUO 22.14.100).

### Discussion

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

Construction of the proposed project is not expected to result in any potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. As for the operation of the project, based on the provided design plans, the project would likely not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

The project would utilize connections to existing nearby power sources as well as a 30kW (emergency only) back-up generator. Energy use would be limited to powering the facility, as there would be no employee work area or administration needs. Furthermore, there would be a limited number of vehicle trips due to the unmanned nature of the facility. Therefore, the project's impact on energy resources would be *less than significant*.

- (e) *Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

The proposed project would not interfere with the County of San Luis Obispo's EnergyWise Plan, which notes the emission reduction goals for the county by 2035 (San Luis Obispo County 2011); nor would the project conflict with any state plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

### Conclusion

The proposed project is not expected to create any potentially significant environmental impacts in terms of energy resource use and does not conflict with any state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

### Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.

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### VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Setting

The project site has a topography of gently sloping and is not located within the County's Geologic Study Area. The project area has moderated landslide risk and low liquefaction potential. The project site is not located near any areas known to contain serpentine or ultramafic rock or soil outcrops, and the nearest known potentially capable fault line is approximately 1.7 miles to the west. As proposed, the project will result in the disturbance of approximately 47,300 square feet and 1,000 cubic yards of both cut and fill. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Wind Erodibility Index, the wind erodibility of the soils which would be disturbed by the proposed project is "moderately low." Additionally, the soils on the site have a moderate shrink-swell (expansive) potential.

### Discussion

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

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

The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone. An unnamed fault line is located approximately 5 miles northeast of the project site. The project would not be open to the public and would be unmanned, with employees visiting the site briefly onsite once every four to six weeks for routine maintenance. Therefore, potential adverse impacts related to known fault zones would be *less than significant*.

(a-ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

The project would be required to comply with the California Building Code (CBC) to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized to the greatest extent feasible. The project would not be open to the public and would be unmanned, with employees briefly onsite once every four to six weeks for routine maintenance. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Based on information provided by the United States Geological Survey, the project site has a low liquefaction risk potential and strong seismic activity is not considered likely. Therefore, the proposed project would not be likely to create any substantial adverse effects involving seismic-related ground failure and impacts would be *less than significant*.



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(a-iv) *Landslides?*

The project site is gently sloping, but the project area has relatively flat topography. Based on the County Safety Element Landslide Hazards Map, the project is located in an area with moderate potential for landslide risk. Therefore, it is unlikely that the project would create any substantial adverse effects involving landslides and impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project would result in the disturbance of approximately 47,300 square feet, including grading for the creation of an access road and minor grading to insert the wireless facility into the proposed hillside with a 4 foot retaining wall. The proposed project does not include major vegetation removal. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Wind Erodibility Index, the wind erodibility of the soils which would be disturbed by the proposed project is "moderately low". During grading activities there would be a potential for erosion and sedimentation to occur. A sedimentation and erosion control plan is required for all construction and grading projects (Section 22.52.120) to minimize potential impacts related to erosion and sedimentation, and includes requirements for specific erosion control materials, setbacks from creeks, and siltation. Upon implementation of the above control measures, as recommended by the County, impacts related to soil erosion and sedimentation would be *less than significant*.

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

Landslides typically occur in areas with steep slopes or in areas containing escarpments. Based on the Landslide Hazards Map provided in the County Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area with slopes susceptible to local failure.

The project would be required to comply with CBC seismic requirements to address potential seismic-related ground failure including lateral spread. Based on the County Safety Element and USGS data, the project is not located in an area of historical or current land subsidence (USGS 2019). Based on the County Safety Element Liquefaction Hazards Map, the project site is located in an area with low potential for liquefaction risk. Therefore, impacts related to on or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse would be *less than significant*.

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

The project site is located on soils that have a moderate shrink swell potential. The proposed project would be uninhabited and would be required to comply with the most recent CBC requirements, which have been developed to property safeguard structures and occupants from land stability hazards, such as expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be *less than significant*.

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

The proposed project would not result in the production of waste water, septic tanks and waste water disposal systems would not be required. Therefore, there would be *no impact* stemming from the installation of septic systems or waste water disposal systems.

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

According to the National Environmental Policy Act Screening Report done by Environmental Assessment Specialists, INC in January 2020, no paleontological resources are known to exist on the project site. No unique geologic features exist on the project site and would therefore not be affected. Therefore, impacts to paleontological resources and unique geologic features would be *less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

The proposed project is not expected to indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving any geologic hazards. The site is considered suitable for this type of development and the proposed project is not expected to result in erosion, loss of topsoil, substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. The project would be required to comply with CBC requirements which have been developed to properly safeguard against seismic and geologic hazards. The project would not result in significant impacts related to geology or soils and no mitigation is necessary.

### *Mitigation*

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

As noted in Section 3 Air Quality, the project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) under the jurisdiction of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). The SLOAPCD has developed and updated a CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012) and clarification memorandum (2017) to evaluate project specific impacts and help determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result. To evaluate long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and establish countywide programs to reach acceptable air quality levels, a Clean Air Plan has been adopted (prepared by SLOAPCD).

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions** have been found to result in an increase in the earth’s average surface temperature by exacerbating the naturally occurring “greenhouse effect” in the earth’s atmosphere. The rise in global temperature is has been projected to lead to long-term changes in precipitation, sea level, temperatures, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth’s climate system. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as global climate change. These changes are broadly attributed to GHG emissions, particularly those emissions that result from human production and use of fossil fuels.

The passage of AB32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006), recognized the need to reduce GHG emissions and set the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law required that by 2020, State emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels. This is to be accomplished by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions. Subsequent legislation (e.g., SB97-Greenhouse Gas Emissions bill) directed the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop statewide thresholds.

In March 2012, the SLOAPCD approved thresholds for GHG emission impacts, and these thresholds have been incorporated the SLOAPCD’s CEQA Air Quality Handbook. SLOAPCD determined that a tiered process for residential / commercial land use projects was the most appropriate and effective approach for assessing the GHG emission impacts. The tiered approach includes three methods, any of which can be used for any given project:

1. Qualitative GHG Reduction Strategies (e.g. Climate Action Plans): A qualitative threshold that is consistent with AB 32 Scoping Plan measures and goals; or,

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2. SLOAPCD GHG Numerical Threshold: Numerical value to determine the significance of a project's annual GHG emissions; or,
3. Efficiency-Based Threshold: Assesses the GHG impacts of a project on an emissions per capita basis.

For most projects, the Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/year) will be the most applicable threshold. In addition to the residential/commercial threshold options proposed above, a bright-line numerical value threshold of 10,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr was adopted for stationary source (industrial) projects.

It should be noted that projects that generate less than the above-mentioned thresholds will also participate in emission reductions because air emissions, including GHGs, are under the purview of the CARB (or other regulatory agencies) and will be "regulated" either by CARB, the federal government, or other entities. For example, new vehicles will be subject to increased fuel economy standards and emission reductions, large and small appliances will be subject to more strict emissions standards, and energy delivered to consumers will increasingly come from renewable sources. Other programs that are intended to reduce the overall GHG emissions include Low Carbon Fuel Standards, Renewable Portfolio Standards, and the Clean Car Standards. As a result, even the emissions that result from projects that produce fewer emissions than the threshold will be subject to emission reductions.

Under CEQA, an individual project's GHG emissions will generally not result in direct significant impacts. This is because the climate change issue is global in nature. However, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. Projects that have GHG emissions above the noted thresholds may be considered cumulatively considerable and require mitigation.

### *Discussion*

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

Using the GHG threshold information described in the Setting section, the project is expected to generate less than the Bright-Line Threshold of 1,150 metric tons of GHG emissions. Therefore, the project's potential direct and cumulative GHG emissions are found to be less significant and less than a cumulatively considerable contribution to GHG emissions. Section 15064(h)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines provide guidance on how to evaluate cumulative impacts. If it is shown that an incremental contribution to a cumulative impact, such as global climate change, is not 'cumulatively considerable', no mitigation is required. Because this project's emissions fall under the threshold, impacts *would be less than significant*.

### *Conclusion*

Impacts relating to greenhouse gas emissions would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

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### IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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### *Setting*

The project is not located in an area of known hazardous material contamination and is not on a site listed on the “Cortese List” (which is a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5) (SWRCB 2019; California Department of Toxic Substance Control [DTSC] 2019). The project is not located within an Airport Review Area and the closest active landing strip, Oak Country Ranch Airport, is 8.9 miles west of the project site. Additionally, the project is not within the 100-year Flood Hazard Combining Designation. With regards to potential fire hazards, the proposed project is within the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and is within an area of State responsibility. Based on the County’s fire response time map, it will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety.

### *Discussion*

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

The project does not propose the routine use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. The applicant supplied a Radio Frequency (RF) report which evaluated the proposed communications facility’s compliance with appropriate guidelines limiting human exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic fields. According to the RF report for this project (EBI Consulting, 2020), the maximum level of RF emissions from the proposed facility at ground-level would be equivalent to 0.39 percent of the applicable exposure limit. These results include several “worst-case” assumptions and therefore are expected to overstate actual power density levels. Although the results are “worst-case” assumptions, they are still within Federal Guidelines for RF exposure limits. However, the County is precluded from evaluating or addressing risk outside of those guidelines. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to require use of limited quantities of hazardous substances, including gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluid, solvents, oils, paints, etc. Handling of these materials has the potential to result in an accidental release. Construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable federal and state environmental and workplace safety laws. Additionally, the construction contractor would be required to implement best management practices (“BMPs”) for the storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials during all construction activities.

The proposed project includes the installation of a 20kW backup emergency generator and associated 190-gallon fuel tank. The applicant is required to obtain an approved Hazardous Materials Business plan with the County Environmental Health Services, prior to approval of the site’s construction permits, relating to the proposed on-site 190-gallon fuel tank. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The nearest school is Templeton Elementary School, located 4.4 miles to the west. There are no schools within a quarter mile of the proposed project. Therefore, there would be no impact.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

The project is not located in an area of known hazardous material contamination and is not on a site listed on the “Cortese List” pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

The project is not located within an airport land use plan and is not located within two miles of an airport. Therefore, there would be no risk of exposing persons to a safety hazard or excessive noise from the operation of the airport and there would be no impact.

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

The project would not conflict with any regional emergency response or evacuation plan as the existing access roads would be wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles and the project footprint is small. Construction and operation of the project would not require road closure, and the project would not physically block the onsite residents from evacuating during an emergency. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

According to Cal Fire, the project site is located in a high fire hazard severity zone within a State Responsibility Area. With the exception of the construction period, the proposed project would not regularly have employees onsite. Once construction is completed, employees would only be onsite for periodic maintenance. The project would not be accessible to the public. Therefore, impacts related to risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials would occur.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

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



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### *Setting*

The proposed unmanned wireless communications facility would not generate water demand outside the construction phase.

The topography of the project is gently rolling to moderately sloping. As described in the NRCS Soil Survey, the soil surface is considered to have moderate erodibility and is considered moderately well-drained. The project parcel is within the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The closest creek from the proposed development is approximately 3.3 miles west of the project. The project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone.

For areas where drainage is identified as a potential issue, the Land Use Ordinance (LUO Sec. 22.52.110) includes a provision to prepare a drainage plan to minimize potential drainage impacts. When required, this plan would need to address measures such as: constructing on-site retention or detention basins or installing surface water flow dissipaters. This plan would also need to show that the increased surface runoff would have no more impacts than that caused by historic flows.

Soil type, area of disturbance, and slopes are key aspects to analyzing potential sedimentation and erosion issues. The project's soil types and descriptions are listed in the previous Agriculture section under "Setting". As described in the NRCS Soil Survey, the project's soil erodibility is high.

A sedimentation and erosion control plan is required for all construction and grading projects (LUO Sec. 22.52.120) to minimize these impacts. When required, the plan is prepared by a civil engineer to address both temporary and long-term sedimentation and erosion impacts. Projects involving more than one acre of disturbance are subject to the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which focuses on controlling storm water runoff. The Regional Water Quality Control Board is the local extension who monitors this program.

### *Discussion*

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

With regards to project impacts on water quality the following conditions apply:

- Approximately 47,300 square feet of site disturbance;
- The project will be subject to standard County requirements for drainage, sedimentation and erosion control for construction and permanent use;
- The project is on soils with moderate erodibility, but not on moderate to steep slopes;
- The project is not within a 100-year Flood Hazard designation;
- The project is more than 500 feet from the closest creek and at least 100 feet from the nearest surface water body;
- All hazardous materials and/or wastes will be properly stored onsite, which include secondary containment should spills or leaks occur; and
- Stockpiles will be properly managed during construction to avoid material loss due to erosion.
- Erosion control measures to be implemented during construction include a permanent erosion control blanket to reduce surficial erosion of the slopes and allow for vegetation growth on the slopes.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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Implementation of Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.110 and Section 22.52.120 will help ensure less than significant impacts to water quality standards and surface and ground water quality.

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

As proposed, operation of the project would not utilize water and would not result in wastewater production. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 500 square feet, which would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

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

The project would be subject to LUO Section 22.52.120A and be required to prepare a sedimentation and erosion control plan. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 500 square feet, which would not substantially contribute to erosion or siltation. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

There are no existing or planned stormwater drainage system within or adjacent to the project site. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 500 square feet, which would not substantially contribute to additional surface runoff. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

There are no existing or planned stormwater drainage system within or adjacent to the project site. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 500 square feet, which would not substantially contribute to additional surface runoff. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- (c-iv) *Impede or redirect flood flows?*

The project is not located within a flood zone and is not located within close proximity to a drainage channel. Impervious surface area of the project would be less than 500 square feet, which would not substantially change the existing ground surface. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Based on the County Safety Element Dam Inundation Map, the project site is not located in an area that would become inundated in the event of dam failure. The proposed project is not located in a 100-year flood zone, and the Pacific Ocean is located more than 20 miles from the project site. The likelihood of flood, tsunami, or seiche affecting the project site is very low and therefore impacts would be less than significant.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

As stated earlier, the proposed project would not result in the use of water for any purpose besides construction, which would be temporary and limited in nature. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in the production of wastewater, which indicates the likelihood of conflicting with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant water-related impacts would occur.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The proposed communication tower would be located in an area designated Agriculture by the County of San Luis Obispo. The project site is surrounded by mostly undeveloped land with some row crop cultivation. The proposed project was reviewed for consistency with policy and regulatory documents relating to the environment and appropriate land use (e.g., County Land Use Ordinance, North County Area Plan, etc.). Referrals were sent to outside agencies and other County departments to review for policy consistencies (e.g., County Fire/CAL FIRE for Fire Code, SLOAPCD for Clean Air Plan, etc.).

#### Discussion

*(a) Physically divide an established community?*

The proposed project is located on an existing parcel and would not involve any components that would physically divide the rural community. The project would utilize the existing circulation system and onsite roads for access and would not require the construction of offsite infrastructure. Therefore, there would be no impact.

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

The project site is located in an area surrounded by agricultural operations (grazing and row crop cultivation). The project site is zoned as Agriculture by the County of San Luis Obispo and no zoning changes are proposed. According to the Agriculture Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, telecommunication towers are considered compatible uses on agricultural land assuming that they are located off of productive agricultural lands. So long as new structures are located where land use compatibility, circulation, and infrastructure capacity exist or can be developed compatible with agricultural uses, the new structures would be considered compatible uses. Since the project would be located on land not actively being used for cultivation, the project would be compatible with the agricultural designation. The project was found to be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the County General Plan, the North County Area Plan, the SLOAPCD Clean Air Plan, and other land use policies for this area. The project would be conditioned to be consistent with standards set forth by County Fire/CAL FIRE, Environmental Health, and the Department of Public Works. Therefore,

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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impacts related to inconsistency with land use and policies adopted to address environmental effects would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant land use or planning impacts would occur.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The County Land Use Ordinance provides regulations for development in delineated Energy and Extractive Resource Areas (EX) and Extractive Resource Areas (EX1). The proposed project is not located within an EX or EX1 designation. Based on the California Geological Survey (CGS) Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification, the project site is located within an Aggregate Materials study area which covers the majority of the county. Active mining operations are located approximately one mile west of the project site, in the Salinas Riverbed.

#### Discussion

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

There are no known mineral resources on the project site. Although the project site is located within an Aggregate Materials study area, the project site does not contain resources identified in the study (aggregate materials - sand and gravel for concrete), which are primarily found in the Salinas River. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(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?*

Based on Chapter 6 of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element – Mineral Resources, the project site is not located within an extractive resource area or an energy and extractive resource area, and the site is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, impacts related to preclusion of future extraction of locally important mineral resources would be less than significant.

#### Conclusion

Due to the lack of known valuable minerals on the project site, and the lack of a mineral resource recovery designation, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of or future extraction of valuable mineral resources.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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*Mitigation*

None required.

*Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XIII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project result in:</i>				
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The existing ambient noise environment is characterized by traffic on El Pomar Dr, as well as agricultural equipment from surrounding properties. Noise-sensitive land uses typically include residences, schools, nursing homes, and parks. The nearest existing off-site noise-sensitive land use is a residence adjacent to the project parcel. The project site is not located within an Airport Review Area, and the nearest airport, Country Ranch Airport, is located 8.9 miles west of the project site.

The County Land Use Ordinance Section 22.10.120 establishes maximum allowed noise levels for both daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.) and nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) hours, as shown below. The maximum allowed exterior hourly noise level is 50 db for the daytime hours and 45 db for the nighttime hours.

#### Discussion

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

The proposed project would introduce noise generating equipment into a relatively quiet rural area. The facility's primary operational noise source would be a diesel-powered emergency back-up generator. The emergency generator is intended to power the facility in the event of a power outage. It would also be operated for about 15 minutes every four to six weeks for routine maintenance and testing. As conditioned, the generator would only be operated for testing during day-time hours.



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Additionally, the generator would be located approximately 500 feet from the nearest residence, and the noise from the generator would attenuate considerably by the time it reaches the residence.

Project construction activities would also generate short-term (temporary) construction noise. These activities would be limited to the daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday, in accordance with County construction noise standards (County Code Section 22.10.120.A).

Noise impacts resulting from both construction and operation of the proposed facility are expected to be less than significant.

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

Operation of the proposed project would not result in groundborne vibration. No construction equipment or methods are proposed that would generate substantial ground vibration. Therefore, impacts related to temporary or permanent groundborne vibration would be less than significant.

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

The closest airport is Oak Country Ranch Airport, located 8.9 miles west of the project site. Since the project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and is not located in an area subject to an airport land use plan, there would be no impact to people residing or working in the project area from excessive air traffic related noise levels.

### *Conclusion*

No significant noise-related impacts are anticipated.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

#### Setting

In its efforts to provide for affordable housing, the County currently administers the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, which provides limited financing to projects relating to affordable housing throughout the county. The County's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires provision of new affordable housing in conjunction with both residential and nonresidential development and subdivisions.

#### Discussion

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

The proposed project would not result in new jobs in the area that would require new housing. The project does not propose new roads or infrastructure to undeveloped or underdeveloped areas that would indirectly result in population growth. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

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

The proposed project proposes construction of a telecommunications facility. The proposed project does not include any residential uses or structures for human habitation. The project would not result in a need for new housing and would not displace existing housing. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

#### Conclusion

No significant population and housing impacts would occur.

#### Mitigation

None required.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

#### Setting

The project area is served by the County Sheriff's Department and Cal Fire as the primary emergency responders. The project is within a zone of high fire severity. The nearest sheriff station is located at the Templeton substation approximately 4 miles to the west of the proposed project. The project is located in a State Responsibility Area for fire protection. Fire hazard severity is high and emergency response times are between 5 to 10 minutes. The project is within the Templeton Unified School District.

#### Discussion

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

##### *Fire protection?*

The proposed project was reviewed by County Fire/Cal Fire for consistency with the Uniform Fire Code and will be required to adhere to the requirements of Uniform Fire Code. The proposed project, along with other projects in the area, will result in a cumulative effect on fire protection services. The project's direct and cumulative impacts are within the general assumptions of allowed use for the

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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subject property that was used to estimate the public facility fees in place. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

### *Police protection?*

The proposed project, along with other projects in the area, would result in a cumulative effect on police protection services. The project's direct and cumulative impacts would be within the general assumptions of allowed use for the subject property that was used to estimate the public facility fees in place. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

### *Schools?*

The proposed project would not result in the need for new housing and would not result in population growth. Therefore, there will be no impact to existing schools or a need for new school facilities.

### *Parks?*

The proposed project would not result in the need for new housing and would not result in population growth. Therefore, there will be no impact to existing parks or a need for new park facilities.

### *Other public facilities?*

The proposed project proposes construction of an unmanned communications facility and would not generate substantial long-term increases in demand for roads, solid waste, or other public services or utilities. The proposed project site would be accessed by the existing local circulation system and onsite farm roads and would not generate substantial long-term operational trips. Therefore, potential impacts on public services or utilities would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant impacts to public services would occur.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XVI. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*Setting*

The County of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Element (Recreation Element) establishes goals, policies, and implementation measures for the management, renovation, and expansion of existing, and the development of new, parks and recreation facilities in order to meet existing and projected needs and to assure an equitable distribution of parks throughout the county. The site is within the Creston to Salinas River proposed trail corridor.

*Discussion*

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

Construction and operation of the proposed telecommunication facility would not have an adverse effect on existing or planned recreational opportunities in the county. The project would not result in the need for new housing and would not result in population growth, and therefore would not create a significant need for additional parks, natural areas, and/or recreational resources. Therefore, there will be no impacts to recreational facility use.

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

The proposed project does not include recreational facilities or require construction of expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, there will be no impacts.

*Conclusion*

No significant impacts to recreational resources would occur.

*Mitigation*

None required.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XVII. TRANSPORTATION

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

#### Setting

The County has established the acceptable Level of Service on roads for this rural area as “C” or better. The existing road network in the area including the project’s access street—El Pomar Drive—are operating at acceptable levels. Based on existing road speeds and configuration (vertical and horizontal road curves), sight distance is considered acceptable.

#### Discussion

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

Short-term construction-related trips would be minimal, and area roadways are operating at acceptable levels and would be able to accommodate construction-related traffic. Long-term maintenance and operational trips would not substantially differ from existing onsite agricultural operations. As a result, the proposed project would have no significant long-term impact on existing road service or traffic safety levels. The project does not conflict with adopted policies, plans and programs related to transportation, would not affect air traffic patterns or policies related to public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities.

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

The project will not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.03, subdivision (b). The long-term maintenance and operational trips of the proposed project would not substantially differ from existing onsite agricultural operations. After a qualitative analysis, this proposed project will have a *less than significant impact*.



## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

The project would not result in any changes to the access road or alterations to the existing driveway approach. Therefore, the project would not substantially increase hazards and would have a less than significant impact.

- (d) *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

El Pomar Drive and the project site's access road are currently able to accommodate emergency vehicles. The project would have the highest risk of emergencies during construction which would be temporary. The project would not block or alter egress routes for surrounding residents. Therefore, impacts related to emergency access would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant transportation-related impacts are expected to occur.

### *Mitigation*

None required.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

Approved in 2014, Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

- 1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
  - a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
  - b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of California Public Resources Code Section 5020.1.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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- 2) 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 California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying these criteria for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

AB 52 consultation letters were sent to four tribes: Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Salinan Tribe of San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties, Xolon Salinan Tribe, and yak tiʔu tiʔu yak tiʔhini. No responses were received as of August 30, 2020.

As noted in Section V: Cultural Resources, the project is located in an area historically occupied by two Native American tribes, the northernmost subdivision of the Chumash, the Obispeño (after Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa), and the Salinan. However, the precise location of the boundary between the Chumashan-speaking Obispeño Chumash and their northern neighbors, the Hokan-speaking Playanos Salinan, is currently the subject of debate, as those boundaries may have changed over time.

### *Discussion*

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

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

No existing cultural reports with positive findings were identified within 3 miles of the project site. There are no known historical resources within the project area; therefore, impacts to historical resources and tribal historical resources would be less than significant.

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

No existing cultural reports with positive findings were identified within 3 miles of the project site. There are no known historical resources within the project area; therefore, impacts to historical resources and tribal historical resources would be less than significant.

In the event archeological resources are unearthed or discovered during any construction activities, the following standards apply:

A. Construction activities shall cease, and the Department shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.

B. In the event archeological resources are found to include human remains, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the County Coroner shall be notified in addition to the Department so proper disposition may be accomplished.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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There are no known tribal cultural resources within the project area. Therefore, impacts are expected to be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

No significant impacts on tribal cultural resources would occur. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of tribal resources during earth-moving activities, compliance with the LUO would ensure potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

### *Mitigation*

No mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
(a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### *Setting*

A fee program has been adopted to address impacts related to public facilities (county) and schools (State Government Code 65995 et seq.). Fees are assessed annually by the County based on the type of proposed development and proportional impact and collected at the time of building permit issuance. Fees are used for the construction as needed to finance the facilities required to the serve new development.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### Discussion

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

The proposed project would not result in the necessity of new or expanded water, wastewater, natural gas, or telecommunications connections or facilities. While the proposed project is the installation of a new telecommunications facility, the project will not result in other new or relocated telecommunications facilities. No other offsite infrastructure is required. The associated utility trenching is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts, as the trenching would not be located within the dripline of any existing native oak trees. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

The proposed project would not result in the usage of water and, therefore, would result in no impact.

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

Operation of the proposed project would not result in the production of wastewater. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on wastewater treatment and storage facilities.

- (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?*

Operation of the project would not result in solid waste generation. Any waste generated from the construction of the proposed facility would be removed by the contractor and disposed of. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

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

Operation of the proposed project would not result in the production of solid waste and therefore would comply with all federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Impacts with regards to solid waste compliance with statutes and regulations would be less than significant.

### Conclusion

No significant impacts related to utilities and service systems is expected to occur, and therefore mitigation is not required.

### Mitigation

None required.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XX. WILDFIRE

	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<i>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</i>				
(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Setting

The proposed project site is located in a high Fire Hazard Severity Zone and has an average annual wind speed of approximately 6.6 to 8.8 miles per hour (Weather Spark 2018). Existing conditions that may exacerbate fire risk include the gently to moderately sloping topography in some areas and the moderate average windspeed.

The County of San Luis Obispo Safety Element establishes goals, policies, and programs to reduce the threat to life, structures, and the environment caused by fire. Policy S-13 identifies that new development should be carefully located, with special attention given to fuel management in higher fire risk areas, and that new development in fire hazard areas should be configured to minimize the potential for added danger.

The California Fire Code provides minimum standards for many aspects of fire prevention and suppression activities. These standards include provisions for emergency vehicle access, water supply, fire protection systems, and the use of fire-resistant building materials.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### Discussion

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

The project would not conflict with any regional emergency response or evacuation plan because the project would be located on an existing parcel and would not alter or prohibit access to the local circulations system. The structures proposed have a small footprint and would be unlikely to pose a significant obstacle during emergency responses. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

The proposed project site is located in an area of moderate wind, with an average annual wind speed of approximately 6.6 to 8.8 miles per hour (Weather Spark 2018). The project site has abundant fuel, especially in the summer months when vegetation is dryer, and it has gently to moderately sloping topography in some areas, all of which exacerbate fire risk. All these conditions have resulted in the project site being classified in a high Fire hazard Severity Zone. The proposed project would have the highest fire risk during construction as construction vehicles have the ability to spark wildfires when operating machinery around dry vegetation. The project proponent would be required to adhere to a Fire Safety plan prepared by County Fire/Cal Fire to lessen fire risk within the project site. Therefore, fire-related impacts to project occupants would be less than significant.

- (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?*

Existing local roads and onsite agricultural roads would be used for access and new roads would not be constructed. The proposed project site would require power to be routed underground from an existing utility pole located in the right of way of El Pomar Drive. Due to the underground location of the conduit, fire risk would be low. Fire-related impacts due to the installation of new infrastructure would be less than significant.

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

As stated earlier, employees would rarely be onsite after completion of construction of the project. The risk to structures would be low due to low landslide and liquefaction risk, location outside a 100-year flood zone, and distance from nearby streams. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact to people and structures in regard to flooding and landslides from post-fire slope instability.

### Conclusion

With the implementation of the Fire Safety Plan, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to wildlife.

### Mitigation

There is no evidence that measures above those required by applicable ordinances or codes are needed. Therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Sources

See Exhibit A.



## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

#### Setting

#### Discussion

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

As discussed in each resource section above, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to biological or cultural resources and would not 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

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Additionally, compliance with mitigation measures AES-1 through AES-3 identified in Exhibit B – Mitigation Summary Table would ensure impacts to aesthetic resources as a result of the proposed project would be less than significant. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

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

The potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project have been analyzed within the discussion of each environmental resource area above. Cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

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

Environmental impacts that may have an adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly, are analyzed in each environmental resource section above. Environmental impacts that could cause substantial adverse effects of human beings would be less than significant.

### *Conclusion*

The proposed project has the potential to have significant impacts to the aesthetic nature of the area. However, with the inclusion of mitigation measures AQ-1 and AES-1 through AES-3, impacts would be mitigated to less than significant.

### *Mitigation*

See mitigation measures AQ-1 and AES-1 – AES-3, which will reduce aesthetic impacts to less than significant.

### *Sources*

See Exhibit A.

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

### Exhibit A - Initial Study References and Agency Contacts

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

Contacted	Agency	Response
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Public Works Department	<b>In File**</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Environmental Health Services	<b>In File**</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Agricultural Commissioner's Office	<b>In File**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Airport Manager	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Airport Land Use Commission	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Pollution Control District	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Sheriff's Department	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional Water Quality Control Board	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Coastal Commission	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	CA Department of Transportation	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Templeton Community Services District	<b>In File**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	<b>Not Applicable</b>

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

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project File for the Subject Application  | <input type="checkbox"/> Design Plan  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>County Documents</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plan  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Plan Policies  | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Resource Summary Report   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Framework for Planning (Coastal/Inland)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Circulation Study  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Plan (Inland/Coastal), includes all maps/elements; more pertinent elements: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Documents</b>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Element   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation & Open Space Element   | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Transportation Plan   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Element   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uniform Fire Code   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Element   | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise Element  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Resources Map                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation Element/Project List   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Area of Critical Concerns Map                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Element   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Biological Importance Map                                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use Ordinance (Inland/Coastal)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CA Natural Species Diversity Database                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building and Construction Ordinance   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Hazard Severity Map  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Facilities Fee Ordinance  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flood Hazard Maps   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Real Property Division Ordinance   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for SLO County |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing Fund   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GIS mapping layers (e.g., habitat, streams, contours, etc.)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airport Land Use Plan  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy Wise Plan  |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North County Area Plan/El Pomar-Estrella SA   |   |

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

California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2019. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program - DLRP Important Farmland Finder. Accessed on: June 14, 2019. Available at: <<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>>

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2018. CDFW Lands Viewer. Accessed on July 1, 2019. Available at: <<https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/lands/>>

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2019. California Natural Diversity Database BIOS Viewer. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/bios/?bookmark=327>>

California State Water Resources Control Board. 2019. Geotracker. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov>>

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). 2019. EnviroStor. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>>

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2008. Scenic Highway Guidelines. October 2008.

California Department of Conservation (DOC). California Geological Survey Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification. 2019. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at <<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/mlc/>>

CalRecycle. May 14, 2019. SWIS Facility Detail. Accessed on June 18, 2019. Available at: <<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/swfacilities/Directory/40-AA-0008>>

County of San Luis Obispo. 2011. EnergyWise Plan. Available at <<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building/Energy-and-Climate/Energy-Climate-Reports/EnergyWise-Plan.aspx>> Accessed on: June 3, 2019.

Environmental Assessment Specialists, Inc. January 28, 2020 – Biological Resources Impact Analysis.

EBI Consulting. August 7, 2020. Radio Frequency – Electromagnetic Energy (RF-EME) Compliance Report.

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). 2019. Delivering Low-Emission Energy. Available at: [https://www.pge.com/en\\_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page](https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page)

San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). 2012. CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Accessed on June 14, 2019. Available at: <[https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/CEQA\\_Handbook\\_2012\\_v2%20%28Updated%20Map2019%29\\_LinkedwithMemo.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/CEQA_Handbook_2012_v2%20%28Updated%20Map2019%29_LinkedwithMemo.pdf)>

San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD). 2017. CEQA Air Quality Handbook Clarification Memo. Accessed on June 14, 2019. Available at: <[https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/FINAL\\_Clarification%20Memorandum%2020172.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/FINAL_Clarification%20Memorandum%2020172.pdf)>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019. National Wetlands Inventory Surface Waters and Wetlands.

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June 5, 2019. Available at: <<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>>

Weather Spark. 2018. Average Weather in Templeton, California. Access on June 30, 2019. Available at: <<https://weatherspark.com/y/1290/Average-Weather-in-Templeton-California-United-States-Year-Round>>

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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### Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary

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

- AES-1**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:
- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.
  - b. All of the antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
  - c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.
- AES-2**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.
- AES-3**      **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.
- AQ-1**      **At the time of application for construction or grading permit**, the applicant shall demonstrate that the Standard Construction Measures shall be met. Standard Construction Measures based on Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) CEQA Handbook (2012), to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from construction equipment. The applicant shall incorporate into the project the following "standard" construction mitigation measures:
- a. Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications;
  - b. Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with Air Resources Board (ARB) certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road);
  - c. Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation;

## Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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- d. Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation;
- e. Construction or trucking companies with fleets that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NOx exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance;
- f. All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5 minute idling limit;
- g. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted;
- h. Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 500 feet of sensitive receptors;
- i. Electrify equipment when feasible;
- j. Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and,
- k. Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

**DEVELOPER'S STATEMENT FOR  
WILSON & AT&T CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT  
DRC2018-00130**

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

**Note:** The items contained in the boxes labeled "Monitoring" describe the County procedures to be used to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures.

The following mitigation measures address impacts that may occur as a result of the development of the project.

**Aesthetics**

**AES-1**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the construction drawings shall show the following specifications:

- a. The water tank shall be designed to appear as a natural aged-wood tank with realistic appearing color and texture treatments for both the tank and the support structure. No signs, banners, or graphic displays shall be painted or otherwise depicted on the tank.
- b. All of the antennas (with the exception of the GPS antennas located on the equipment shelter) shall be located completely within the faux tank.
- c. The coaxial cables and cable tray shall be located below the fence line and shall not be visible to the public.

**AES-2**      **At the time of application for construction permits**, the applicant shall submit accurate scaled engineering and architectural drawings of the water tank exactly as proposed. Water tank plans shall not include generic illustrations of a typical faux tank. The drawings shall include elevations and plan views. Once approved, the water tank plans shall be specifically used (in conjunction with approved color and material samples and other related documents) as a basis for assessing condition compliance during construction. The plans, specifications and estimates, and construction schedule shall provide for revisions and corrections to the water tank engineering and architectural plans prior to preparation of the final plans.

**AES-3**      **Prior to issuance of construction permits**, the applicant shall submit material and color test samples of all visible elements of the water tank to the County Department of Planning and Building for review and approval.

**Monitoring: (Visual Recourse Measures VR-1 to VR-3)** Required at the time of application for construction permits. Compliance will be verified by the County Department of Planning and Building.



**Air Quality**

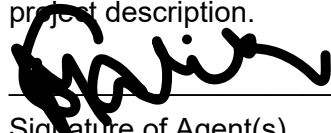
**AQ-1**

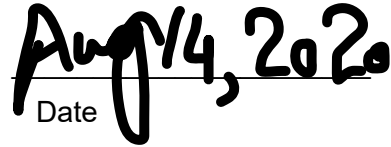
**At the time of application for construction or grading permit**, the applicant shall demonstrate that the Standard Construction Measures shall be met. Standard Construction Measures based on Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) CEQA Handbook (2012), to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from construction equipment. The applicant shall incorporate into the project the following "standard" construction mitigation measures:

- a. Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications;
- b. Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with Air Resources Board (ARB) certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road);
- c. Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation;
- d. Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation;
- e. Construction or trucking companies with fleets that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NOx exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance;
- f. All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5 minute idling limit;
- g. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted;
- h. Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 500 feet of sensitive receptors;
- i. Electrify equipment when feasible;
- j. Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and,
- k. Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

**Monitoring:** Department of Planning and Building shall verify compliance in consultation with the Environmental Coordinator and APCD.

The applicant understands that any changes made to the project description subsequent to this environmental determination must be reviewed by the Environmental Coordinator and may require a new environmental determination for the project. By signing this agreement, the owner(s) agrees to and accepts the incorporation of the above measures into the proposed project description.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Agent(s)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**GUNJAN MALIK**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)