INITIAL STUDY

FOR THE

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
AREAS H AND I SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Prepared for:

Mission Springs Water District
66575 Second Street
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

Prepared by:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

FIGURES

TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACROYNMS

AB	Assembly Bill
APE	Area of Potential Effect
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BRA	Biological Resources Assessment
BUOW	Burrowing Owl
C&D	Construction and Demolition
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendment
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCAR	California Climate Action Registry (now called Climate Action Reserve)
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CVPA	Coachella Valley Planning Area
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DTS	Department of Toxic Substances
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EI	Expansion Index
EO	Executive Orders
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FGC	Fish & Game Code
FTA	Federal Transit Association
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HAS	Hydrologic Sub-Area
LST	Localized Significance Thresholds
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MM	Mitigation Measure
MSWD	Mission Springs Water District
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OS	Open Space
RCFD	Riverside County Fire Department
RCP	Reinforced Concrete Pipe
R-L	Residential Low
R-RD	Residential Rural Desert
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCE	Southern California Edison
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VdB	vibration-velocity decibel
WoUS	Waters of the United States
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

1. Project Title: Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project

2. Lead Agency Name: Mission Springs Water District
   Address: 66575 Second Street, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

3. Contact Person: Danny Friend, Director of Engineering and Operations
   Phone Number: (760) 329-6448
   Email: dfriend@mswd.org

4. Project Location: The MSWD service area is located in southern California within the northwestern portion of the Coachella Valley. The project will occur within various roadways generally located south of Desert View Avenue, west of Mountain View Road, and east of Miracle Hill Road. The southern boundary of the project site is about a half mile south of Hacienda Avenue. The roadways within which the proposed sewer improvements will be located include:

   - Agua Cayendo Road
   - Cuando Way
   - Oro Lomo Street
   - Suerte Way
   - Tunitas Road
   - Eliseo Road
   - Miracle Hill Road
   - Cerrita Way
   - Pequena Drive
   - Cielo Azul Way
   - Loma Vista Road
   - Hidalgo Street
   - Hermano Way
   - Inaja Street
   - Quinta Way
   - Monterico Road
   - Alameda Drive
   - Arena Blanca Road
   - Oris Drive
   - Key Way
   - Monterey Road

   The project is located within the USGS Topo 7.5-minute map for Seven Palms Valley, CA, and is located in Section 33, Township 2 South and Range 5 East. The approximate GPS coordinates of the project area are 33.95020°, -116.48380°. Refer to Figures 1 and 2 for the regional and site location maps.

5. Project Sponsor Name and Address: Mission Springs Water District
   66575 Second Street, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

6. General Plan Designation: R-L: Residential Low (Up to 6.0 DU/AC) and V-S: Visitor-Serving

7. Zoning: R-L: Residential Low, VS-C: Visitor-Serving Commercial, and VS-M: Visitor-Serving Mixed

8. Project Description:

Introduction

Mission Springs Water District (MSWD or District) provides water and sewer services to the communities of Desert Hot Springs, West Garnet, North Palm Springs, and various portions of unincorporated Riverside County. MSWD, as the Lead Agency pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is proposing to install approximately 30,000 linear feet (LF) of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas H and I (refer to Figures 3 and 4) to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This would also protect hot mineral water, which is the economic basis of the community's spa industry.

In February of 1999, MSWD adopted the MSWD Sewer Improvement Project, which was intended to convert approximately 5,000 existing septic disposal treatment systems to a sewer conveyance and treatment system. The project was approved to develop about 62.8 miles of sewer line and a one million gallon per day (MGD) expansion of the District's Horton Wastewater Treatment Plant. In March of 2011, MSWD adopted an Addendum to the MSWD Sewer Improvement Project titled "Addendum No. 1 for AD-12 Sewer Improvement Project," which would enable the District to install about 57 miles of sewer pipelines and wastewater collection within the District's service area. The proposed Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project is an extension of the original project from 1999, but because over 20 years have passed since the original project was adopted, a follow-on Initial Study is being prepared to address the potential impacts from installation of the proposed 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline.

The District developed a Groundwater Quality Protection Program (GQPP) to protect and preserve the quality of its most valuable natural resource, groundwater. The overall GQPP is designed to protect groundwater quality from degradation by discharges from septic tank leach-fields. The GQPP would ultimately remove more than 7,800 septic tanks for connection to MSWD's sewer system. The proposed Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project focuses on Sub Areas H and I and its construction to connect 678 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate over 468 on-site septic systems. Additionally, the proposed project would increase wastewater effluent available for treatment to tertiary levels and for reuse as recycled water in the future.

Project Description

MSWD proposes to construct 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within GQPP Sub Areas H and I of the District's service area, within an area of approximately 220 acres. Figures 3 and 4 depict Sub Areas H and I and the proposed pipeline alignments. As stated above, the installation of this new sewer pipeline would convert areas within MSWD's service area from septic system to a sewer system. This project pertains to Sub Areas H and I and would install the pipeline required to connect 678 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate over 468 on-site septic systems.

As stated under Project Location, above, the proposed project would install pipeline within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Areas H and I (Figures 3 and 4). The proposed project involves installation of pipeline at one location that is not within a roadway to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. This pipeline will skirt the boundaries of the homes within Sub Area I.

Construction Scenario

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022 and is anticipated to require 9 months to complete.

It is assumed that an underground utility installation team can install approximately 200 to 400 lineal feet of sewer, force mains, or recycled water line per day. A team consists of the following:

- 1 Excavator
- 1 Backhoe
- 1 Paver
- 1 Roller
- 1 Water truck
- Traffic Control Signage and Devices
- 10 Dump/delivery trucks (80 miles round trip distance)
- Employees (12 members per team)

It is assumed that installation of 30,000 lineal feet of sewer line will occur over 160 days of construction over a period of about 8 months. The final activity associated with the sewer installation is repaving of roads disturbed by the construction. This is anticipated to occur over a 30 day period.

The project will utilize open cut trenching and jack and bore techniques. The depth to the invert of the pipe will be approximately 8 feet deep in the open cut trench areas and approximately 12 to 15 feet deep under the existing drainage channel between Hidalgo Street and Quinta Way.

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

The proposed project encompasses about 220 acres within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The project is therefore surrounded by a variety of uses:

- The uses to the north of the project area includes undeveloped land. The land use to the north is designated: V-S Visitor-Serving
- The uses to the east of the project area include a residential neighborhood and a few Hotel, Resorts, and Spas. The land uses to the east are: V-S Visitor-Serving, R-L: Residential Low (up to 6.0 dwelling units per acre [DU/AC]), and R-M: Residential Medium (up to 20 DU/AC)
- The uses to the south of the project area include vacant land and residential neighborhoods. The land uses to the south are: V-S Visitor-Serving and R-L: Residential Low (up to 6.0 DU/AC)
- The uses to the west of the project area include commercial businesses, the Two Bunch Palms Resort, and residential neighborhoods. The land uses to the west are: V-S Visitor-Serving and Two Bunch Palms Specific Plan

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

If listed species are involved, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) may have to issue incidental take permits or permits may be obtained under the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). Local jurisdictions issue plant removal permits, for Joshua trees and native cactus. The Corps of Engineers, CDFW and

Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) may need to participate in review of any discharge of fill into or alteration of a streambed. The whole of the project exceeds the threshold for a General Construction National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This requires notification to the State Water Board and preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The proposed project may require encroachment permits from City of Desert Hot Springs to construct the pipeline within existing road rights-of-way.

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

Only one tribe has requested consultation with the District under AB 52, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. Consultation letters were sent to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians on October 19, 2020. No response was received within the 30-day consultation period, as such no further action is required. Consultation is deemed complete as of November 17, 2020.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

☐	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.

Tom Dodson & Associates — Prepared by
May 2019 — Date

Lead Agency (signature)
May 11, 2021 — Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

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

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *No Impact* – MSWD proposes to install 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in diameter within Sub Areas H and I of the District's service area, within an area of approximately 220 acres. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and within one section of land at one location that is not within a roadway to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. The dominant landscape feature of the project footprint are the Little San Bernardino Mountains that are located to the north and east. Additionally, middle- and background views within the City of Desert Hot Springs include the San Bernardino Mountains to the west, and the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains to the southwest and south, which also provide dramatic and valuable viewsheds. The proposed project site is located just south of the Little San Bernardino Mountains.

   The presence of construction equipment and related construction materials would be visible from public vantage points such as sidewalks and streets within the Areas H and I footprint but it would not adversely affect any scenic views or vistas. Construction of the conveyance pipelines and ancillary facilities would not permanently affect views or scenic vistas. Thus, construction impacts would be less than significant. The entirety of the proposed project will be constructed belowground within existing roadways or disturbed right-of-way (ROW). Once constructed, the roadways and ROW will be returned to their original condition, and roadways repaved. Given that the project would not degrade views to nearby scenic vistas and that the visual effects of pipeline installation and repaved sections of roadway would not substantially alter the views in the project footprint in the long-term, implementation of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project is not expected to cause any substantial adverse effects on any important scenic vistas. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and within one section of land at a location that is not within a roadway to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. None of the roadways within which the proposed project will be installed are designated as a scenic highway by the State of California. The nearest officially designated State scenic highway is State Highway 62 located approximately five miles west of the project site. Highway 62 is the main corridor gateway to Joshua Tree National Park and the main arterial roadway for the communities of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twenty-Nine Palms.

The project site would not be visible from Highway 62 and no impacts to the State Scenic Highway are anticipated. No rock outcroppings or historic buildings exist within the project footprint and as the proposed project would be constructed mostly within existing rights of way, no trees will be impacted by installation of the proposed sewer pipeline and laterals. Based on the lack of any intrinsic onsite scenic resources, the proposed project will not cause substantial project-specific damage to any such resources. No impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue and no mitigation is required.

c. *No Impact* – The project site is located in an urbanized area within City of Desert Hot Springs. The project would connect customers within Areas H and I to MSWD's sewer service through the installation of 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline and laterals. The proposed sewer pipelines would be placed underground and would not be visible once construction is complete. As the proposed pipelines will all be located belowground, and the roadways in which the pipelines are installed will be repaved as each segment of pipeline installation is completed, construction and operation of the proposed pipelines will have no potential to conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. No impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue and no mitigation is required.

d. *No Impact* – There will be no new lighting associated with the proposed project. The pipelines will be constructed underground, mostly within existing roadways. No reflective materials or coatings are associated with this project. The construction activities are limited to daylight hours unless an emergency occurs, and the amount of security lighting needed during construction will be minimal. Therefore, with no permanent aboveground features, it is not anticipated that the site would create any new permanent sources of light or glare. No significant impact associated with lighting or glare can be identified and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *No Impact* – The proposed project footprint is located adjacent to the foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains. The area to the south, east, and west of the project site is urbanized, and neither the project footprint nor the adjacent and surrounding properties are designated for agricultural use; no agricultural activities exist in the project area; and there is no potential for impact to any agricultural uses or values as a result of project implementation. According to the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland mapping and monitoring program of the California Resources Agency, no prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance exists within the vicinity of the proposed project (Figure II-1). No adverse impact to any agricultural resources would occur from implementing the proposed Project. No mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The project footprint is not now included in a Williamson Act contract or an Agricultural Preserve. Based on these facts, the proposed project will not cause a significant direct impact or

conflict with the Williamson Act or an existing agricultural use. The project footprint is not currently being farmed and the land use designations support R-L: Residential Low (Up to 6.0 DU/AC) and V-S: Visitor-Serving and the zoning classifications support R-L: Residential Low, VS-C: Visitor-Serving Commercial, and VS-M: Visitor-Serving Mixed uses. Furthermore, the surrounding uses are not agricultural in nature. Furthermore, the City of Desert Hot Springs does not have any current land use designations or zoning classifications for agricultural use. According to the Riverside County Williamson Act Lands Map from the Williamson Act Program (2007), there are no sites within the project footprint are under a Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract. Therefore, no potential for indirect effects on agricultural resources or values would occur due to implementation of the Sewer Improvement Project.

c. *No Impact* – There are no existing zoning ordinances that pertain to forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. The land use designations support R-L: Residential Low (Up to 6.0 DU/AC) and V-S: Visitor-Serving and the zoning classifications support R-L: Residential Low, VS-C: Visitor-Serving Commercial, and VS-M: Visitor-Serving Mixed uses. Furthermore, the surrounding uses are not related to forestry uses. Additionally, according to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, there are no land use designations that pertain to forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Therefore, the no potential for indirect effects to existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production would occur due to implementation of the Sewer Improvement Project.

d. *No Impact* – As described in the preceding evaluation, there are no forest lands within the project area, which is because the project area is urbanized and is a low-elevation desert. No potential for loss of forest land would occur if the project is implemented. No mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – Because the project site and surrounding area do not support either agricultural or forestry uses and, furthermore, because the project site and environs are not designated for such uses, implementation of the proposed project would not cause or result in the conversion of farmland or forest land to alternative use. No adverse impact would occur. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Mission Springs Water District, Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, Desert Hot Springs, California* dated January 18, 2021 prepared by Giroux & Associates. This technical study is provided as Appendix 1 to this document.

Background

Climate
The proposed project site is in the Coachella Valley Planning Area (CVPA) of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB). The SSAB was part of the Southeast Desert Air Basin (SEDAB) until May, 1996 when the SSAB was created. The project site is in the hottest and driest part of California. The climate is characterized by hot, dry summers and relatively mild winters. Rainfall is scant in all seasons, so differences between the seasons are characterized principally by differences in temperature. Average annual precipitation in the air basin ranges from 2 to 6 inches per year.

Seasonal temperature differences in the basin are large, confirming the absence of marine influences due to the blocking action of the mountains to the west. Average monthly maximum temperatures in the project vicinity range from 108ºF in July to 57ºF in January. The average monthly minima range from about 40ºF in January to about 80ºF in July.

During much of the year, California is covered by a moderately intense high-pressure system. In winter, the Pacific High retreats to the south, so that frontal systems from the North Pacific can move onto the California coast. On average, 20 to 30 frontal systems pass through California each winter. The first front usually arrives around the middle of October, and the average period of frontal activity is five to six months. Most of these systems are relatively weak by the time they reach the SSAB, however, and they become more diffuse as they move southeastward.

Air Quality Standards
Existing air quality is measured at established South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) air quality monitoring stations. Monitored air quality is evaluated in the context of ambient air quality standards. These standards are the levels of air quality that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) currently in effect are shown in Table III-1. Because the State of

California had established Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) several years before the federal action and because of unique air quality problems introduced by the restrictive dispersion meteorology, there is considerable difference between state and national clean air standards. Those standards currently in effect in California are shown in Table III-1. Sources and health effects of various pollutants are shown in Table III-2.

Table III-1
AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

Pollutant	Average Time	California Standards [1]		National Standards [2]		
		Concentration [3]	Method [4]	Primary [3,5]	Secondary [3,6]	Method [7]
Ozone (O3)[8]	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m^3)	Ultraviolet Photometry	–	Same as Primary Standard	Ultraviolet Photometry
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3)		0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3)		
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM10)[9]	24 Hour	50 µg/m^3	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	150 µg/m^3	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m^3		–		
Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)[9]	24 Hour	–	–	35 µg/m^3	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m^3	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	12.0 µg/m^3	15.0 µg/m^3	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m^3)	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)	35 ppm (40 mg/m^3)	–	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)
	8 Hour	9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)		9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	–	
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m^3)		–	–	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)[10]	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m^3)	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence	100 ppb (188 µg/m^3)	–	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m^3)		0.053 ppm (100 µg/m^3)	Same as Primary Standard	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO2)[11]	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m^3)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence	75 ppb (196 µg/m^3)	–	Ultraviolet Flourescense; Spectrophotometry (Paraosaniline Method)
	3 Hour	–		–	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m^3)	
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m^3)		0.14 ppm (for certain areas)[11]	–	
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	–		0.030 ppm (for certain areas)[11]	–	
Lead 8[12,13]	30-Day Average	1.5 µg/m^3	Atomic Absorption	–	–	–
	Calendar Quarter	–		1.5 µg/m^3 (for certain areas)[12]	Same as Primary Standard	High Volume Sampler and Atomic Absorption
	Rolling 3-Month Avg	–		0.15 µg/m^3		
Visibility Reducing Particles[14]	8 Hour	See footnote 14	Beta Attenuation and Transmittance through Filter Tape	**No Federal Standards**		
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m^3	Ion Chromatography			
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m^3)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence			
Vinyl Chloride[12]	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m^3)	Gas Chromatography			

Footnotes

1 California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, suspended particulate matter – PM10, PM2.5, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

2 National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM10, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year, with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 $\mu g/m^3$, is equal to or less than one. For PM2.5, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over 3 years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact U.S. EPA for further clarification and current federal policies.

3 Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.

4 Any equivalent procedure which can be shown to the satisfaction of the ARB to give equivalent results at or near the level of the air quality standard may be used.

5 National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.

6 National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

7 Reference method as described by the EPA. An “equivalent method” of measurement may be used but must have a “consistent relationship to the reference method” and must be approved by the EPA.

8 On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.

9 On December 14, 2012, the national PM2.5 primary standard was lowered from 15 $\mu g/m^3$ to 12.0 $\mu g/m^3$. The existing national 24-hour PM2.5 standards (primarily and secondary) were retained at 35 $\mu g/m^3$, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 $\mu g/m^3$. The existing 24-hour PM10 standards (primarily and secondary) of 150 $\mu g/m^3$ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.

10 To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.

11 On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO2 standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO2 national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved.

Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.

12 The ARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.

13 The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 j.tg/m^3 as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.

14 In 1989, the ARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

Table III-2
HEALTH EFFECTS OF MAJOR CRITERIA POLLUTANTS

Pollutants	Sources	Primary Effects
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	• Incomplete combustion of fuels and other carbon-containing substances, such as motor exhaust. • Natural events, such as decomposition of organic matter.	• Reduced tolerance for exercise. • Impairment of mental function. • Impairment of fetal development. • Death at high levels of exposure. • Aggravation of some heart diseases (angina).
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)	• Motor vehicle exhaust. • High temperature stationary combustion. • Atmospheric reactions.	• Aggravation of respiratory illness. • Reduced visibility. • Reduced plant growth. • Formation of acid rain.
Ozone (O3)	• Atmospheric reaction of organic gases with nitrogen oxides in sunlight.	• Aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. • Irritation of eyes. • Impairment of cardiopulmonary function. • Plant leaf injury.
Lead (Pb)	• Contaminated soil.	• Impairment of blood function and nerve construction. • Behavioral and hearing problems in children.
Fine Particulate Matter (PM-10)	• Stationary combustion of solid fuels. • Construction activities. • Industrial processes. • Atmospheric chemical reactions.	• Reduced lung function. • Aggravation of the effects of gaseous pollutants. • Aggravation of respiratory and cardio respiratory diseases. • Increased cough and chest discomfort. • Soiling. • Reduced visibility.
Fine Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)	• Fuel combustion in motor vehicles, equipment, and industrial sources. • Residential and agricultural burning. • Industrial processes. • Also, formed from photochemical reactions of other pollutants, including NOx, sulfur oxides, and organics.	• Increases respiratory disease. • Lung damage. • Cancer and premature death. • Reduces visibility and results in surface soiling.
Sulfur Dioxide (SO2)	• Combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. • Smelting of sulfur-bearing metal ores. • Industrial processes.	• Aggravation of respiratory diseases (asthma, emphysema). • Reduced lung function. • Irritation of eyes. • Reduced visibility. • Plant injury. • Deterioration of metals, textiles, leather, finishes, coatings, etc.

Source: California Air Resources Board, 2002.

Baseline Air Quality

In the CVPA portion of the SSAB, air quality planning, enforcement and monitoring responsibilities are carried out by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Existing and probable future levels of air quality around the project area can be best inferred from ambient air quality measurements conducted by the SCAQMD at the Indio and Palm Springs air quality monitoring stations. In Indio, ozone and 10 microns or less in diameter, (respirable) particulates called PM-10, are monitored. These two pollutants are the main air pollution problems in the CVPA portion of the SSAB. Vehicular pollution levels such as carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) are monitored at Palm Springs. Levels of CO and NO_2 at the project site are likely lower than those monitored in Palm Springs. However, because CO and NO_2 levels in Palm Springs are well within acceptable limits, their use to characterize the project site

introduces no complications. The last four years of published data from Indio and Palm Springs stations are summarized in Table III-3. The following conclusions can be drawn from these data:

- Photochemical smog (ozone) levels periodically exceed standards. The 1-hour state standard was violated less than one percent of all days in the last four years near Indio. The 8-hour state ozone standard has been exceeded an average of 11 percent of all days per year in the same time. The Federal eight-hour ozone standard is violated on around eight percent of all days per year. Ozone levels are much lower than 10 to 20 years ago. Attainment of all clean air standards in the project vicinity is not likely to occur soon, but the severity and frequency of violations is expected to continue to slowly decline during the current decade.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) measurements near the project site have declined throughout the last decade, and 8-hour CO levels were at their lowest in 2017. Federal and state CO standards have not been exceeded in the last 10+ years. Despite continued basin-wide growth, maximum CO levels at the closest air monitoring station are less than 25 percent of their most stringent standards because of continued vehicular improvements.
- PM-10 levels as measured at Indio, have exceeded the state 24-hour standard on 12 percent of all measurement days in the last four years, but the national 24-hour particulate standard has not been exceeded during the same period. The state standard is considerably more restrictive.
- A fraction of PM-10 is comprised of ultra-small diameter particulates capable of being inhaled into deep lung tissue (PM-2.5). There have no violations of the 24-hour federal PM-2.5 standard in recent years. With dustier conditions along the I-10 Corridor, there may be occasional violations of PM-2.5 standards at the project site.

Table III-3
AIR QUALITY MONITORING SUMMARY
(Days Standards were Exceeded and Maximum Observed Concentrations 2015-2018)

Pollutant/Standard	2015	2016	2017	2018
Ozone[a]				
1-Hour > 0.09 ppm (S)	2	8	4	4
8-Hour > 0.07 ppm (S)	27	44	49	43
8- Hour > 0.075 ppm (F)	12	27	28	43
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.099	0.107	0.106	0.103
Max. 8-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.089	0.093	0.091	0.087
Carbon Monoxide[b]				
1-hour > 20. ppm (S)	0	0	0	0
8- Hour > 9. ppm (S,F)	0	0	0	0
Max 8-hour Conc. (ppm)	1.5	0.5	1.1	0.7
Nitrogen Dioxide[b]				
1-Hour > 0.18 ppm (S)	0	0	0	0
Max 1-hour Conc. (ppm)	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
Respirable Particulates (PM-10)[a]				
24-hour > 50 $\mu g/m^3$ (S)	56/313	43/363	43/353	27/361
24-hour > 150 $\mu g/m^3$ (F)	0/313	0/363	0/363	0/361
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. ($\mu g/m^3$)	137.	128.	146.	41.
Ultra-Fine Particulates (PM-2.5)[a]				
24-Hour > 35 $\mu g/m^3$ (F)	0/115	0/110	0/122	0/118
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. ($\mu g/m^3$)	25.8	18.8	28.7	15.0

(S) = state standard, (F) = federal standard
[a]Data from Indio monitoring station; [b]Data from Palm Springs air monitoring station.
Source: SCAQMD Air Monitoring Summaries.

Air Quality Planning

The U.S. EPA is responsible for setting and enforcing the NAAQS for O3, CO, NOx, SO2, PM10, PM2.5, and lead. The U.S. EPA has jurisdiction over emissions sources that are under the authority of the federal government including aircraft, locomotives, and emissions sources outside state waters (Outer Continental Shelf). The U.S. EPA also establishes emission standards for vehicles sold in states other than California. Automobiles sold in California must meet the stricter emission requirements of the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The Federal Clean Air Act (1977 Amendments) required that designated agencies in any area of the nation not meeting national clean air standards must prepare a plan demonstrating the steps that would bring the area into compliance with all national standards. The SCAB could not meet the deadlines for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, or PM-10. In the SCAB, the agencies designated by the governor to develop regional air quality plans are the SCAQMD and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The two agencies first adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in 1979 and revised it several times as earlier attainment forecasts were shown to be overly optimistic.

The 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendment (CAAA) required that all states with air-sheds with "serious" or worse ozone problems submit a revision to the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The most current regional attainment emissions forecast for ozone precursors (ROG and NOx) and for carbon monoxide (CO) and for particulate matter are shown in Table III-4. Substantial reductions in emissions of ROG, NOx and CO are forecast to continue throughout the next several decades. Unless new particulate control programs are implemented, PM-10 and PM-2.5 are forecast to slightly increase.

The SCAQMD adopted an updated clean air "blueprint" in August 2003. The 2003 AQMP was based upon the federal one-hour ozone standard which was revoked late in 2005 and replaced by an 8-hour federal standard. Because of the revocation of the hourly standard, a new air quality planning cycle was initiated. With re-designation of the air basin as non-attainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, a new attainment plan was developed. This plan shifted most of the one-hour ozone standard attainment strategies to the 8-hour standard. The attainment date was to "slip" from 2010 to 2021. The updated attainment plan also includes strategies for ultimately meeting the federal PM-2.5 standard.

Because projected attainment by 2021 required control technologies that did not exist yet, the SCAQMD requested a voluntary "bump-up" from a "severe non-attainment" area to an "extreme non-attainment" designation for ozone. The extreme designation was to allow a longer time period for these technologies to develop. If attainment cannot be demonstrated within the specified deadline without relying on "black-box" measures, EPA would have been required to impose sanctions on the region had the bump-up request not been approved. In April 2010, the EPA approved the change in the non-attainment designation from "severe-17" to "extreme." This reclassification set a later attainment deadline (2024), but also required the air basin to adopt even more stringent emissions controls.

Table III-4
SOUTH COAST AIR BASIN EMISSIONS FORECASTS (Emissions in tons/day)

Pollutant	2015[a]	2020[b]	2025[b]	2030[b]
NOx	357	289	266	257
VOC	400	393	393	391
PM-10	161	165	170	172
PM-2.5	67	68	70	71

[a]2015 Base Year.; [b]With current emissions reduction programs and adopted growth forecasts.
Source: California Air Resources Board, 2013 Almanac of Air Quality

AQMPs are required to be updated every three years. The 2012 AQMP was adopted in early 2013. An updated AQMP was required for completion in 2016. The 2016 AQMP was adopted by the SCAQMD Board in March, 2017, and has been submitted the California Air Resources Board for forwarding to the EPA. The 2016 AQMP acknowledges that motor vehicle emissions have been effectively controlled and that reductions in NOx, the continuing ozone problem pollutant, may need to come from major stationary sources (power plants, refineries, landfill flares, etc.). The current attainment deadlines for all federal non-attainment pollutants are now as follows:

8-hour ozone (70 ppb)	2032
Annual PM-2.5 (12 $\mu g/m^3$)	2025
8-hour ozone (75 ppb)	2024 (old standard)
1-hour ozone (120 ppb)	2023 (rescinded standard)
24-hour PM-2.5 (35 $\mu g/m^3$)	2019

The key challenge is that NOx emission levels, as a critical ozone precursor pollutant, are forecast to continue to exceed the levels that would allow the above deadlines to be met. Unless additional stringent NOx control measures are adopted and implemented, ozone attainment goals may not be met.

The proposed project does not directly relate to the AQMP in that there are no specific air quality programs or regulations governing sewer pipeline installation projects. Conformity with adopted plans, forecasts and programs relative to population, housing, employment and land use is the primary yardstick by which impact significance of planned growth is determined. The SCAQMD, however, while acknowledging that the AQMP is a growth-accommodating document, does not favor designating regional impacts as less-than-significant just because the proposed development is consistent with regional growth projections. Air quality impact significance for the proposed project has therefore been analyzed on a project-specific basis.

Significance Thresholds Used in This Document

Air quality impacts are considered “significant” if they cause clean air standards to be violated where they are currently met, or if they “substantially” contribute to an existing violation of standards. Any substantial emissions of air contaminants for which there is no safe exposure, or nuisance emissions such as dust or odors, would also be considered a significant impact.

Appendix G of the California CEQA Guidelines offers the following four tests of air quality impact significance. A project would have a potentially significant impact if it:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Primary Pollutants
Air quality impacts generally occur on two scales of motion. Near an individual source of emissions or a collection of sources such as a crowded intersection or parking lot, levels of those pollutants that are emitted in their already unhealthful form will be highest. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an example of such a pollutant. Primary pollutant impacts can generally be evaluated directly in comparison to appropriate clean air standards. Violations of these standards where they are currently met, or a measurable worsening of an existing or future violation, would be considered a significant impact. Many particulates, especially fugitive dust emissions, are also primary pollutants. Because of the non-attainment status of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) for PM-10, an aggressive dust control program is required to control fugitive dust during project construction.

Secondary Pollutants
Many pollutants, however, require time to transform from a more benign form to a more unhealthful contaminant. Their impact occurs regionally far from the source. Their incremental regional impact is minute on an individual basis and cannot be quantified except through complex photochemical computer models. Analysis of significance of such emissions is based upon a specified amount of emissions (pounds, tons, etc.) even though there is no way to translate those emissions directly into a corresponding ambient air quality impact.

Because of the chemical complexity of primary versus secondary pollutants, the SCAQMD has designated significant emissions levels as surrogates for evaluating regional air quality impact significance independent of chemical transformation processes. Projects in the Coachella Valley portion of the SCAQMD with daily emissions that exceed any of the following emission thresholds are to be considered significant under CEQA guidelines.

Table III-5
DAILY EMISSIONS THRESHOLDS

Pollutant	Construction[1]	Operations[2]
ROG	75	75
NOx	100	100
CO	550	550
PM-10	150	150
PM-2.5	55	55
Sox	150	150
Lead	3	3

[1] Construction thresholds apply to both the SCAB and the Coachella Valley (Salton Sea and Mojave Desert Air Basins.
[2] For Coachella Valley the mass daily emissions thresholds for operation are the same as the construction daily emissions thresholds.
Source: SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook, November, 1993 Rev.

Sensitive Uses
The project will occur within various roadways generally located south of Desert View Avenue, west of Mountain View Road, and east of Miracle Hill Road. The southern boundary of the project site is about a half mile south of Hacienda Avenue.

The gross project area encompasses about 220 acres within the City of Desert Hot Springs, though the area of disturbance (trenches for installing the sewer line) is much less. The area is primarily residential with a few spa hotels. Most homes have at least a 50-foot setback to the roadway centerline.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Projects such as the proposed installation of new sewers (30,000 LF of sewer pipeline) does not directly relate to the AQMP in that there are no specific air quality programs or regulations governing general development. This makes sense since, once installed, the sewers do not generate new emissions. Conformity with adopted plans, forecasts and programs relative to population, housing, employment and land use are the primary yardsticks by which impact significance of planned growth is determined. Based on the analysis of the City's General Plan Land Use section, the proposed project is consistent with the adopted City's General Plan. Thus, the proposed project is consistent with regional planning forecasts maintained by the SCAG regional plans. The SCAQMD, however, while acknowledging that the AQMP is a growth-accommodating document, does not favor designating regional impacts as less than significant only because of consistency with regional growth projections. Air quality impact significance for the proposed project

has therefore been analyzed on a project-specific basis. As the analysis of project-related emissions provided below indicates, the proposed project will not cause or be exposed to significant air pollution, and is, therefore, consistent with the applicable air quality plan.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Air pollution emissions associated with the proposed project would occur over both a short and long-term time period. Short-term emissions include fugitive dust from construction activities (i.e., site prep, demolition, grading) and exhaust emissions at the project site. Long-term emissions generated by future operation of the proposed pipeline are negligible as additional operation will not require a new source of energy to operate. Energy is not anticipated to be required, though the proposed operations and maintenance activities in the future include energy consumption and trips generated by the future development. It is anticipated that existing conveyance systems (lift stations and/or other appurtenances) will require greater energy to accommodate the sewage conveyed by the new pipelines, but this increase in energy demand would be minimal. No additional energy demand is anticipated because the proposed sewer would operate solely by gravity and will continue via gravity to the treatment plant.

Construction Emissions
CalEEMod was developed by the SCAQMD to provide a model by which to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from a variety of land use projects. It calculates both the daily maximum and annual average emissions for criteria pollutants as well as total or annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

It is assumed that installation of 30,000 lineal feet of sewer line will occur over 160 days of construction over a period of about 8 months. The final activity associated with the sewer installation is repaving of roads disturbed by the construction. This is anticipated to occur over a 30 day period. Construction is assumed to begin in the summer of 2021.

Estimated construction emissions were modeled using CalEEMod2016.3.2 to identify maximum daily emissions for each pollutant during project construction. Construction was modeled using default construction equipment and schedule for a project of this size using input from the project engineer as shown in Table III-6.

Table III-6
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY EQUIPMENT FLEET

Phase Name and Duration	Equipment
Demo Roadway and Trench 2 months	1 Loader/Backhoe
	2 Trencher
	1 Concrete Saw
Install Pipe 6 months	2 Forklifts
	1 Welder
Backfill and Pave 1 month	1 Loader/Backhoe
	2 Concrete Mixers
	1 Paver
	1 Loader/Backhoes
	1 Roller

Utilizing this indicated equipment fleet and durations shown in Table III-6 the following worst-case daily construction emissions are calculated by CalEEMod and are listed in Table III-7.

Table III-7
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY EMISSIONS
MAXIMUM DAILY EMISSIONS (pounds/day)

Maximal Construction Emissions	ROG	NOx	CO	SO_2	PM-10	PM-2.5
2021 Unmitigated	1.2	10.2	10.2	0.0	5.5	3.2
2021 Mitigated	1.2	10.2	10.2	0.0	3.0	1.8
2022 Unmitigated	0.9	7.6	10.1	0.0	0.6	0.4
2022 Mitigated	0.9	7.6	10.1	0.0	0.6	0.4
SCAQMD Thresholds	**75**	**100**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**

Peak daily construction activity emissions are estimated to be below SCAQMD CEQA thresholds without the need for added mitigation. Mitigated conditions reflect dust suppression associated with twice daily watering during demo and grading. However, though construction activities are not anticipated to cause dust emissions to exceed SCAQMD CEQA thresholds, emissions minimization through enhanced dust control measures is recommended for use because of the non-attainment status of the air basin. As such, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

AIR-1 ***Fugitive Dust Control. The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications for implementation during construction:***

- ***Apply soil stabilizers to inactive areas.***
- ***Prepare a high wind dust control plan and implement plan elements and terminate soil disturbance when winds exceed 25 mph.***
- ***Stabilize previously disturbed areas if subsequent construction is delayed.***
- ***Apply water to disturbed surfaces and haul roads 3 times/day.***
- ***Replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly.***
- ***Reduce speeds on unpaved roads to less than 15 mph.***
- ***Trenches shall be left exposed for as short a time as possible.***
- ***Identify proper compaction for backfilled soils in construction specifications.***

This measure shall be implemented during construction, and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.

Similarly, ozone precursor emissions (ROG and NOx) are calculated to be below SCAQMD CEQA thresholds. However, because of the regional non-attainment for photochemical smog, the use of reasonably available control measures for diesel exhaust is recommended. Combustion emissions control options include:

AIR-2 ***Exhaust Emissions Control. The following measures shall be incorporated into Project plans and specifications for implementation:***

- ***Utilize off-road construction equipment that has met or exceeded the maker's recommendations for vehicle/equipment maintenance schedule.***
- ***Contactors shall utilize Tier 4 or better heavy equipment.***
- ***Enforce 5-minute idling limits for both on-road trucks and off-road equipment.***

With the above mitigation measures, any impacts related to construction emissions are considered less than significant. No further mitigation is required.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Conformity
Annualized construction activity emissions were calculated by assuming all construction activities would occur during the same calendar year to represent a worst-case condition. The calculated emissions were then compared to the EPA *de minimis* emission thresholds that would allow for a federal conformity finding with Section 176c of the Clean Air Act.

If the project-related emissions from construction and operations are less than specified "*de minimis*" levels, no further SIP consistency demonstration is required. There are no operational emissions associated with this project. The SCAB Coachella Valley is designated as a "extreme" non-attainment area for the federal 8-hour ozone standard. The basin is a non-attainment area for PM-2.5. Based upon these designations, the following emissions levels are presumed evidence of SIP conformity:

VOC/ROG	-	10 tons/year
NOx	-	10 tons/year
PM-2.5	-	100 tons/year
PM-10[1]	-	70 tons/year
SO_2	-	100 tons/year

Annual construction emissions were calculated with the CalEEMod computer model. Maximum annual project-related air pollution emissions relative to federal standard attainment designations and appropriate *de minimis* thresholds are shown in Table III-8.

Table III-8
TOTAL ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS
(TONS/YEAR)

Activity	ROG	NOx	CO	SO_2	PM-10	PM-2.5	CO_2
Maximal Construction Emissions							
2021	0.05	0.38	0.42	0.00	0.14	0.08	55.55
2022	0.03	0.22	0.29	0.00	0.02	0.01	40.48
Total	0.08	0.60	0.71	0.00	0.16	0.09	96.03
NEPA Threshold	**10**	**10**	**100**	**100**	**70**	**100**	**-**

Maximum annual emissions are much less than their associated *de minimis* thresholds. A formal SIP consistency analysis is not required.

Operational Emissions
The operation of the pipelines will not require a new source of energy to operate. This is because the new sewer pipelines will connect to MSWD's existing wastewater conveyance system, which has adequate capacity to serve Areas H and I. It is anticipated that existing conveyance systems (lift stations and/or other appurtenances) will require some additional energy to accommodate the sewage conveyed by the new pipelines, but this increase in energy demand can be accommodated by existing systems. No additional energy demand is anticipated because the proposed sewer would operate solely by gravity and will continue via gravity to the treatment plant. Therefore, no significant operational air quality emissions are anticipated to be generated by the proposed project.

Conclusion
With the incorporation of mitigation measures **AIR-1** and **AIR-2**, the development of the Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project would have a less than significant potential to result in a cumulatively

[1] Air quality in Coachella Valley now meets the national PM10 standards. A request for redesignation to attainment has been submitted to EPA (2020): https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/regact/2021/sad20/appc.pdf

considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The SCAQMD has developed analysis parameters to evaluate ambient air quality on a local level in addition to the more regional emissions-based thresholds of significance. These analysis elements are called Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs). LSTs were developed in response to Governing Board's Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative 1-4 and the LST methodology was provisionally adopted in October 2003 and formally approved by SCAQMD's Mobile Source Committee in February 2005.

Use of an LST analysis for a project is optional. For the proposed project, the primary source of possible LST impact would be during construction. LSTs are applicable for a sensitive receptor where it is possible that an individual could remain for 24 hours such as a residence, hospital or convalescent facility.

LSTs are only applicable to the following criteria pollutants: oxides of nitrogen (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM-10 and PM-2.5). LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that are not expected to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard, and are developed based on the ambient concentrations of that pollutant for each source receptor area and distance to the nearest sensitive receptor.

LST screening tables are available for 25, 50, 100, 200 and 500 meter source-receptor distances. For this project, the closest receptor 25-meter distance was used.

The SCAQMD has issued guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs. LST pollutant screening level concentration data is currently published for 1, 2 and 5 acre sites for varying distances. For this site, the most stringent thresholds for a one-acre site were utilized.

The following thresholds and emissions in Table III-9 are therefore determined (pounds per day):

Table III-9
LST AND PROJECT EMISSIONS (pounds/day)

LST Coachella Valley	CO	NOx	PM-10	PM-2.5
LST Threshold	878	132	4	3
Max On-Site Emissions				
Unmitigated	10	10	5	3
Mitigated	10	10	3	2
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

CalEEMod Output in Appendix

LSTs were compared to the maximum daily construction activities. As seen in Table III-9, LST impacts are less than significant.

Construction equipment exhaust contains carcinogenic compounds within the diesel exhaust particulates. The toxicity of diesel exhaust is evaluated relative to a 24-hour per day, 365 days per year, 70-year lifetime exposure. The SCAQMD does not generally require the analysis of construction-related diesel emissions relative to health risk due to the short period for which the majority of diesel exhaust would occur. Health risk analyses are typically assessed over a 9-, 30-, or 70-year timeframe and not over a relatively brief construction period due to the lack of health risk associated with such a brief exposure. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Substantial odor-generating sources include land uses such as agricultural activities, feedlots, wastewater treatment facilities, landfills or various heavy industrial uses. The project does not propose any such uses or activities that would result in potentially significant operational-source odor impacts particularly given that the sewer pipeline will be located below ground. Project operations (pumping) are an essentially closed system with negligible odor potential. Therefore, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information is provided based on a Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation Report, and Land Use Consistency of the project site. The assessment was conducted by Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. dated March 2021 and is titled "*Mission Springs Water District Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation Report and Land Use Consistency Analysis*." The following information is abstracted from the Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) provided as Appendix 2.

General Site Conditions

The project site is within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The Desert Hot Springs area is situated in the northwestern portion of the Coachella Valley and is bordered on the north and northeast by the Little San Bernardino Mountains, on the east/southeast by the Seven Palms Valley and Edom Hills and on the west by the San Bernardino Mountain foothills. The elevation of the project area ranges from approximately 1,040 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southwestern limits of the project area to 1,250 feet amsl near the northeastern-most limits.

Hydrologically, the project area is situated within the Miracle Hill Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 719.43). The Miracle Hill HSA comprises a 44,525-acre drainage area, within the larger Whitewater River Watershed (HUC 18100201). The Whitewater River is the major hydrogeomorphic feature within the Whitewater River

Watershed and is one of the main tributaries to the Salton Sea. The nearest tributary to the Whitewater River is Morongo Wash, which is approximately 2 miles west of the project area at its closest point.

Soils within the project area are comprised mostly of Carsitas gravelly sand, 0 to 9 percent slopes, and Carsitas gravelly sand, 9 to 30 percent slopes. Carsitas family soils consist of gravelly sand that is comprised of gravelly alluvium derived from granite. This soil type is excessively drained, with a low to very low runoff class and does not have a hydric soil rating.

The project area is entirely within an urban environment consisting of single-family residential development and is surrounded by residential development and undeveloped land. Habitat within the surrounding undeveloped areas consist mostly of Mojave mixed woody scrub and Sonoran mixed woody and succulent scrub plant communities.

Conclusion

Sensitive Biological Resources
No sensitive species were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level field survey and due to the environmental conditions on site, none are expected to occur. The project area is completely disturbed, consisting of paved streets and previously graded, compact bare ground and due to the environmental conditions on site and the adjacent disturbances, the project area is likely not suitable to support any of the special status wildlife species that have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 3 miles), including the federally listed as endangered Coachella Valley milk-vetch, the state and federally listed as threatened Mojave desert tortoise, the state listed as endangered and federally listed as threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, and the California Species of Special Concern (SSC) Burrowing owl (BUOW).

The project area does not contain any sensitive habitats, including any USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species, and the project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat. Additionally, the project will not impact any Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Conservation Areas. The Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Mojave desert tortoise, and Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard are all Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) Covered Species. The CVMSHCP provides “take” authorization for Covered Species during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species. The District and the City of Desert Hot Springs are both signatories to the CVMSHCP. Since the Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Mojave desert tortoise, and Coachella Valley fringe- toed lizard are all Covered Species under the CVMSHCP and the project will not impact any MSHCP Conservation Areas or United States Dish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated Critical Habitat for Coachella Valley milk-vetch, “take” authorization is provided for any potential project -related impacts to these species.

Nesting Birds
There is habitat within the project area that is suitable to support nesting birds, including both vegetation and man-made structures. Most native bird species are protected from unlawful take by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). In general, impacts to all bird species (common and special status) can be avoided by conducting work outside of the nesting season, which is generally February 1st through September 1st. However, if all work cannot be conducted outside of nesting season, mitigation is recommended.

Jurisdictional Waters
The result of the jurisdictional waters assessment is that there are no wetland or non-wetland waters of the United States (WOTUS) or waters of the State potentially subject to regulation by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Section 401 of the CWA and/or Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (FGC), respectively. Therefore, the project will not impact any jurisdictional waters and no state or federal jurisdictional waters permitting will be required.

Land Use Designations
The project is within the CVMSHCP boundary. The nearest Conservation Areas are approximately 0.4 mile northeast (Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area) and 0.9 mile southeast (Long Canyon Conservation Area) of the project area, respectively. MSWD should be prepared to pay the MSHCP fees and restrict all project related impacts to existing right-of-way and/or other areas outside of the Conservation Areas. No other conservation or avoidance measures are expected, and the project as described, would be consistent with the Conservation Goals and Objectives set forth in the CVMSHCP.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to have a potential for an adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. As stated above, no sensitive species were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level field survey and due to the environmental conditions on site, none are expected to occur. The project area is completely disturbed, consisting of paved streets and previously graded, compact bare ground and due to the environmental conditions on site and the adjacent disturbances, the project area is likely not suitable to support any of the special status wildlife species that have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 3 miles), including the federally listed as endangered Coachella Valley milk-vetch, the state and federally listed as threatened Mojave desert tortoise, the state listed as endangered and federally listed as threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, and the California SSC BUOW. There is no suitable habitat for the above species within the project site. Given that the proposed project would not impact any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas, under which the Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Mojave desert tortoise, and Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard are all CVMSHCP Covered Species and CVMSHCP provides "take" authorization for Covered Species during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species (refer to the discussion under issue "e" below). No other sensitive species have been identified as having a potential to exist within or be impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to result in a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No mitigation is required.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the proposed project has minimal potential to have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. As stated in the BRA provided as Appendix 2 prepared by Jacobs, the project area does not contain any sensitive habitats, including any USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species, and the Project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat. Furthermore, no intermittent or ephemeral dry washes that would meet the definitions of State and federal jurisdictional waters as defined by Section 1600 of the State of California FGC or "Waters of the United States" (WoUS) as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) occur on the project site. Therefore, no regulatory permits from these agencies will be required for this project. Based on the field survey conducted by Jacobs and the information contained in Appendix 2, no significant impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive communities are anticipated to occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

c. *No Impact* – According to the data gathered by Jacobs in Appendix 2, no federally protected wetlands occur within the project footprint. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will have no potential to impact 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 mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Based on the field survey of the project site, the project will not substantially interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory species

or with established native or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native nursery sites. Once constructed, the entirety of the project will operate belowground as a functioning sewer collection pipeline system. However, the State does protect all migratory and nesting native birds. Further, the project site and surrounding area consists of habitat that is suitable to support nesting birds. Thus, the project area may include areas that function as nesting locations for native birds. To avoid impacting nesting birds as required by the MBTA and California FGC, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

BIO-1 ***Nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified avian biologist no more than three (3) days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance activities. Preconstruction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified avian biologist will make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If active nests are found during the preconstruction nesting bird surveys, a Nesting Bird Plan (NBP) shall be prepared and implemented by the qualified avian biologist. At a minimum, the NBP shall include guidelines for addressing active nests, establishing buffers, ongoing monitoring, establishment of avoidance and minimization measures, and reporting. The size and location of all buffer zones, if required, shall be based on the nesting species, individual/pair's behavior, nesting stage, nest location, its sensitivity to disturbance, and intensity and duration of the disturbance activity. To avoid impacts to nesting birds, any grubbing or vegetation removal should occur outside peak breeding season (typically February 1 through September 1).***

Thus, with implementation of the above measure, any effects on wildlife movement or the use of wildlife nursery sites can be reduced to a less than significant impact.

e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Development of the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Impacts to biological resources have been addressed above under issues IV(a-d). Due to the nature of the proposed project—installing pipelines belowground within mostly within existing roadways—no trees or other biological resources that might be protected exist within the project footprint. Therefore, the potential for the project to conflict with local policies or ordinances pertaining to biological resources would be considered less than significant.

f. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under Conclusion and issue IV(a), above. The County of Riverside developed the CVMSHCP to enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem processes while allowing future economic growth. The CVMSHCP sets Conservation Goals and Objectives to ensure the conservation of the Covered Species and conserved natural communities in the MSHCP Reserve System. In addition to setting Conservation Goals and Objectives for the Covered Species and conserved natural communities, the MSHCP has designated Core Habitat, Other Conserved Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors and Linkages. The CVMSHCP area is divided into Conservation Areas based on a combination of ecological and jurisdictional factors. The CVMSHCP is intended to satisfy the legal requirements to authorize the "take" of species covered under the Plan during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species. The BRA provided as Appendix 2 concluded that the project concluded that the project area is outside any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas and the nearest Conservation Areas are approximately 0.4-mile northeast (Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area) and 0.9 mile southeast (Long Canyon Conservation Area) of the project area, respectively. Therefore, no conservation or avoidance measures are expected, and the project as described, would be consistent with the Conservation Goals and Objectives set forth in the CVMSHCP.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: A cultural resources report has been prepared to evaluate the potential for cultural resources to occur within the project area of potential effect entitled "*Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report: Mission Springs Water District Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, City of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California*" prepared by CRM TECH dated April 5, 2021 (Appendix 3). The following information is abstracted from this report. It provides an overview and findings regarding the cultural resources found within the project area.

Background

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the undertaking encompass the maximum extent of ground disturbance required during construction, which mostly coincides with the existing rights-of-way of the various public roadways along the pipeline routes. The overall extent of the undertaking, namely Sub Areas H and I, lies south of Desert View Avenue, west of Mountain View Road, and east of Miracle Hill Road, extending approximately a half-mile south of Hacienda Avenue. Improvements will occur within the following roadways: Agua Cayendo Road, Cuando Way, Oro Lomo Street, Suerte Way, Tunitas Road, Eliseo Road, Miracle Hill Road, Cerrita Way, Pequena Drive, Cielo Azul Way, Loma Vista Road, Hidalgo Street, Hermano Way, Inaja Street, Quinta Way, Monterico Road, Alameda Drive, Arena Blanca Road, Oris Drive, Key Way, and Monterey Road.

The vertical extent of the APE, represented by the maximum depth of ground disturbance associated with pipeline installation, will reach 10 feet below current ground surface in most of the APE, while excavation to the depth of approximately 15 feet will be necessary for pipeline installation under an existing drainage channel between Hidalgo Street and Quinta Way. The undertaking proposes no aboveground improvements that may introduce visual, atmospheric, or other indirect impacts. Therefore, the limits of the APE are constrained to only those areas where direct ground disturbances may occur. The APE lies within the east half of Section 32, T2S R5E, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

The purpose of this technical study is to provide the MSWD and the SWCRB with the necessary information and analysis to determine whether the undertaking would have an adverse effect on any "historic properties," as defined by 36 CFR 800.16(l), or "historical resources," as defined by California PRC §5020.1(j), that may exist in the APE. To accomplish this objective, a cultural resources records search, historical and geoarchaeological background research, Native American consultation, and a systematic field survey were conducted.

Throughout the course of this study, no "historic properties" or "historical resources" were encountered within the APE boundaries. However, the research results indicate that a prehistoric Native American village site at Two Bunch Palms, designated Site 33-001246 in the California Historical Resources Inventory, lies in close proximity to the southwestern portion of the APE, while the southern portion of the APE is known to be the general location of famed early settler Cabot Yerxa's (1883-1965) original homestead and trading post. Therefore, the potential for encountering buried archaeological deposits of

prehistoric or early historic origin during construction is considered to be moderate to high in the portion of the APE along Miracle Hill Road and the portion delineated by Hidalgo Street, Loma Vista Road, and Hermano Way.

Since the APE lies predominantly within the rights-of-way of paved public roadways, standard archaeological testing prior to the commencement of the undertaking does not appear to be a feasible approach to determine the presence or absence of subsurface cultural remains. In order to identify such remains in a timely manner and, if necessary, protect them from adverse effect from the undertaking, CRM TECH recommends that excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will occur in the archaeologically sensitive area and reach beyond the roadbed fill—generally speaking the uppermost five feet of surface and near-surface soils—be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations should be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a standard archaeological testing program.

Under this condition, the proposed undertaking may be cleared to proceed in compliance with Section 106 and CEQA provisions on cultural resources. No further cultural resources investigation is recommended for the rest of the undertaking unless project plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by this study. However, if buried cultural materials are encountered during earth-moving operations elsewhere within the APE, all work within a 100-foot radius of the discovery should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds. Any human remains unearthed during the project will need to be addressed in accordance with California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and Public Resources Code §5097.98.

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (PRC §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC §5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired."

Per the above discussion and definition, archeological resources may be encountered during construction. This is because, as stated above, a prehistoric Native American village site at Two Bunch Palms, designated Site 33-001246 in the California Historical Resources Inventory, lies in close proximity to the southwestern portion of the APE, while the southern portion of the APE is known to be the general location of famed early settler Cabot Yerxa's (1883-1965) original homestead and trading post. Therefore, the potential for encountering buried archaeological deposits of prehistoric or early historic origin during construction is considered to be moderate to high in the portion of the APE along Miracle Hill Road and the portion delineated by Hidalgo Street, Loma Vista Road, and Hermano Way. In regards to historical resources, no "historic properties" or "historical resources" were encountered within the APE boundaries. In light of this information and pursuant to PRC §21084.1, the following conclusions have been reached for the project:

- No historical resources within or adjacent to the project area have any potential to be disturbed as they are not within the proposed area in which the facilities will be constructed and developed, and thus, the project as it is currently proposed will not cause a substantial adverse change to any known historical resources.
- Archaeological deposits may be located in the soils underlying the roadways within which the proposed pipeline will be installed. Mitigation is required to minimize any potential impacts thereof.

CUL-1 In order to identify such archaeological deposits within the potentially sensitive areas of the APE—along Miracle Hill Road and the portion delineated by Hidalgo Street, Loma Vista Road, and Hermano Way—in a timely manner

and, if necessary, to protect such resources from adverse effect from the undertaking, any ground disturbance that will occur in the archaeologically sensitive area and reach beyond the roadbed fill—generally speaking the uppermost five feet of surface and near-surface soils—shall be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations shall be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a standard archaeological testing program.

Furthermore, throughout the remainder of the APE, there is minimal potential to encounter cultural materials; however, unknown buried cultural materials cannot be discovered until excavation and earth moving take place, and may be discovered during earth-moving operations associated with the project. As such, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

CUL-2 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the District's onsite inspector. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

With the above mitigation measures, the potential for impacts to cultural resources will be reduced to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As noted in the discussion above, no available information suggests that human remains may occur within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and the potential for such an occurrence is considered very low. Human remains discovered during the project will need to be treated in accordance with the provisions of HSC §7050.5 and PRC §5097.98, which is mandatory. State law (Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code) as well as local laws requires that the Police Department, County Sheriff and Coroner's Office receive notification if human remains are encountered. Compliance with these laws is considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented in relation to discovery and treatment of human remains:

CUL-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

With the incorporation of the above mitigation measure, potential for impact to discovery and treatment of human remains will be reduced to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VI. ENERGY: Would the project:				
a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – During construction, the proposed project will utilize construction equipment that is CARB approved, minimizing emissions generated and electricity required to the extent feasible (as outlined under Section III, Air Quality, above). As stated in Section III, Air Quality, the construction of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project would require mitigation measures to minimize emissions impacts from construction equipment use. These mitigation measures also apply to energy resources as they require equipment not in use for 5 minutes to be turned off, and for electrical construction equipment to be used where available. These measures would prevent a significant impact during construction due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and would also conform to the CARB regulations regarding energy efficiency.

Southern California Edison Company (SCE) is the primary distribution provider for electricity in the project area. According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report (General Plan EIR), in the 2018 fiscal year, SCE sold approximately 87,143 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity; approximately 46% of the electricity that SCE delivered to customers came from carbon-free resources, including solar energy (approximately 13%), wind energy (approximately 13%), and geothermal energy (approximately 8%). The City's General Plan EIR provides the following analysis related to new development under Chapter 4.6, Energy:

"New development and land use turn over would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity consumption in new and/or retrofitted structures. Additional electricity reductions would be achieved through the implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1C, which requires the adoption of a Zero Net Energy (ZNE) ordinance. The adoption and implementation of a ZNE ordinance would require increased building efficiency and the installation of renewable energy infrastructure (e.g., photovoltaic (PV) systems and/or windmills) to offset the building/structure's energy consumption."

A ZNE ordinance has not yet been adopted by the City. Furthermore, the proposed project would be required to comply with Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code). Additionally, in July 2013, the City of Desert Hot Springs adopted an Energy Action Plan (EAP), to which the project will be required to adhere. However, the operation of the pipelines will not require a new source of energy to operate. This is because the new sewer pipelines will connect to MSWD's existing wastewater conveyance system, which has adequate capacity to serve Areas H and I. No additional energy demand is anticipated because the proposed sewer would operate solely by gravity and will continue via gravity to the treatment plant. No natural gas would be required to operate the proposed project, and trips to the project footprint would occur only on an as needed basis for maintenance purposes. As such, petroleum consumption associated with implementation of the Sewer Improvement Project would not be considered unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

According to SCE's website[2], SCE is committed to delivering power reliably and to meet demand; SCE is expanding and upgrading the transmission and distribution networks to meet the region's growing demand for electricity, and improve grid performance, while meeting California's ambitious renewable-power goals. As such, it is anticipated that SCE will continue to have ample power supply to serve the construction of the project without the need for additional electrical capacity. Therefore, given the lack of energy required to operate the proposed project, it is not anticipated that the project would either result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operations, or conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts under these issues are considered less than significant.

[2] https://www.sce.com/about-us/reliability/meeting-demand

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 onsite or offsite land-slide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information is provided based on a Subsurface Soils Investigation prepared for the project site. The assessment was conducted by LOR Geotechnical Group, Inc. dated June 19, 2020 and is titled "*Subsurface Soils Investigation Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, Desert Hot Springs, California.*" The Soils Investigation is provided as Appendix 4a to this Initial Study.

a. i. Ground Rupture

Less Than Significant Impact – The project footprint is located in the City of Desert Hot Springs within the County of Riverside, which is situated within several active faults, including the North and South Branches of the San Andreas fault, which are considered to be Alquist-Priolo fault zones. Figure VII-1 shows where these faults are located as depicted in the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, which depicts faults within the City boundary as well as within and around its Sphere of Influence (SOI). According to Figure VII-1, the footprint is located within an Alquist-Priolo fault zone, the San Andreas Fault Zone, and is also delineated as being located within a Riverside County Designated

Fault Zone. Therefore, the proposed sewer pipelines would cross through an active fault zone. Underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from fault rupture, depending on the severity of a seismic event. In the event that a strong earthquake were to occur, the proposed sewage conveyance pipeline could burst, causing sewage to leak. While damage to pipelines can occur, pipelines can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to expose people or structures to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map.

ii. Strong Seismic Ground Shaking

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated in the discussion above, several faults run through the City, and as with much of southern California, the proposed pipelines will be subject to strong seismic ground shaking impacts should any major earthquakes occur in the future, particularly due to the site's location within two fault zones, as shown in Figure VII-1. As a result, and like all other development projects in the City and throughout the southern California region, the proposed project will be required to comply with all applicable seismic design standards contained in the 2019 California Building Code (CBC). Compliance with the CBC and the use of best management design practices will enable maximum structural integrity of the pipelines to be maintained in the event of an earthquake. As stated above, mitigation to prevent impacts from pipeline rupture will be implemented. However, generally, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from ground shaking. Many such facilities exist and function within areas susceptible to strong ground shaking effects. Therefore, given that the proposed project consists of pipelines that will be constructed mostly within existing roadways and that no structures will be developed in support of the proposed project, there is a less than significant potential for people or structures to be exposed to strong seismic ground shaking.

iii. Seismic-Related Ground Failure Including Liquefaction

Less Than Significant Impact – The three factors determining whether a site is likely to be subject to liquefaction include seismic shaking, type and consistency of earth materials, and groundwater level. Liquefaction of saturated cohesionless soils can be caused by strong ground motion resulting from earthquakes. Soil liquefaction is a phenomenon in which saturated, cohesionless soils lose their strength due to the build-up of excess pore water pressure during cyclic loading such as that induced by earthquakes. According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Seismic Hazards Map (Figure VII-2), the project site is located within a general area known to be susceptible to liquefaction. As with other ground failure potential, pipelines are not susceptible to significant adverse effects associated with liquefaction. Damage to pipelines can occur, but can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Therefore, potential impacts associated with seismic-related ground failure would be considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

iv. Landslide

Less Than Significant Impact – According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR, Landslides are found along the perimeter of the City on properties abutting the surrounding hills and mountains. The proposed project footprint is located along the foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains; however, it is located along the relatively flat area just south of the foothills and is therefore assumed to be located within an area of low susceptibility to landslides. However, pipelines are not typically susceptible to significant adverse effects associated with landslides. Damage to pipelines can occur, but can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Therefore, potential impacts associated with landslides are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The majority of the project area has been graded, compacted, and paved with asphalt because the proposed pipeline installation project will

occur mostly within existing roadways. The exception is an area that is not paved, consisting of compacted dirt to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. The proposed sewer improvement project will result in land disturbance in the areas that will require construction within roadways and adjacent rights-of-way to accommodate the trenching required to install the sewer pipeline. Adequate drainage facilities exist to accommodate existing drainage flows, and no change in drainage will result once the roadways are repaved and the pipelines are in place belowground. This project will result in the disturbance of more than one acre of land and will require filing a Notice of Intent (NOI), securing a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), general construction stormwater discharge permit, and preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP will include but not be limited to the following measures to mitigate potential impacts associated with erosion and surface water quality degradation during construction:

GEO-1 Stored backfill material shall be covered with water resistant material during periods of heavy precipitation to reduce the potential for rainfall erosion of stored backfill material. Where covering is not possible, measures such as the use of straw bales or sand bags shall be used to capture and hold eroded material on the Project site for future cleanup such that erosion does not occur.

GEO-2 Excavated areas shall be backfilled and compacted such that erosion does not occur. Paved areas disturbed by this project shall be repaved in such a manner that roadways and other disturbed areas are returned to the pre-project conditions or better.

GEO-3 All exposed, disturbed soil (trenches, stored backfill, etc.) will be sprayed with water or soil binders twice a day or more frequently if fugitive dust is observed migrating from the site within which the pipelines are being installed.

GEO-4 The length of trench which can be left open at any given time will be limited to that needed to reasonably perform construction activities. This will serve to reduce the amount of backfill stored onsite at any given time.

With implementation of the above mitigation measures, any impacts are considered less than significant. No further mitigation is necessary.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As stated under issues VII(a[iii]) and VII(a[iv]) above, the project footprint traverses through areas that are susceptible to landslides and liquefaction. This indicates that the project footprint and general area may be underlain by unstable soils, or be affected by subsidence, lateral spreading, or collapse. However, the proposed project consists of the installation of sewer pipelines within existing roadways and a small segment of compacted dirt, and pipelines are generally not susceptible to significant adverse effects associated with unstable soils. As stated under issues VII(a[iii]) and VII(a[iv]) above, damage to pipelines can occur, but can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Furthermore, the proposed project shall be required to implement the design measures outlined in the Subsurface Soils Investigation, which shall be implemented through the following measure, implementation of the project would not result in a significant impact from occurring under this issue:

GEO-5 Based upon the Subsurface Soils Investigation (Appendix 4a of this document), all of the recommendations identified in Appendix 4a (listed on pages 3-8) shall be implemented by MSWD. Implementation of these specific measures will address all of the identified geotechnical constraints identified at project site.

The recommended measures outlined in the Subsurface Soils Investigation will ensure that any potential impacts regarding soil stability will be mitigated to a level of less than significant. Therefore, with implementation of the stabilizing measures identified in the site plan, the project would not 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 onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The entirety of the proposed project will be located underground. As stated throughout the Geology and Soils section of the Initial Study, pipelines are generally not subject to experiencing significant effects of soil instability or in this case, expansive soils. Damage to pipelines can occur, but can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Additionally, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey (Appendix 4b), the majority of the project area is underlain by gravelly sand type soils that are not considered expansive. However, a small portion of the project area at the north of Areas H and I is underlain by Chuckawalla very gravelly sandy clay loam (CoD), which may be considered expansive in nature. As stated above under VII(a[i]) and VII(a[ii]), mitigation to prevent impacts from pipeline rupture will be implemented. Expansive soils are typically in the clay soil family, which are present within the project footprint; however, while damage to pipelines can occur, damaged pipelines can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Given the above, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.

e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project proponent is MSWD, and the overall purpose of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project is intended to connect area septic systems users to their wastewater collection service. No septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the project. Thus, because the project will be served by a municipal wastewater provider, no impacts related to the use of septic tanks or alternative water disposal systems will occur.

f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The potential for discovering paleontological resources during development of the project is considered somewhat likely based on the data gathered within the Cultural Resources Report provided as Appendix 3. The vast majority of the pipeline alignments are contained within the rights-of-way of existing public roadways, where typically the top five to six feet of soils are practically engineered fill that has been greatly disturbed by road construction and the installation of subsurface utility lines. MM **CUL-1** would ensure that any potential paleontological resources located in the known sensitive area are tested, recorded, and treated appropriately. However, in the areas that have not been delineated as sensitive within the project APE, and because these resources are located beneath the surface and can only be discovered as a result of ground disturbance activities, the following measure shall be implemented:

GEO-6 Should any paleontological resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection should be performed immediately by a qualified paleontologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the MSWD's onsite inspector. The paleontological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and determine appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act that shall be implemented to minimize any impacts to a paleontological resource.

With incorporation of this contingency mitigation, the potential for impact to paleontological resources will be reduces to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: "*Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Mission Springs Water District, Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, Desert Hot Springs, California"* dated January 18, 2021 prepared by Giroux & Associates. This technical study is provided as Appendix 1 to this document.

a&b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – California has passed several bills and the Governor has signed at least three executive orders regarding greenhouse gases. GHG statues and executive orders (EO) include AB 32, SB 1368, EO S-03-05, EO S-20-06 and EO S-01-07. AB 32 is one of the most significant pieces of environmental legislation that California has adopted. Among other things, it is designed to maintain California's reputation as a "national and international leader on energy conservation and environmental stewardship." A unique aspect of AB 32, beyond its broad and wide-ranging mandatory provisions and dramatic GHG reductions, are the short time frames within which it must be implemented. Major components of the AB 32 include:

- Require the monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions beginning with sources or categories of sources that contribute the most to statewide emissions.
- Requires immediate "early action" control programs on the most readily controlled GHG sources.
- Mandates that by 2020, California's GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels.
- Forces an overall reduction of GHG gases in California by 25-40%, from business as usual, to be achieved by 2020.
- Must complement efforts to achieve and maintain federal and state ambient air quality standards and to reduce toxic air contaminants.

Statewide, the framework for developing the implementing regulations for AB 32 is under way. Maximum GHG reductions are expected to derive from increased vehicle fuel efficiency, from greater use of renewable energy and from increased structural energy efficiency. Additionally, through the California Climate Action Registry (CCAR now called the Climate Action Reserve), general and industry-specific protocols for assessing and reporting GHG emissions have been developed. GHG sources are categorized into direct sources (i.e., company owned) and indirect sources (i.e., not company owned).

Thresholds of Significance

In response to the requirements of SB 97, the State Resources Agency developed guidelines for the treatment of GHG emissions under CEQA. These new guidelines became state laws as part of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations in March 2010. The CEQA Appendix G guidelines were modified to include GHG as a required analysis element. A project would have a potentially significant impact if it:

- Generates GHG emissions, directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, or,
- Conflicts with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions.

Section 15064.4 of the Code specifies how significance of GHG emissions is to be evaluated. The process is broken down into quantification of Project-related GHG emissions, making a determination of significance, and specification of any appropriate mitigation if impacts are found to be potentially significant. At each of these steps, the new GHG guidelines afford the lead agency with substantial flexibility.

Emissions identification may be quantitative, qualitative or based on performance standards. CEQA guidelines allow the lead agency to "select the model or methodology it considers most appropriate." The most common practice for transportation/combustion GHG emissions quantification is to use a computer model such as CalEEMod, as was used in the ensuing analysis.

The significance of those emissions then must be evaluated; the selection of a threshold of significance must take into consideration what level of GHG emissions would be cumulatively considerable. The guidelines are clear that they do not support a zero net emissions threshold. If the lead agency does not have sufficient expertise in evaluating GHG impacts, it may rely on thresholds adopted by an agency with greater expertise.

On December 5, 2008 the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted an Interim quantitative GHG Significance Threshold for industrial projects where the SCAQMD is the lead agency (e.g., stationary source permit projects, rules, plans, etc.) of 10,000 Metric Tons (MT) CO_2 equivalent/year. In September 2010, the SCAQMD CEQA Significance Thresholds GHG Working Group released revisions which recommended a threshold of 3,000 MT CO_2e for all land use projects. This 3,000 MT/year recommendation has been used as a guideline for this analysis. In the absence of an adopted numerical threshold of significance, Project related GHG emissions in excess of the guideline level are presumed to trigger a requirement for enhanced GHG reduction at the project level.

Construction Activity GHG Emissions

The project is assumed to require less than one year for construction but will overlap two calendar years with construction commencing in the summer of 2021. During project construction, the CalEEMod2016.3.2 computer model predicts that the construction activities will generate the annual CO_2 emissions identified in Table VIII-1.

Table VIII-1
CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS (Metric Tons CO_2e)

	CO_2e
Year 2021	56.6
Year 2022	40.5
Total	97.1
Amortized	**3.2**

SCAQMD GHG emissions policy from construction activities is to amortize emissions over a 30-year lifetime. The amortized level is also provided. GHG impacts from construction are considered individually less than significant.

Consistency with GHG Plans, Programs, and Policies

The City of Desert Hot Springs adopted an Initial Study, Negative Declaration for a Climate Action Plan in 2013. The plan identifies 80 specific actions to reduce GHG emissions. However, the proposed project is GHG neutral and will not increase electrical consumption or require additional personnel or maintenance. The project could be considered GHG positive because it will eliminate the need to clean and maintain individual septic systems for 678 parcels (468 on-site septic systems).

Since the project results in GHG emissions below the recommended SCAQMD 3,000 metric ton threshold for any land use project, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation to reduce GHG emissions.

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

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project should not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; but it may 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 during construction. During construction, there is a potential for accidental release of petroleum products in sufficient quantity to pose a significant hazard to people and the environment. The following mitigation measure will be incorporated into the SWPPP prepared for the project and it can reduce such a hazard to a less than significant level:

HAZ-1 ***All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the Certified Unified Program Agency and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable state and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste will be collected and disposed of at an appropriately a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into the SWPPP prepared for the proposed project. Prior to accepting the site as***

remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

Additionally, roadways adjacent to and within the project footprint are public roads that can be used by any common carrier to or from the local area. For such transporters, the existing regulatory mandates ensure that the hazardous materials and any hazardous wastes transported to and from the Project site will be properly managed. These regulations are codified in Titles 8, 22, and 26 of the California Code of Regulations. For example, maintenance trucks for construction equipment must transport their hazardous materials in appropriate containers, such as tanks or other storage devices. In addition, the haulers must comply with all existing applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding transport, use, disposal, handling and storage of hazardous wastes and material, including storage, collection and disposal. Compliance with these laws and regulations related to transportation will minimize potential exposure of humans or the environment to significant hazards from transport of such materials and wastes.

The proposed project will install 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline. The proposed pipeline will be installed underground within existing roadways and within a small section of compacted dirt; once constructed, the roadways will be repaved to their original condition and the segment of compacted dirt will be recompacted. Thus, once constructed, the pipelines will not require or result in transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, with implementation of the identified mitigation measure, impacts are considered less than significant.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project footprint is located in close proximity to several schools, though all schools are located more than one quarter mile from the project footprint. The nearest schools are Cabot Yerxa Elementary School (west of the project footprint), Julius Corsini Elementary School (east of the project footprint), and Bubbling Wells Elementary School (south of the project footprint). As previously stated, the project will involve the use of petroleum products and exhaust emissions with construction activities, but will be minimal, as stated under the Air Quality Section of this document. The handling of all hazardous or potentially hazardous materials during construction would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local agencies and regulations pertaining to the handling and use of hazardous materials. Adherence to these policies and regulations, as well as the implementation of the above mitigation measures will ensure that the project will not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school during either construction, and during operation no potential exists to handle such hazardous materials as the proposed sewer pipelines are located belowground. Any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project footprint is not located in an area that has been included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result it will not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. According to the California State Waterboard's GeoTracker, which provides information regarding Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, there are no locations within a 2,500 foot radius of any of the proposed project facilities that is identified as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) site or Department of Toxic Substances (DTS) site (Figure IX-1 see GeoTracker figure), nor are there any remediated LUST or DTS cleanup sites. Furthermore, the nature of the proposed project is not such that persons working or residing in the area would be exposed to any hazards from any nearby contaminated sites, particularly as the proposed pipeline will be installed within existing, disturbed roadways. Therefore, because the project will not require excavation at depths that would encounter contaminated materials, the proposed pipeline replacement project is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the population or to the environment from their implementation. Impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – The Palm Springs International Airport is the closest airport to the proposed project and is located approximately 7.4 miles south of the proposed project. The project footprint is not located within an Influence Area identified in the Palm Springs International Airport section of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission's Compatibility Plan.[3] Given the large distance between the proposed project and nearby airports, project implementation would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Furthermore, there are no private airstrips/public use airports located within two miles of the project site. Therefore, the development of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project would have no potential to result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project will be located within existing roadways within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The proposed Sewer Improvement Project will not be developed within any emergency response or evacuation route. Primary roadways within the project footprint that would be used during an emergency or evacuation order would be Hacienda Avenue (east-west), Palm Drive (north-south), and Mountain View Road (north-south). The proposed sewer pipeline segments are generally not located within these major roadways, with the exception of connecting a pipeline within Hacienda Avenue. At no time during the installation of pipeline will the entirety of this roadway be closed. The project would require one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented. As such, please refer to the Transportation/Traffic Section of this document, Section XVII. Mitigation to address any potential traffic disruption and emergency access issues on area roadways are included in this section. Impacts are reduced to a less than significant level with mitigation incorporated. No additional mitigation is required.

g. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands. The proposed project area is located adjacent to the Little San Bernardino Mountains, as such, the project is located adjacent to a high fire hazard zone within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) (Figure IX-2). However, the project will not construct any habitable structures. The proposed project will install 30,000 LF of new pipeline within existing roadways or otherwise underground. Pipelines are not susceptible to wildfire hazards and the development of the proposed pipeline will not increase the risk of wildland fires to nearby residences and structures. Therefore, though the proposed project is located adjacent to an area considered susceptible to wildfire hazards, because the entirety of the project will be installed belowground, the proposed project would have a less than significant expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. No mitigation is required.

[3] http://www.rcaluc.org/Portals/13/PDFGeneral/plan/newplan/18-%20Vol.%201%20Palm%20Springs%20International.pdf

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?; or,	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project proposes to install 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline. The area of disturbance from the construction of the pipeline will occur within existing rights-of-way including paved roadways and a compacted dirt alignment. Three main sources of potential violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements are as follows: from generation of municipal wastewater; from stormwater runoff; and potential discharges of pollutants, such as accidental spills. To address stormwater and accidental spills within this environment, any new project must ensure that site development implements a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to control potential sources of water pollution that could violate any standards or discharge requirements during construction and a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to ensure that project-related surface runoff meets discharge requirements over the short- and long-term. In the short term, construction activities will have some potential to affect the quality of stormwater discharged from the project sites. Land disturbance activities could result in erosion and sedimentation immediately adjacent to the disturbed project alignment. Spills or leaks of petroleum products used by construction equipment could also potentially affect the quality of surface water. The project will be required to obtain a general construction National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

System (NPDES) stormwater discharge permit prior to the start of construction. Obtaining coverage under the General Construction NPDES permit requires the preparation and implementation of the SWPPP, which specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that must be implemented during construction of this specific project. Compliance with the terms and conditions of the NPDES and the SWPPP, as well as the WQMP, is mandatory and is judged adequate mitigation by the regulatory agencies for potential impacts to stormwater during construction activities. Implementation of the following mitigation measure is also considered adequate to reduce potential impacts to stormwater runoff to a less than significant level.

HYD-1 MSWD shall require that the construction contractor prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) which specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from contacting stormwater and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. The SWPPP shall include a Spill Prevention and Cleanup Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented in the SWPPP may include but not be limited to:

- ***The use of silt fences;***
- ***The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;***
- ***The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;***
- ***The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;***
- ***The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;***
- ***The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and***
- ***Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.***

Once constructed, the proposed pipeline will operate underground within existing road rights-of-way that will be repaved to their original or better condition, as will the area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. Therefore, with no anticipated operational impacts or substantial change in the environment from implementation of the proposed project, implementation of these mandatory Plans and their BMPs, as well as MMs **HYD-1** and **HAZ-1** above, will prevent a violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project does not propose the installation of any water wells that would directly extract groundwater. The proposed project will install a sewer conveyance pipeline that will connect the GQPP Areas H and I to the Horton WWTP. Construction of the new sewer conveyance pipeline alignment would require approximately 5,000 gallons of potable water each day for a maximum of about 160 days, which equates to the construction of the conveyance pipeline requiring about 800,000 gallons of water (2.4-acre feet) to support the pipeline installation within existing roadways. This amount is considered nominal when compared to the availability of supply from the project proponent, MSWD based on a review of their 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Once the pipeline has been installed, the roadways will return to their original condition with no new impervious area resulting from this effort that would interfere with groundwater recharge in the area. No aboveground features are proposed as part of this project that would require the use of potable water. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to substantially deplete groundwater supplies such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or lowering of the groundwater table. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

c
(i-iii). *Less Than Significant Impact* – No substantial impact to drainage patterns or structures will result from implementing this project. The roadways within which the pipeline will be installed will be returned to their original condition upon completion of the placement of each section of sewer pipeline, as will the area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. The roadways will generate essentially the same amount of stormwater as they do at present because no expansion of roadway or change in drainage patterns are anticipated. Conveyance of stormwater to drainage alignments and storm drains within these roadways will remain intact and unchanged once construction has been completed. No substantial change to the existing drainage pattern will result from project implementation. Adequate drainage facilities exist to accommodate pre- and post-project drainage flows, and will therefore result in a less than significant impact. Based on the data outlined above, this project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area; will not substantially alter the course of a stream or river in such a manner that will result in substantial erosion or siltation either on or off the project footprint; or contribute runoff water that could exceed the capacity of the existing drainage facilities. No additional sources of polluted runoff will result and impacts are considered less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

c
(iv). *No Impact* – According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Flood Hazard Map (Figure X-1), the proposed project is located within Zone X (areas of 0.2% annual change flood (500-year flood); and areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual flood chance. There is also a portion of the project footprint that is not mapped as being located within a flood hazard zone. The proposed project would install pipeline underground within existing roadways or within the area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. This project will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area because the roadway and compacted alignment will be returned to their original condition once the pipeline has been installed. As such, once installed underground, the existing drainage pattern will be maintained, and given that no project components will be installed aboveground, the proposed project would have no potential to impede or redirect flows. No mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As stated above under issue X(c[iv]), the proposed project is located within Zone X (areas of 0.2% annual change flood (500-year flood))(; and areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual flood chance. There is also a portion of the project footprint that is not mapped as being located within a flood hazard zone. The project site is not located near any large bodies of water, so impacts associated with seiche or tsunami cannot occur. Mudflow typically occurs on hillsides and the proposed project is not located on a hillside or in an area exposed to significant mudflow. Once the proposed pipeline is installed belowground, the roadways and area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed, will be returned to their original condition or better. With no aboveground structures proposed, the development of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – The proposed project is located within the Desert Hot Springs subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. The Desert Hot Springs subbasin has been designated as very low-priority, by the Department of Water Resources (DWR).[4] The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SMGA) "requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline."[5] Given that the project is located within a subbasin that is considered very low priority, no conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater

[4] https://www.cvwd.org/357/Sustainable-Groundwater-Management-Act
[5] https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management

management plan is anticipated. Furthermore, the proposed project is designed to enable MSWD to improve groundwater quality by removing septic systems within their service area. Because the project would install 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline to connect Areas H and I to MSWD's wastewater collection and treatment service, the proposed project would have no potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *No Impact* – The Sewer Improvements Project footprint is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs and will occur within developed roadway segments and within a small portion of compacted dirt area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. The project footprint has no General Plan Land Use Designation because pipelines and the roadways in which the new pipeline will be installed are considered essential infrastructure. Once in operation the project will not encroach on developed land surrounding the project footprint as the new sewer pipelines will be located underground. The proposed project is considered a benefit to MSWD's service area because it would enable greater municipal wastewater service to residents within MSWD's service area. Therefore, the project would not result in physically dividing an established community, particularly because the entirety of the project will occur within existing road rights-of-way and within a small portion of developed land containing compacted dirt, and once constructed, the roadways and compacted dirt area will continue to function as they do at present. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under issue X(a) above. The project will occur mostly within existing roadways within an area surrounded by several land use designations, including R-L: Residential Low (Up to 6.0 DU/AC) and V-S: Visitor-Serving. The project will install new sewer pipeline within MSWD's service area in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The project footprint consists of existing road rights-of-way and a small area of compacted dirt that will be returned to their original condition and function as they do at present once the new sewer pipeline has been installed. Thus, the development of the proposed project within the proposed alignment will be compatible with existing land uses and land use plan, and no conflict or impact to land use can been identified. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. *No Impact* – The proposed pipeline alignment is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs, and the project will be installed either within existing roadways or within a compacted area within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. The project is located adjacent to the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and east, and residences throughout the project and development to the east, south, and west. According to the Mineral Resources map prepared for the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan (Figure XII-1), no known mines or mineral resources are known to occur on or in the vicinity of the project footprint. As no current mining operations exist within the proposed pipeline alignment or have been identified by the City, implementation of the proposed project will not result in in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state or a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. No impacts are anticipated under this issue and no mitigation is required.

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

SUBSTANTIATION

Background

Noise is generally described as unwanted sound. The proposed project consists of installing 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline within the City of Desert Hot Springs within MSWD's service area. Once installed within existing roadways, the pipeline will operate underground and the roadways will be repaved to function as they do at present. No above ground facilities are proposed as part of this project. The noise environment varies within the project footprint as some segments within the proposed pipeline replacement traverse through roadways that experience a high volume of traffic, while other segments within the proposed pipeline replacement are located in low traffic volume, residential areas.

The unit of sound pressure ratio to the faintest sound detectable to a person with normal hearing is called a decibel (dB). Sound or noise can vary in intensity by over one million times within the range of human hearing. A logarithmic loudness scale, similar to the Richter scale for earthquake magnitude, is therefore used to keep sound intensity numbers at a convenient and manageable level. The human ear is not equally sensitive to all sound frequencies within the entire spectrum. Noise levels at maximum human sensitivity from around 500 to 2,000 cycles per second are factored more heavily into sound descriptions in a process called "A-weighting," written as "dBA."

Leq is a time-averaged sound level; a single-number value that expresses the time-varying sound level for the specified period as though it were a constant sound level with the same total sound energy as the time-varying level. Its unit is the decibel (dB). The most common averaging period for Leq is hourly.

Because community receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during more sensitive evening and nighttime hours, state law requires that an artificial dBA increment be added to quiet time noise levels. The State of California has established guidelines for acceptable community noise levels that are based on the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) rating scale (a 24-hour integrated noise measurement scale). The guidelines rank noise land use compatibility in terms of "normally acceptable," "conditionally acceptable," and "clearly unacceptable" noise levels for various land use types. The State Guidelines, Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure, single-family homes are "normally acceptable" in exterior noise environments up to 60 dB CNEL and "conditionally acceptable" up to 70 dB CNEL based on this scale. Multiple family residential uses are "normally acceptable" up to 65 dB CNEL and "conditionally acceptable" up to 70 CNEL. Schools, libraries and churches are "normally acceptable"

up to 70 dB CNEL, as are office buildings and business, commercial and professional uses with some structural noise attenuation.

City of Desert Hot Springs Noise Regulations and Standards

The City of Desert Hot Springs noise standards are found in Section 17-040.180 of the Municipal Code which states:

- In residential areas, no exterior noise level shall exceed 65 dBA and no interior noise level shall exceed 45 dBA.

Construction noise is exempt from these standards as long as work is limited to the hours of 7 am to 5 pm Monday through Saturday. During daylight savings time the permissible hours are 6 am to 6 pm. Construction is not permitted on Sundays.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project will install sewer pipeline within existing road rights-of-way. Sensitive receptors are located adjacent to the roadways within which the pipeline will be installed. However, once installed, the pipelines will be located underground; no above ground features are proposed, and no noise sources will affect adjacent land uses. The background noise in this area is moderate to low because it is mostly residential in nature, though Hacienda Avenue, which bisects the project, is a major east-west roadway in the City that generates moderate background traffic noise in the vicinity of the project footprint.

Short Term Construction Noise

Short-term construction noise impacts associated with the proposed project will occur over a period of 160 days and may impact nearby residential dwellings. These activities will include noise generated by construction activities, movement of construction materials to and from the site, and grading, paving, trenching, and excavation within the road rights-of-way. The noise of each of these construction activities varies depending on the type of construction equipment and the location within the footprint within which the construction takes place. The earth-trenching sources are the noisiest type of equipment typically ranging from 82 to 85 dB at 50 feet from the source. Temporary construction noise is exempt from the City's noise standards as long as work is limited to the hours of 7 am to 5 pm Monday through Saturday. The proposed project would be constructed in compliance with the City's noise standards, and construction of the project would be less than significant. However, to minimize the noise generated on the site to the extent feasible, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

NOI-1 All construction vehicles and fixed or mobile equipment shall be equipped with operating and maintained mufflers.

NOI-2 All employees that will be exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB over an 8-hour period shall be provided adequate hearing protection devices to ensure no hearing damage will result from construction activities.

NOI-3 No construction activities shall occur during the hours of 5 PM through 7 AM, Monday through Saturday; at no time shall construction activities occur on Sundays or holidays, unless a declared emergency exists.

NOI-4 Equipment not in use for five minutes shall be shut off.

NOI-5 Equipment shall be maintained and operated such that loads are secured from rattling or banging.

NOI-6 Construction employees shall be trained in the proper operation and use of equipment consistent with these mitigation measures, including no unnecessary revving of equipment.

NOI-7 MSWD will require that all construction equipment be operated with mandated noise control equipment (mufflers or silencers). Enforcement will be accomplished by random field inspections by MSWD.

NOI-8 Construction staging areas shall be located as far from adjacent sensitive receptor locations as possible, for example north or west of the existing reservoir.

Long-Term Operational Noise

The proposed project will not cause any measurable permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project above levels existing without the project, in particular because this project would install pipeline belowground. Operation of the new sewer pipeline will not generate any new sources of noise within the project footprint. Therefore, through the implementation of the mitigation measures identified above, neither operation or construction of the proposed project would violate noise standards outlined in the City's Municipal Code. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by vibration of room surfaces is called structure borne noises. Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g. earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g. explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous or transient. Vibration is often described in units of velocity (inches per second), and discussed in decibel (dB) units in order to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Vibration impacts related to human development are generally associated with activities such as train operations, construction, and heavy truck movements.

The FTA Assessment states that in contrast to airborne noise, ground-borne vibration is not a common environmental problem. Although the motion of the ground may be noticeable to people outside structures, without the effects associated with the shaking of a structure, the motion does not provoke the same adverse human reaction to people outside. Within structures, the effects of ground-borne vibration include noticeable movement of the building floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and rumbling sounds. FTA Assessment further states that it is unusual for vibration from sources such as buses and trucks to be perceptible, even in locations close to major roads. However, some common sources of vibration are trains, trucks on rough roads, and construction activities, such as blasting, pile driving, and heavy earth-moving equipment. The Federal Transit Association (FTA) guidelines identify a level of 80 VdB for sensitive land uses. This threshold provides a basis for determining the relative significance of potential project related vibration impacts. This threshold provides a basis for determining the relative significance of potential project related vibration impacts.

In the short term, it is possible that groundbreaking construction equipment and other equipment required to construct the whole of the project may have some potential to create some vibration to the nearest sensitive receptors at some sites within the project footprint. Background vibration within the project footprint that traverses through the City of Desert Hot Springs would generally be mixed given that the traffic along the roadways in which the pipeline will be installed varies widely from somewhat-heavily traveled to lightly traveled residential roads. Groundborne vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB, while 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible. Construction activity can result in varying degrees of groundborne vibration; in the short term, construction from installing the pipeline has the potential to create some groundborne vibration to the nearest sensitive receptors at some sites within

the project footprint. However, any short-term impacts to the nearest sensitive receptors would be considered less than significant through implementing the following mitigation measure:

NOI-9 MSWD shall require the construction contractor(s) to implement the following measures:

- ***Ensure that the operation of construction equipment that generates high levels of vibration including, but not limited to, large bulldozers, loaded trucks, pile-drivers, vibratory compactors, trenching equipment, and drilling rigs, is minimized to below 72 vibration decibels (VdB), within 45 feet of existing residential structures and 35 feet of institutional structures (e.g., schools) during construction. Use of small rubber-tired bulldozers shall be enforced within these areas during grading operations to reduce vibration effects.***
- ***The construction contractor shall provide signs along the roadway identifying a phone number for adjacent property owners to contact with any complaint. During future construction activities with heavy equipment within 300 feet of occupied residences, vibration field tests shall be conducted at the property line near the nearest occupied residences., If vibrations exceed 72 VdB, the construction activities shall be revised to reduce vibration below this threshold. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following: use different construction methods, slow down construction activity, or other mitigating measures to reduce vibration at the property from where the complaint was received.***

With implementation of the above mitigation measure, the project would comply with the City of Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code, and would prevent significant vibration impacts from occurring within the project area. Therefore, impacts from project related vibration would be considered less than significant with implementation of mitigation. No further mitigation is required.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, aircraft noise impacting the community emanates from commercial and general aviation operations at the Palm Springs International Airport, located approximately 7.4 miles south of the proposed project. The Palm Springs International Airport: Airport Master Plan and Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study indicate that flight tracks and patterns that aircraft are assumed to follow outlined in the Airport Noise Study indicate limited over flights in Desert Hot Springs. Ultimately, the Airport Master Plan concluded that existing and future noise levels associated with Airport operations will have no significant impact on the City of Desert Hot Springs or its sphere of influence (SOI). Given that the proposed H and I Sewer Improvement Project is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs, it is not anticipated that persons working in the project area to excessive noise levels generated by the nearby Airport. No private airstrips are located in close proximity to the proposed project; therefore, impacts under this issue is considered less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the project will not induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure). The project is considered a vital infrastructure project because it proposes to install new sewer pipeline to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. The proposed project will require a temporary work force; however, this is short-term and with a maximum of about 12 employees will not induce substantial population growth. Furthermore, according to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the total population of Desert Hot Springs in 2018 was 29,742 persons[6]. The City General Plan notes that the City's population is anticipated to grow to 88,476 residents by 2040. This indicates that the City plans for population growth in the future. As such, given that no additional employees will be required once the pipeline has been replaced and is in operation, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly. No mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The proposed Sewer Improvement Project will occur within roadways and within a small portion of compacted dirt. No housing is proposed as part of the project and no persons reside within the project footprint. Therefore, implementation of the project as a whole will not displace any existing housing or displace a substantial number of people that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impacts will occur as a result of project implementation. No mitigation is required.

[6] https://www.scag.ca.gov/Documents/DesertHotSprings.pdf

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES: 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:				
a) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The City of Desert Hot Springs is currently served by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The RCFD currently has two fire stations: Station #36 and Station #37, which, together, responded to approximately 5,746 calls in FY15.[7] These calls included medical emergencies, vegetation and structure fires, vehicle accidents, public assistance and false alarms. Station #37 is the fire station located closes to the project at about a mile northwest of the proposed project footprint along Pierson Boulevard. The project will not include the use or storage of highly flammable materials. The proposed project would install 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline belowground within existing roadways and within a small area of compacted dirt. Though there may be some need for fire protection services during construction of the pipeline, existing fire protection services within the area are considered adequate protection in such instances. Once construction of each segment has been completed there will be no potential for the operation of the pipeline to require fire protection services as these pipelines will be located belowground. Therefore, any impact to the existing fire protection system is considered random and less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project site is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs in a residential area adjacent to the Little San Bernardino Mountains. The City of Desert Hot Springs Police Department provides the citizens of the Planning Area with police services and protection. According to the City's General Plan EIR, Service is primarily provided from the Police Department Office at 65-950 Pierson Blvd, which is about a mile west of the project footprint. Additional personnel are provided at a satellite office at the Police Neighborhood Office at 66140 West Arroyo located in Tedesco Park. Police services are dispatched from the Police Department Office, but the satellite office is centrally located for greater police presence in the neighborhood and efficient response. The project is not anticipated to generate growth within the project area that would create a new demand for police protection because no additional employees will be required once the pipeline is installed and is in operation. The construction of the sewer pipeline will require only a temporary work force. The proposed project will not include the kind of use that would likely attract criminal activity, except for random trespass and theft; however, construction equipment will be stored in such a manner that public will not have access to it, and once in operation, the project will not include any aboveground components. Thus, due to the type of project proposed, no new or expanded police facilities would need to be constructed as a result of the project. Therefore, impacts

[7] City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR (pg. 4.15-1)

to police protection resources from implementation of the proposed project are considered less than significant; no mitigation measures are required.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located within the Palm Springs Unified School District. Within the City and SOI, there are five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school, as well as the Wenzlaff Education Center, a continuation school. Bella Vista Elementary School, located at 65750 Avenido Jalisco and Painted Hills Middle School, located at 9250 Sonora Drive within the City of Desert Hot Springs are the closest schools to the project site, located less than a mile to the west. As discussed under Chapter XIV, Population and Housing, above, the project would not induce population growth within the City, as it will neither construct housing, nor result in a growth in employment opportunities within the area. Because the project would develop infrastructure through the development of 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline and would not develop any aboveground facilities that are commercial, residential, or industrial in nature, the proposed project is not required to pay any fees to offset impacts to school facilities. Thus, the proposed project will not generate an increase in elementary, middle, or high school population. Therefore, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

d. *No Impact* – Because the project would develop infrastructure through the development of 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline and would not develop any aboveground facilities that are commercial, residential, or industrial in nature, the proposed project is not required to pay any fees to offset impacts to park facilities. As stated in the preceding sections, the proposed project is not anticipated to create a substantial increase in population because it does require additional MSWD staff to operate this new sewer collection system. Implementation of the proposed project will not impact any current or planned park use, as it will be constructed within existing roadways and within an area containing compacted dirt. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse physical impact to any parks within the City. No impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – Other public facilities include library and general municipal services. The library system in the City of Desert Hot Springs is operated by the Riverside County Library System. Since the project will not directly induce substantial population growth, it is not forecast that the use of such facilities will increase as a result of the proposed project. As a result, the implementation of the project will not 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 public services to include other public facilities. Thus, no impacts are anticipated under this issue and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVI. RECREATION:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *No Impact* – As previously discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing and Section XV, Public Services, this project will not contribute to an increase in the population beyond that already allowed or planned for by local and regional planning documents. Therefore, this project will not result in an increase in the demand for parks and other recreational facilities and implementation of the proposed project would not increase the use of any parks within the area, now would it result in the physical deterioration of other surrounding facilities. No impacts are anticipated. No mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The proposed project does not include recreational facilities, nor does it require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The proposed project will install 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline within MSWD's service area in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The Sewer Improvement Project will occur mostly within existing roadways and does not include the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Thus, there will be no adverse effects on the recreational facilities from implementing this project. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVII. TRANSPORTATION: Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* — The proposed project would install 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline within existing roadways in the City of Desert Hot Springs. The entirety of the project will occur within existing roadway segments outlined in the project description and within a small segment of compacted dirt. The majority of the segments of roadway in which the sewer pipeline will be constructed are local/residential roadways and will not impact major routes of circulation within the area. However, the proposed project will require connection to an existing pipeline within Hacienda Avenue, which is a major east-west roadway within the City. The pipeline installation will require one lane to be closed to complete the installation of the sewer pipeline; this will ensure that each roadway can still operate during construction. However, the project will require implementation of a traffic management plan in order to ensure adequate traffic flow. The installation of new sewer collection pipelines would temporarily reduce the capacity of roadways along the pipeline alignment(s) due to open-trenching within existing roadway rights-of-way (ROWs) and the resulting temporary lane closures on the affected roadways. The impact of the lane closures would vary based on the number of lanes needed to be closed (a function of pipeline diameter and trench width) and the width (number of lanes) of the affected roads. Multi-lane roads (four or more lanes) would be better able to accommodate two-way traffic than two-lane roadways. Two lane roads would likely require active traffic control (flaggers) to allow alternate one-way traffic flow on the available road width, and could possibly require full road closure (with detour routing around the construction work zone). MM **TRAN-1**—addressed below—would be required to reduce potential impacts to traffic and transportation conditions. Implementation of this measure, in conjunction with the temporary character of the construction impacts, is considered sufficient to ensure adequate flow of traffic in a safe manner for pipeline installation.

TRAN-1 ***MSWD shall require that contractors prepare a construction traffic control plan. Elements of the plan should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:***

- ***Develop circulation and detour plans, if necessary, to minimize impacts to local street circulation. Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible.***
- ***To the extent feasible, and as needed to avoid adverse impacts on traffic flow, schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.***
- ***Install traffic control devices as specified in Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones where needed to maintain safe driving conditions. Use flaggers and/or signage to safely direct traffic through construction work zones.***

- ***For roadways requiring lane closures that would result in a single open lane, maintain alternate one-way traffic flow and utilize flagger-controls.***
- ***Coordinate with facility owners or administrators of sensitive land uses such as police and fire stations, hospitals, and schools. Provide advance notification to the facility owner or operator of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities.***

During construction, an estimated 12 roundtrips from construction workers per day will occur to install the proposed new sewer pipeline. A maximum of 15 roundtrips per day would occur to support construction efforts (i.e., delivery or removal of construction materials), though the average would be about 10 roundtrips per day. Once constructed, no traffic would be generated by this project other than visits to the pipeline alignment by MSWD personnel to inspect and maintain facilities when necessary, resulting in minimal vehicle miles traveled once the pipelines are in operation. Implementation of the project has the potential to conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. However, with implementation of the above mitigation measure requiring a construction traffic management plan, and the following MM **TRAN-2** requiring disturbances within public roadways to be returned to their original or better condition, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact pertaining to the circulation system, particularly given that impacts to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities will be temporary, and will not permanently disrupt circulation thereof.

TRAN-2 MSWD shall require that all disturbances to public roadways be repaired in a manner that complies with the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (green book) or other applicable County of Riverside or City of Desert Hot Springs standard design requirements.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project would install 30,000 LF of sewer pipeline within the City of Desert Hot Springs in MSWD's service area. The City of Desert Hot Springs has not developed a threshold for vehicle miles travelled; however, the proposed project will require minimal vehicle miles traveled to accomplish once constructed. In the short term, construction of the proposed facilities will result in the generation of up to about 27 roundtrips per day on the adjacent roadways by construction personnel and trucks removing any excavated materials and remains of the structures on site. The total number of truck roundtrips per day is estimated to be 15 trips, plus 12 employee roundtrips per day. The vehicle miles traveled in these instances would likely average less than 80 miles round trip. The number of temporary truck trips will be minimized by using 15 cubic yard material haulers instead of smaller 10 cubic yard trucks to haul material onto and off of the site. Additionally, the same trucks that haul material onto the site would also carry material off of the site. Once constructed, no traffic would be generated by this project other than visits to the pipeline alignment by MSWD personnel to inspect and maintain facilities when necessary, resulting in minimal vehicle miles traveled once the pipelines are in operation. As such, development of the Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project is not anticipated to result in a significant impact related to vehicle miles travelled, and thus would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b). Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will temporarily alter existing roadways during construction of the proposed pipeline. However, this alteration will not create any hazards due to design features of incompatible uses. The proposed project will install approximately 30,000 LF of pipeline within existing rights-of-way within the City of Desert Hot Springs. As stated under issue XVII(a) above, with the implementation of mitigation measures **TRAN-1** and **TRAN-2**, which require implementation of a construction traffic management plan and requiring disturbances within public roadways to be returned to their original or better condition, any potential increase in hazards due to design features or incompatible use will be considered less than significant in the short term. In the long term, no impacts to any hazards or incompatible uses in existing roadways are anticipated because once the pipeline is constructed, the roadway and small segment of compacted

dirt will be returned to its original condition, or better. Thus, any impacts are considered less than significant with implementation of mitigation. No additional mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Please refer to the discussions under issue XVII(a) and XVII(c) above. The proposed project will require closure of one lane within the roadway in which each pipeline segment is installed. The Sewer Improvement Project will install sewer pipeline within Areas H and I within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The roadways within which the pipeline installation will occur vary from local residential roadways to collector streets to primary arterial roadways. Primary roadways within the project footprint that would be used during an emergency or evacuation order would be Hacienda Avenue (east-west), Palm Drive (north-south), and Mountain View Road (north-south). The proposed sewer pipeline segments are generally not located within these major roadways, with the exception of connecting pipeline within Hacienda Avenue. At no time during the installation of pipeline will the entirety of this roadway be closed. The project would require one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented. Adequate emergency access will be provided along these routes throughout construction. Though closure of one lane will impact traffic, the implementation of mitigation measures **TRAN-1** and **TRAN-2** will ensure that impacts are reduced to a level of less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, 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 the California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) 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	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in sub-division (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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Only one tribe has requested consultation with the District under AB 52, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The District contacted the tribe to initiate the AB-52 process on October 19, 2020. As discussed under Section V Cultural Resources, there may be a potential to unearth cultural resources and possible tribal cultural resources of importance during the earth moving activities, which includes trenching mostly within existing roadways required to install the sewer pipeline. During the 30-day consultation period that concluded on November 17, 2020, the tribe did not submit a response. As such, AB-52 concluded with no tribal input, and therefore, with the implementation of the mitigation measures **CUL-1** through **CUL-3**, the project has a less than significant potential to cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, 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 the California Native American tribe and that is either **a)** 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 **b)** 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 further mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

a. Water

No Impact – The proposed project will not develop any housing or human-occupied structures that would require connection to MSWD's water distribution system. The project proposes to install 30,000 LF of sewer collection pipeline. Therefore, with no connections to MSWD's water distribution system required, site improvements are not forecast to require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities in order to serve the project.

Wastewater

Less Than Significant Impact – The proposed project will construct new wastewater facilities in the form of 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline within Areas H and I to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. As demonstrated throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project will not result in any significant impacts from the installation of the new wastewater collection system that will connect to MSWD's existing wastewater collection system. MSWD has planned for and anticipates the additional wastewater flow generated by Areas H and I, and has available capacity to treat this additional wastewater at their existing/planned wastewater treatment plants. Therefore, while the proposed project would construct new wastewater collection facilities, development of the Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Stormwater

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated under issue XI(c[i-iii]), implementation the proposed project is not forecast to significantly alter the volume of surface/stormwater runoff that will be generated

from the project footprint. The roadways within which the pipeline will be installed will be returned to their original condition upon completion of the placement of each section of sewer pipeline, as will the area of compacted dirt within which a small portion of the alignment will be installed. The roadways will generate essentially the same amount of stormwater as they do at present because no expansion of roadway or change in drainage patterns are anticipated. Given that no new stormwater collection facilities are required to implement the proposed project, and that the existing stormwater collection facilities will remain in place under the proposed project, development of the project will not require or result in the construction of new or expansion of existing stormwater drainage facilities. Any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Electric Power

No Impact – Development of the proposed Sewer Improvement Project would not require the installation of electrical services or substantial additional energy beyond that which is currently required to operate MSWD's wastewater collection facilities. The proposed project would install 30,000 LF of new sewer pipeline that will be connected to MSWD's existing wastewater collection system. The project may require some additional energy use at existing transmission facilities to accommodate the additional wastewater collected within Areas H and I. However, this increase in energy use would be able to operate within existing electrical capacities. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

Natural Gas

No Impact – Development of the Sewer Improvement Project would not require installation of natural gas. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

Telecommunications

No Impact – Development of the Sewer Improvement Project would not installation of wireless internet service or phone serve. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded telecommunication facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

b. *No Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under issues X(b) and XIX(a) above. The proposed project will install a sewer conveyance pipeline that will connect the GQPP Areas H and I. Construction of the new sewer conveyance pipeline alignment would require approximately 5,000 gallons of potable water each day for a maximum of about 160 days, which equates to the construction of the conveyance pipeline requiring about 800,000 gallons of water (2.4 acre feet) to support the pipeline installation within existing roadways. This amount is considered nominal when compared to the availability of supply from the project proponent, MSWD based on a review of their 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Once the pipeline has been installed, the roadways will return to their original condition with no new impervious area resulting from this effort that would interfere with groundwater recharge in the area. No aboveground features are proposed as part of this project that would require the use of potable water to operate. Thus, implementation of the proposed project will have access to sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources. Any impacts under is issue is considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under X(b) and XIX(a) above. The proposed project will install 30,000 LF of new sewer conveyance pipeline that will connect the GQPP Areas H and I to MSWD's service area. MSWD has planned for and anticipates the additional wastewater flow generated by Areas H and I, and has available capacity to treat this additional wastewater at their existing/planned wastewater treatment plants. Therefore, while the proposed project would construct new sewer facilities, the connection of Areas H and I to MSWD's service area would not create a demand of wastewater treatment services that would impact the provider's ability

to collect and treat wastewater within their existing commitments. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

d&e. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will generate construction waste from the removal of asphalt, concrete, and similar materials. The inert wastes can be disposed of at existing municipal solid waste facilities, which have adequate capacity to accept inert wastes generated by this project, or can be recycled onsite. Any construction and demolition (C & D) waste will be recycled to the maximum extent feasible and any residual materials will be delivered to one of several C & D disposal sites in the area surrounding the project site. Many of these C & D materials can be reused or recycled, thus prolonging our supply of natural resources and potentially saving money in the process.

In accordance with CALGreen code 5.408.4, 100 percent of trees, stumps, rocks and associated vegetation and soils resulting primarily from land clearing must be reused or recycled. As this is a mandatory requirement, no mitigation is required to ensure compliance by MSWD for this project.

Because of increased construction recycling efforts resulting from CalGreen and other regulations, opportunities for construction recycling are becoming easier to find, such as one in Palm Desert that accepts a wide range of construction and demolition debris materials: asphalt, concrete, drywall, gravel, reusable/ deconstructed material, pallets, sand, soil, and wood. There are additional facilities that accept C&D materials located in the surrounding areas[8] including facilities in Coachella, Thousand Palms, Indio, Palm Springs, and Cathedral City that accept a wide range of materials including the following: appliances, cardboard, metals, wood, asphalt, concrete, soil, block, rock, brick, carpet and padding, concrete with rebar, drywall, gravel, rock, roof tile, and tile.

The facilities that accept C&D materials, combined with the landfills in the surrounding area, have adequate capacity to serve the proposed project. Solid waste will be disposed of in accordance with existing regulations at an existing licensed landfill. The Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill and Badlands Landfill serve the project area. The Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill has a maximum permitted daily capacity of 5,500 tons per day, with a permitted capacity of 38,935,653 cubic yards (CY), with 19,242,950 CY of capacity remaining. The Badlands landfill has a maximum permitted daily capacity of 4,800 tons per day, with a permitted capacity of 34,400,000 CY, with 15,748,799 CY of capacity remaining. Both landfills permit thousands of tons of waste per day, which is beyond what the expected amount of waste would be generated by the construction of the proposed sewer pipeline alignments. Furthermore, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any operational waste as the project will install pipelines belowground. As such, the proposed project would comply with all federal, State, and local statues related to solid waste disposal.

Any hazardous materials collected within the project footprint during either construction or operation of the project will be transported and disposed of by a permitted and licensed hazardous materials service provider. Therefore, the project is expected to comply with all regulations related to solid waste under federal, state, and local statutes. To further reduce potential impacts to solid waste facilities due to the scale of the materials that may require disposal or recycling, the following mitigation measure will be implemented:

UTIL-1 The contract with demolition and construction contractors shall include the requirement that all materials that can be recycled shall be salvaged and recycled. This includes, but is not limited to, wood, metals, concrete, road base, and asphalt. The contractor shall submit a recycling plan to MSWD for review and approval prior to the start of demolition/construction activities to accomplish this objective.

[8] http://cms.sbcounty.gov/portals/50/solidwaste/CandD_Recycling_Guide.pdf

Therefore, with the above mitigation measure, the project is expected to comply with all regulations related to solid waste under federal, state, and local statutes and be served by a landfill(s) with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. No further mitigation is necessary.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XX. WILDFIRE: If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a-d. *No Impact* – The proposed project is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zone. The proposed project is located adjacent to the Little San Bernardino Mountains, as such, the project is located adjacent to a high fire hazard zone within an SRA (Figure IX-2). However, the project will not construct any habitable structures. The proposed project will install 30,000 LF of new pipeline within existing roadways, underground. Pipelines are not susceptible to wildfire hazards and the development of the proposed pipeline will not increase or exacerbate the risk of wildland fires to nearby residences and structures. The proposed project area is within a residential, developed area of the desert and once installed, the pipeline will be located belowground and will not be susceptible to wildfire risk. Therefore, as the proposed project is not located within or adjacent to a very high fire hazard severity zone, no impacts under these wildfire issues are anticipated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

The analysis in this Initial Study and the findings reached indicate that the proposed project can be implemented without causing any new project specific or cumulatively considerable unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts. Mitigation is required to control potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant impact level. The following findings are based on the detailed analysis of the Initial Study of all environmental topics and the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the previous text and summarized following this section.

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project has no potential to cause a significant impact any biological or cultural resources. No sensitive species were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level field survey and due to the environmental conditions on site, none are expected to occur. The project area is completely disturbed, consisting of paved streets and previously graded, compact bare ground and due to the environmental conditions on site and the adjacent disturbances, the project area is likely not suitable to support any of the special status wildlife species that have been documented in the project vicinity. As such, the project has been identified as having no potential to degrade the quality of the natural environment, substantially reduce 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal; however, mitigation is required to minimize impacts to nesting birds. No historical resources within or adjacent to the project area have any potential to be disturbed as they are not within the proposed area in which the pipelines will be constructed and developed, and thus, the project as it is currently proposed will not cause a substantial adverse change to any known historical resources. However, archaeological deposits may be located in the soils underlying the roadways within which the proposed pipeline will be installed. Mitigation is required to minimize any potential impacts thereof. Furthermore, because it is not known what could be unearthed upon any excavation activities, contingency mitigation measures are provided to ensure that, in the unlikely event that any resources are found outside of the sensitive areas, they are protected from any potential impacts. Please see biological and cultural sections of this Initial Study.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Based on the analysis in this Initial Study, the proposed Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project has the potential to cause impacts that are individually or cumulatively considerable. There are no other projects in the vicinity to which this project would make a cumulatively considerable impact, furthermore the provision of wastewater collection is generally viewed as a benefit to the community. The issues of Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and ensure that cumulative effects are not cumulatively considerable. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts without implementation of mitigation. The potential cumulative environmental effects of implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than considerable and thus, less than significant impacts.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project includes activities that have a potential to cause direct substantial adverse effects on humans. The issues of Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce human impacts to a less than significant level. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts on humans without implementation of mitigation. The potential for direct human effects from implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than significant.

Conclusion

This document evaluated all CEQA issues contained in the Initial Study Checklist form. The evaluation determined that either no impact or less than significant impacts would be associated with the issues of Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Wildfire. The issues of Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The required mitigation has been proposed in this Initial Study to reduce impacts for these issues to a less than significant impact and the MSWD will implement these measures.

Based on the findings in this Initial Study, the MSWD proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Mission Springs Water District Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project. A Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI) will be issued for this project by the MSWD. The Initial Study and NOI will be circulated for 30 days of public comment. At the end of the 30-day review period, a final MND package will be prepared and it will be reviewed by MSWD for possible adoption at a future Board meeting, the date for which has yet to be determined. If you or your agency comments on the MND/NOI for this project, you will be notified about the meeting dates in accordance with the requirements in Section 21092.5 of CEQA (statute).

_____

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino*,(1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; *Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors*, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; San *Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2019
Authority: Public Resources Code sections 21083 and 21083.09
Reference: Public Resources Code sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3/ 21084.2 and 21084.3

SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

Air Quality

AIR-1 Fugitive Dust Control. The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications for implementation during construction:

- Apply soil stabilizers to inactive areas.
- Prepare a high wind dust control plan and implement plan elements and terminate soil disturbance when winds exceed 25 mph.
- Stabilize previously disturbed areas if subsequent construction is delayed.
- Apply water to disturbed surfaces and haul roads 3 times/day.
- Replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly.
- Reduce speeds on unpaved roads to less than 15 mph.
- Trenches shall be left exposed for as short a time as possible.
- Identify proper compaction for backfilled soils in construction specifications.

This measure shall be implemented during construction, and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.

AIR-2 Exhaust Emissions Control. The following measures shall be incorporated into Project plans and specifications for implementation:

- Utilize off-road construction equipment that has met or exceeded the maker's recommendations for vehicle/equipment maintenance schedule.
- Contactors shall utilize Tier 4 or better heavy equipment.
- Enforce 5-minute idling limits for both on-road trucks and off-road equipment.

Biological Resources

BIO-1 Nesting bird surveys shall be conducted by a qualified avian biologist no more than three (3) days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance activities. Preconstruction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified avian biologist will make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If active nests are found during the preconstruction nesting bird surveys, a Nesting Bird Plan (NBP) shall be prepared and implemented by the qualified avian biologist. At a minimum, the NBP shall include guidelines for addressing active nests, establishing buffers, ongoing monitoring, establishment of avoidance and minimization measures, and reporting. The size and location of all buffer zones, if required, shall be based on the nesting species, individual/pair's behavior, nesting stage, nest location, its sensitivity to disturbance, and intensity and duration of the disturbance activity. To avoid impacts to nesting birds, any grubbing or vegetation removal should occur outside peak breeding season (typically February 1 through September 1).

Cultural Resources

CUL-1 In order to identify such archaeological deposits within the potentially sensitive areas of the APE—along Miracle Hill Road and the portion delineated by Hidalgo Street, Loma Vista Road, and Hermano Way—in a timely manner and, if necessary, to protect such resources from adverse effect from the undertaking, any ground disturbance that will occur in the archaeologically sensitive area and reach beyond the roadbed fill—generally speaking the uppermost five feet of surface and near-surface soils—shall be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations shall be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a standard archaeological testing program.

CUL-2 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the District's onsite inspector. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

CUL-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

Geology & Soils

GEO-1 Stored backfill material shall be covered with water resistant material during periods of heavy precipitation to reduce the potential for rainfall erosion of stored backfill material. Where covering is not possible, measures such as the use of straw bales or sand bags shall be used to capture and hold eroded material on the Project site for future cleanup such that erosion does not occur.

GEO-2 Excavated areas shall be backfilled and compacted such that erosion does not occur. Paved areas disturbed by this project shall be repaved in such a manner that roadways and other disturbed areas are returned to the pre-project conditions or better.

GEO-3 All exposed, disturbed soil (trenches, stored backfill, etc.) will be sprayed with water or soil binders twice a day or more frequently if fugitive dust is observed migrating from the site within which the pipelines are being installed.

GEO-4 The length of trench which can be left open at any given time will be limited to that needed to reasonably perform construction activities. This will serve to reduce the amount of backfill stored onsite at any given time.

GEO-5 Based upon the Subsurface Soils Investigation (Appendix 4a of this document), all of the recommendations identified in Appendix 4a (listed on pages 3-8) shall be implemented by MSWD. Implementation of these specific measures will address all of the identified geotechnical constraints identified at project site.

GEO-6 Should any paleontological resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection should be performed immediately by a qualified paleontologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the MSWD's onsite inspector. The paleontological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and determine appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act that shall be implemented to minimize any impacts to a paleontological resource.

Hazards & Hazardous Materials

HAZ-1 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the Certified Unified Program Agency and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable state and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste will be collected and disposed of at an appropriately a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into the SWPPP prepared for the proposed project. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

Hydrology & Water Quality

HYD-1 MSWD shall require that the construction contractor prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) which specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from contacting stormwater and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. The SWPPP shall include a Spill Prevention and Cleanup Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented in the SWPPP may include but not be limited to:

- The use of silt fences;
- The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;
- The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;
- The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;
- The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;
- The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and
- Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.

Noise

NOI-1 All construction vehicles and fixed or mobile equipment shall be equipped with operating and maintained mufflers.

NOI-2 All employees that will be exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB over an 8-hour period shall be provided adequate hearing protection devices to ensure no hearing damage will result from construction activities.

NOI-3 No construction activities shall occur during the hours of 5 PM through 7 AM, Monday through Saturday; at no time shall construction activities occur on Sundays or holidays, unless a declared emergency exists.

NOI-4 Equipment not in use for five minutes shall be shut off.

NOI-5 Equipment shall be maintained and operated such that loads are secured from rattling or banging.

NOI-6 Construction employees shall be trained in the proper operation and use of equipment consistent with these mitigation measures, including no unnecessary revving of equipment.

NOI-7 MSWD will require that all construction equipment be operated with mandated noise control equipment (mufflers or silencers). Enforcement will be accomplished by random field inspections by MSWD.

NOI-8 Construction staging areas shall be located as far from adjacent sensitive receptor locations as possible, for example north or west of the existing reservoir.

NOI-9 MSWD shall require the construction contractor(s) to implement the following measures:

- Ensure that the operation of construction equipment that generates high levels of vibration including, but not limited to, large bulldozers, loaded trucks, pile-drivers, vibratory compactors, trenching equipment, and drilling rigs, is minimized to below 72 vibration decibels (VdB), within 45 feet of existing residential structures and 35 feet of institutional

structures (e.g., schools) during construction. Use of small rubber-tired bulldozers shall be enforced within these areas during grading operations to reduce vibration effects.

- The construction contractor shall provide signs along the roadway identifying a phone number for adjacent property owners to contact with any complaint. During future construction activities with heavy equipment within 300 feet of occupied residences, vibration field tests shall be conducted at the property line near the nearest occupied residences., If vibrations exceed 72 VdB, the construction activities shall be revised to reduce vibration below this threshold. These measures may include, but are not limited to the following: use different construction methods, slow down construction activity, or other mitigating measures to reduce vibration at the property from where the complaint was received.

Transportation

TRAN-1 MSWD shall require that contractors prepare a construction traffic control plan. Elements of the plan should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Develop circulation and detour plans, if necessary, to minimize impacts to local street circulation. Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible.
- To the extent feasible, and as needed to avoid adverse impacts on traffic flow, schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.
- Install traffic control devices as specified in Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones where needed to maintain safe driving conditions. Use flaggers and/or signage to safely direct traffic through construction work zones.
- For roadways requiring lane closures that would result in a single open lane, maintain alternate one-way traffic flow and utilize flagger-controls.
- Coordinate with facility owners or administrators of sensitive land uses such as police and fire stations, hospitals, and schools. Provide advance notification to the facility owner or operator of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities.

TRAN-2 MSWD shall require that all disturbances to public roadways be repaired in a manner that complies with the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (green book) or other applicable County of Riverside or City of Desert Hot Springs standard design requirements.

Utilities & Service Systems

UTIL-1 The contract with demolition and construction contractors shall include the requirement that all materials that can be recycled shall be salvaged and recycled. This includes, but is not limited to, wood, metals, concrete, road base, and asphalt. The contractor shall submit a recycling plan to MSWD for review and approval prior to the start of demolition/construction activities to accomplish this objective.

REFERENCES

CRM TECH, "*Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report: Mission Springs Water District Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, City of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California*" dated April 5, 2021

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Giroux & Associates, *"Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Mission Springs Water District, Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, Desert Hot Springs, California"* dated January 18, 2021

Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., "*Mission Springs Water District Areas H and I Sewer Improvements Project Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation Report and Land Use Consistency Analysis*" dated March 2021

LOR Geotechnical Group, Inc., "*Subsurface Soils Investigation Areas H and I Sewer Improvement Project, Desert Hot Springs, California*" dated June 19, 2020

Websites:

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https://www.cvwd.org/357/Sustainable-Groundwater-Management-Act

https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management

https://www.scag.ca.gov/Documents/DesertHotSprings.pdf

City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR

City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

http://cms.sbcounty.gov/portals/50/solidwaste/CandD_Recycling_Guide.pdf

FIGURES

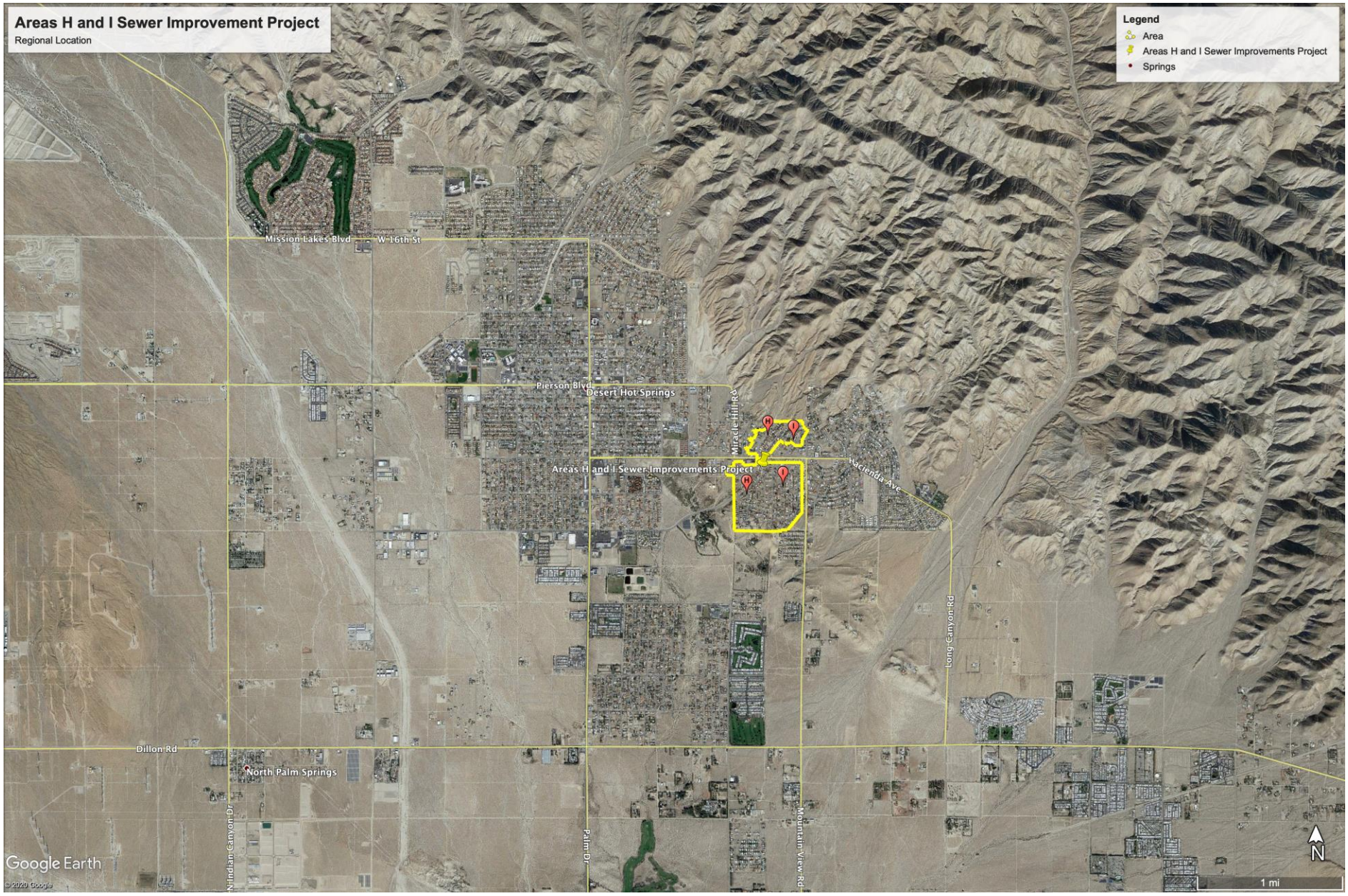


FIGURE 1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Regional Location

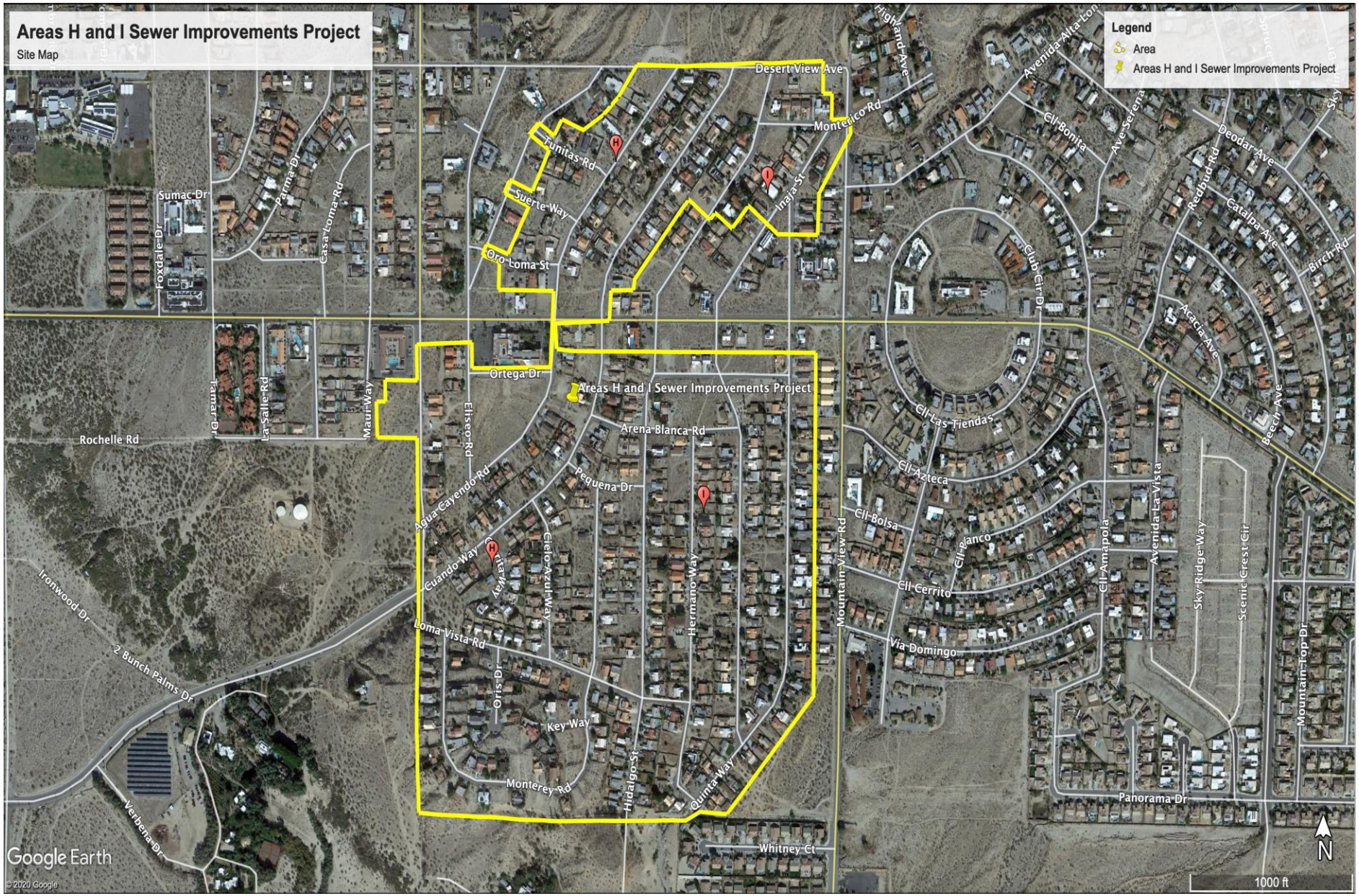


FIGURE 2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Site Map

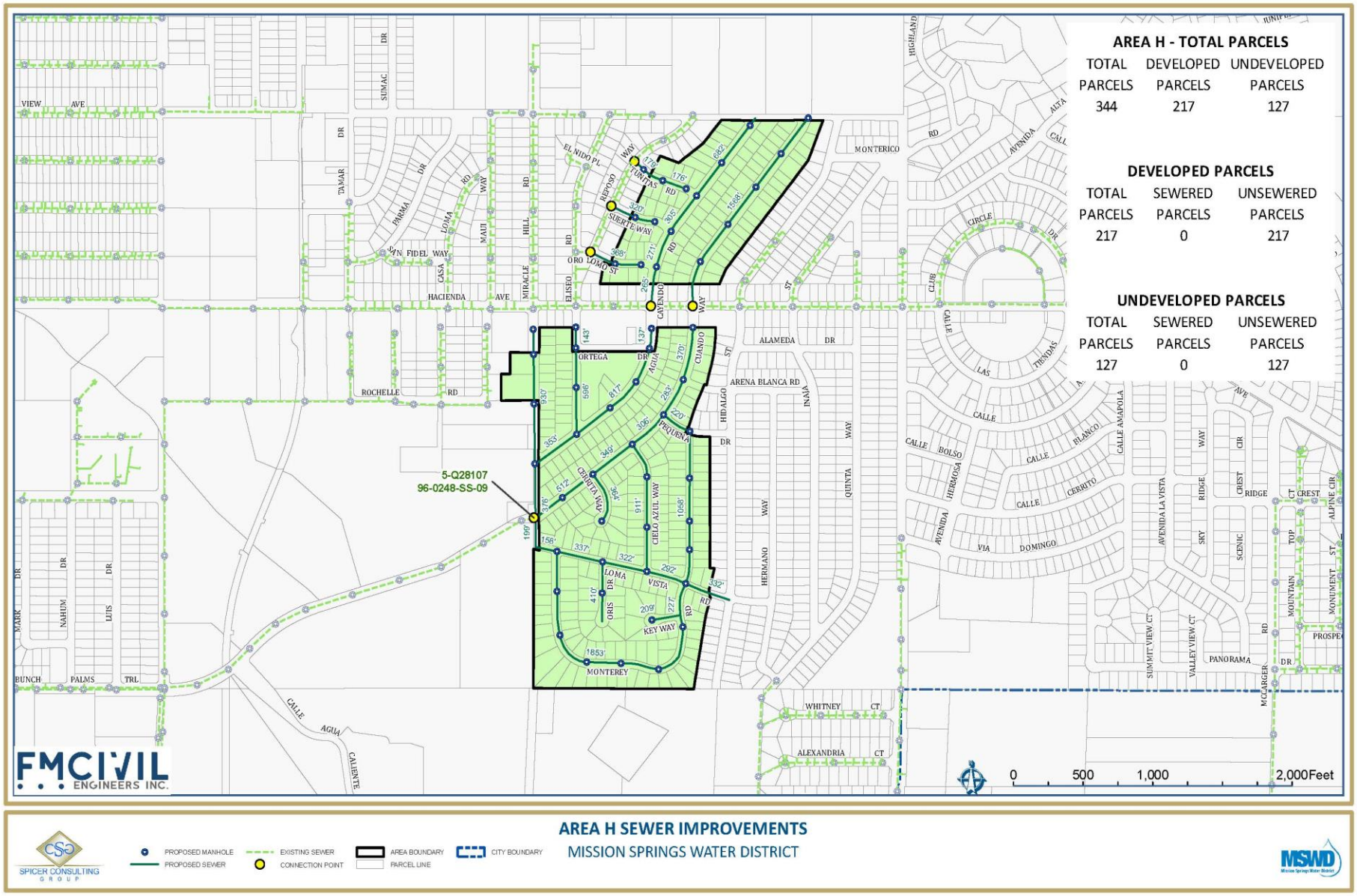


FIGURE 3

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Area H Sewer Improvements

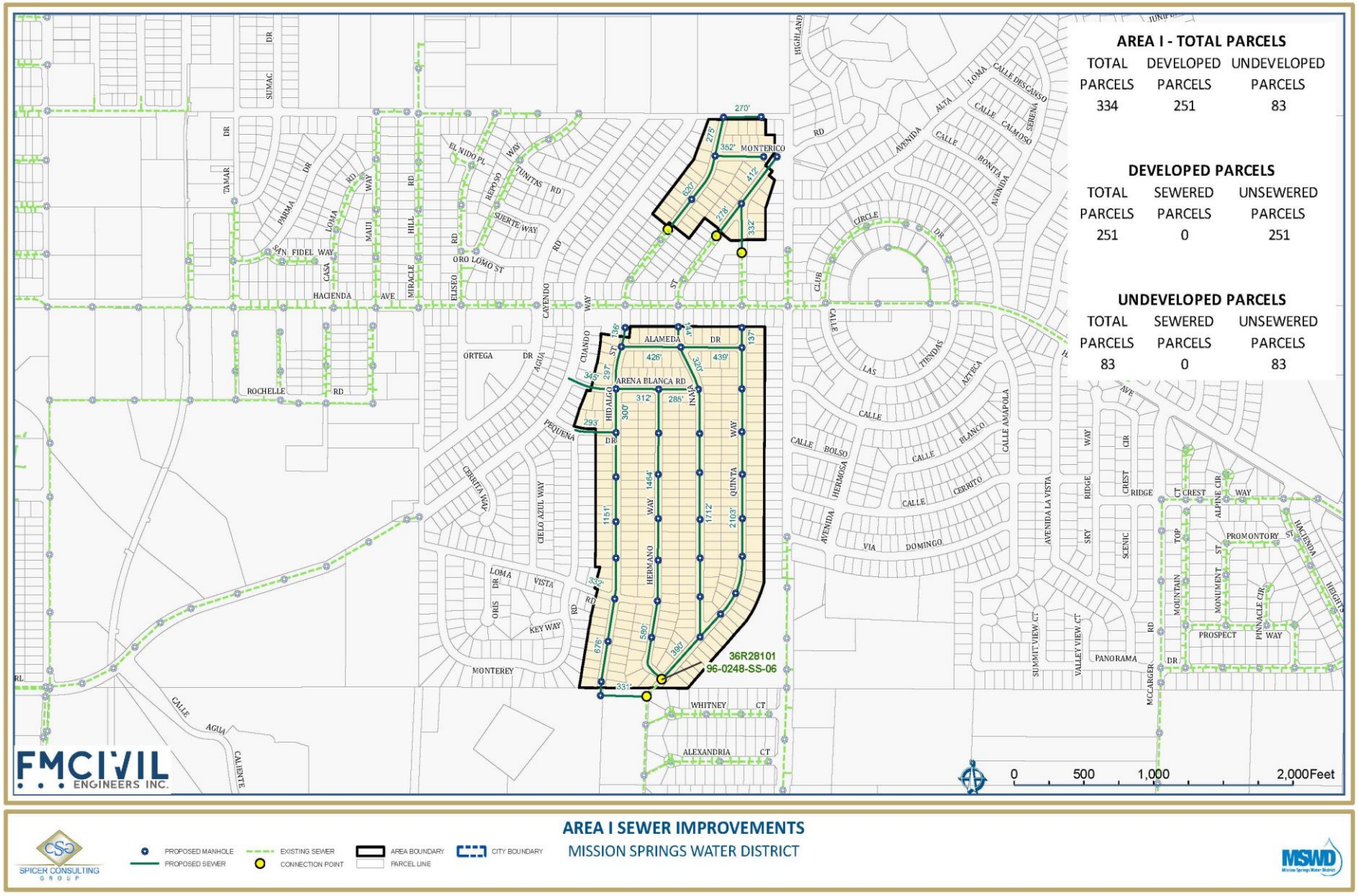


FIGURE 4

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Area I Sewer Improvements

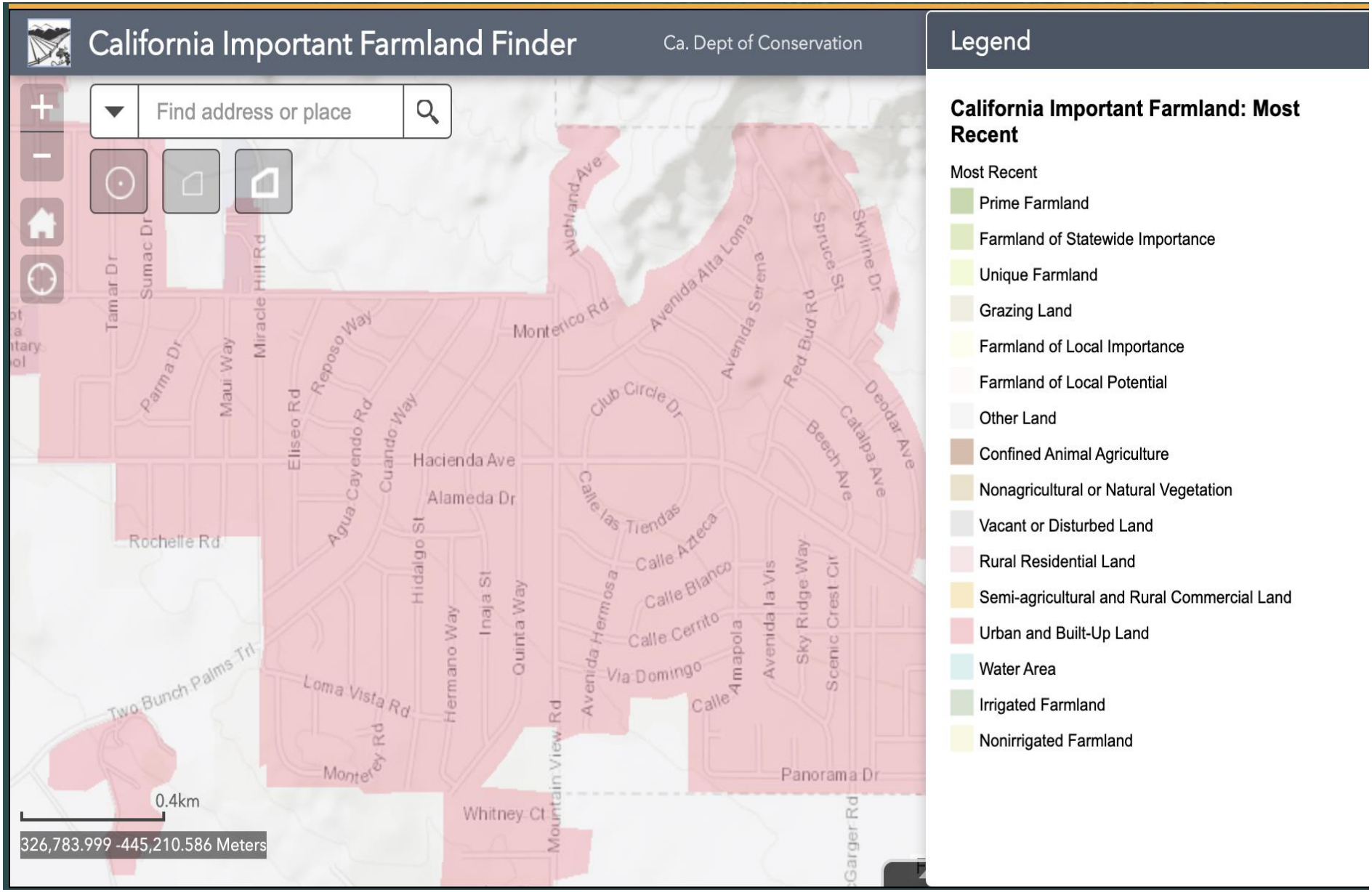
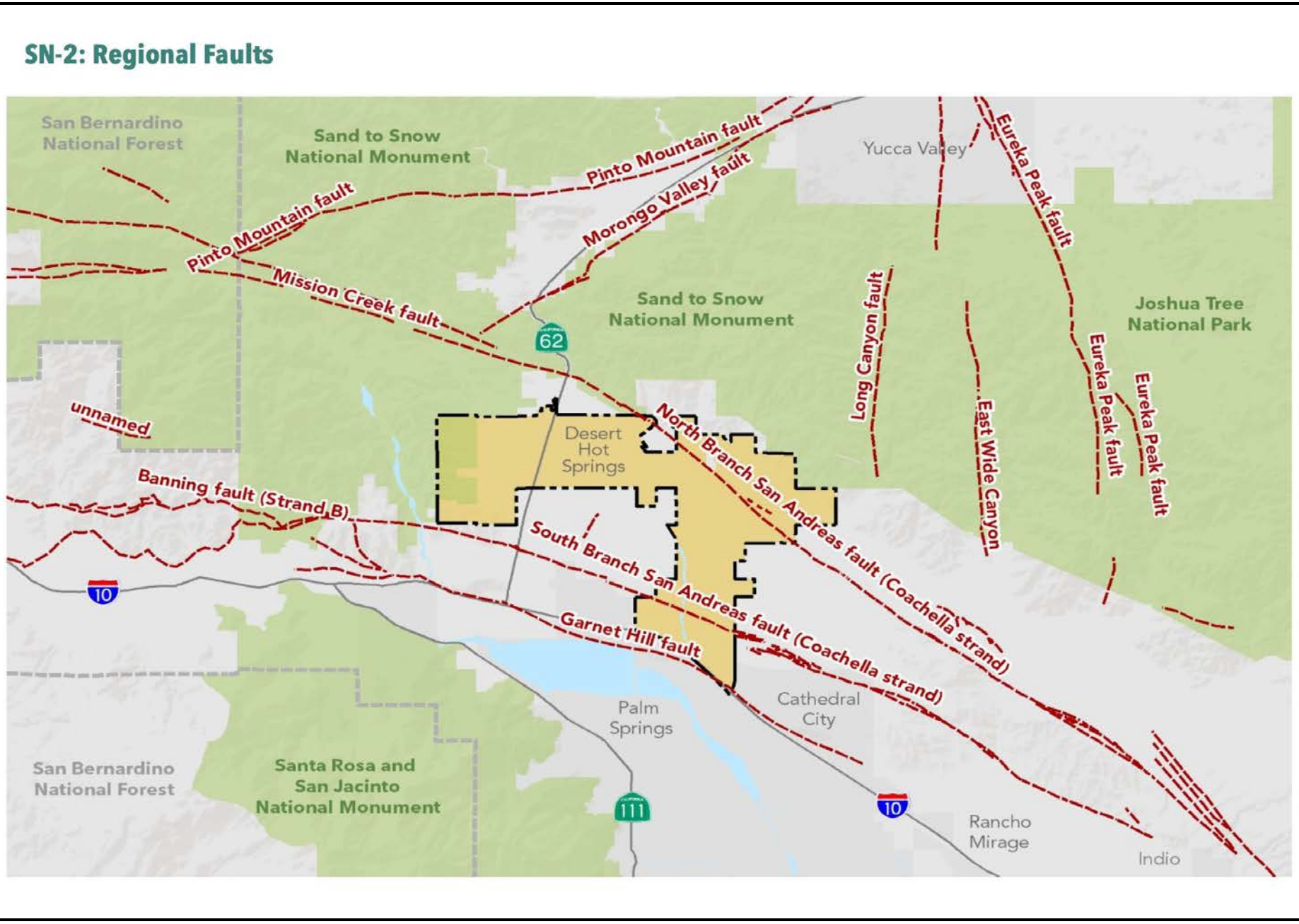


FIGURE II-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Agriculture Map

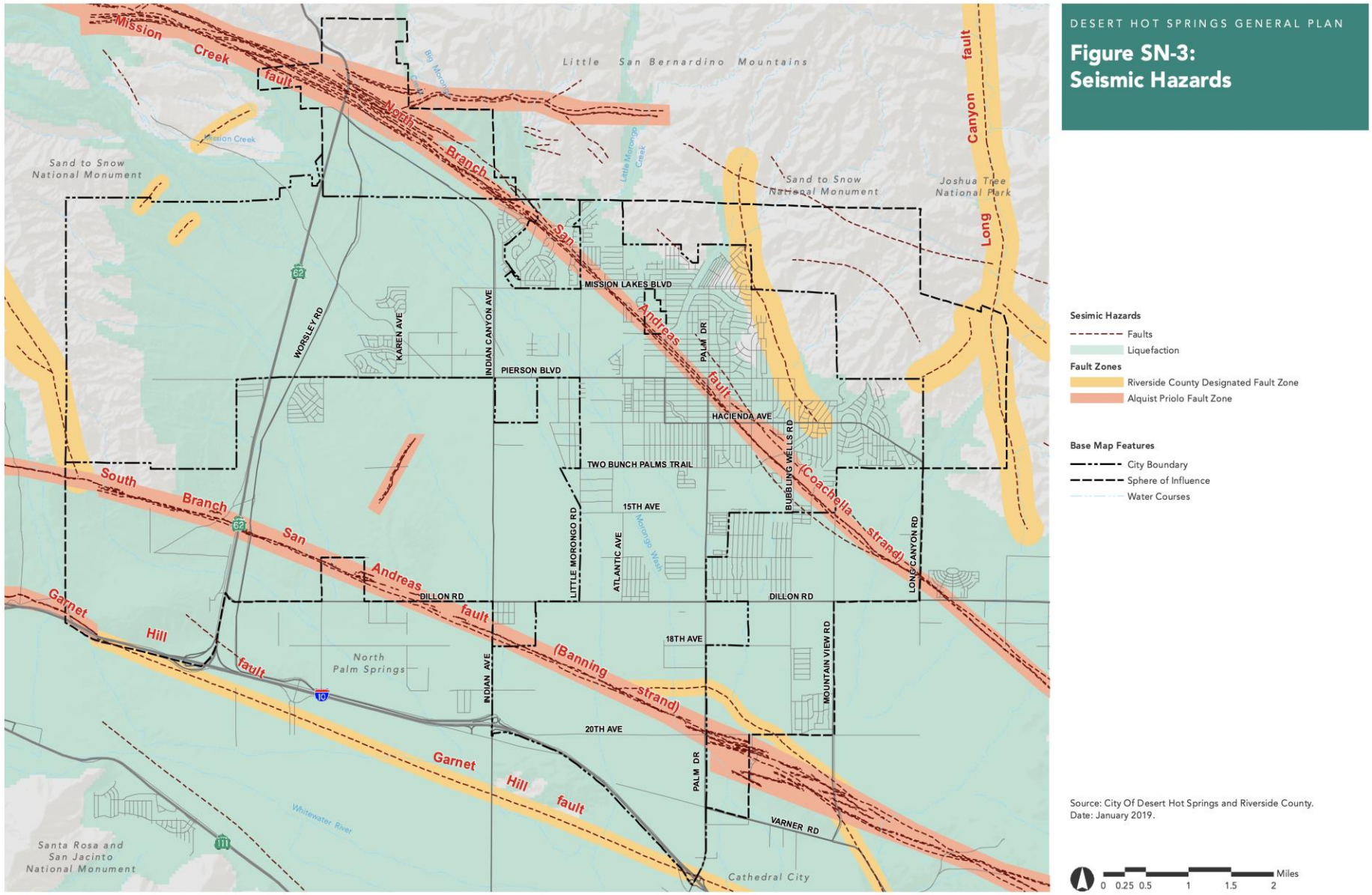


SOURCE: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

FIGURE VII-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Regional Faults



SOURCE: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

FIGURE VII-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Seismic Hazards

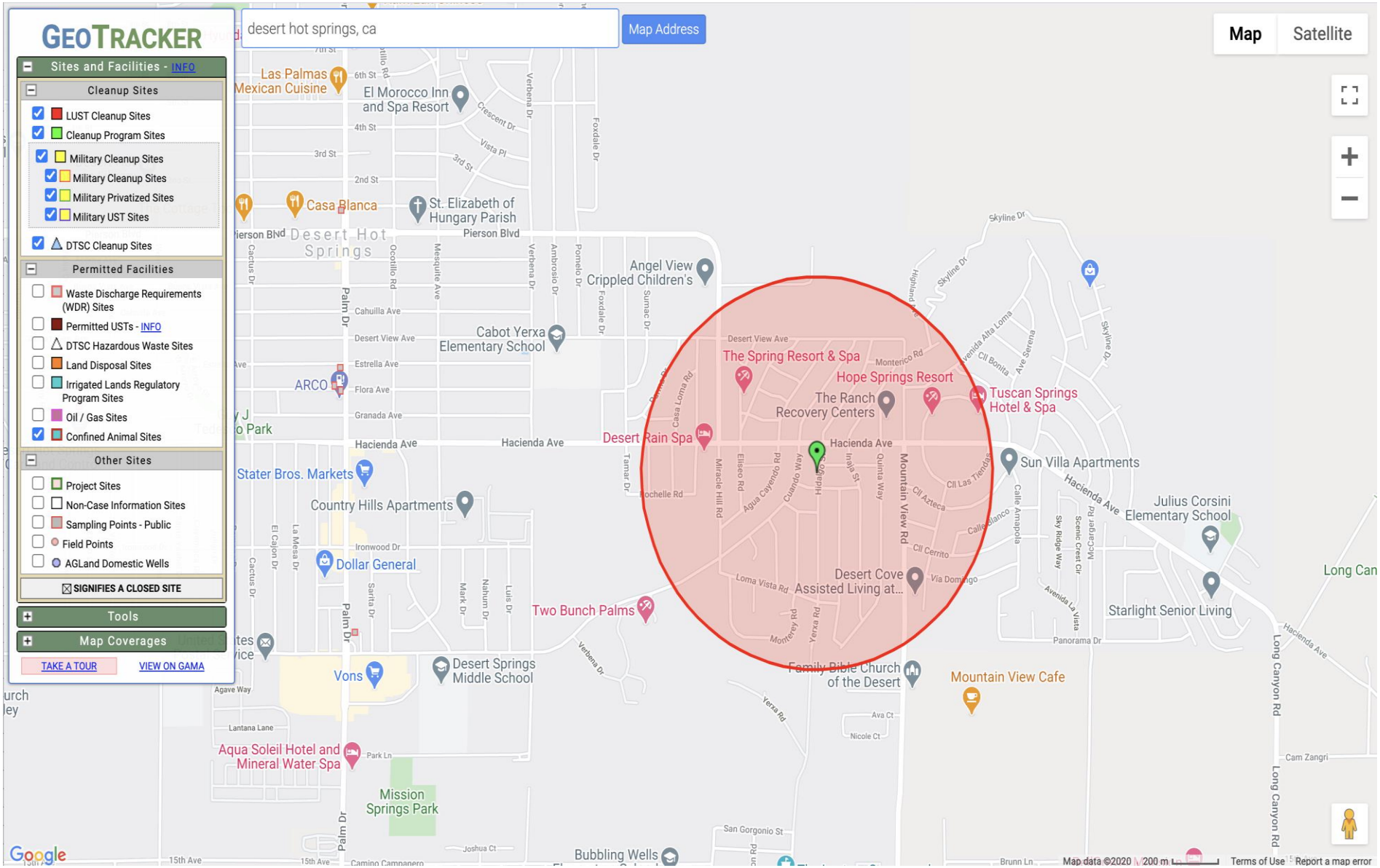
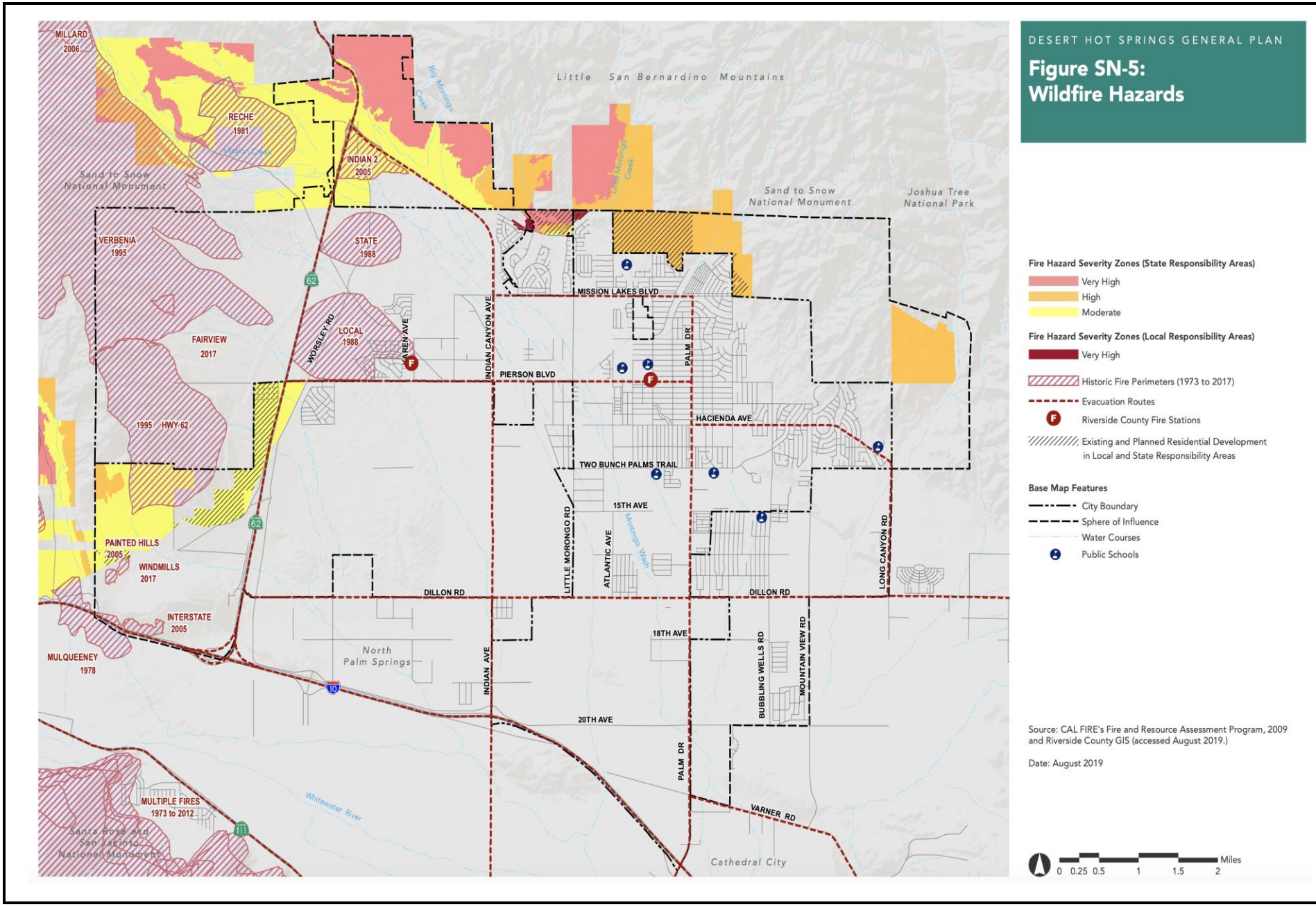


FIGURE IX-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

GeoTracker

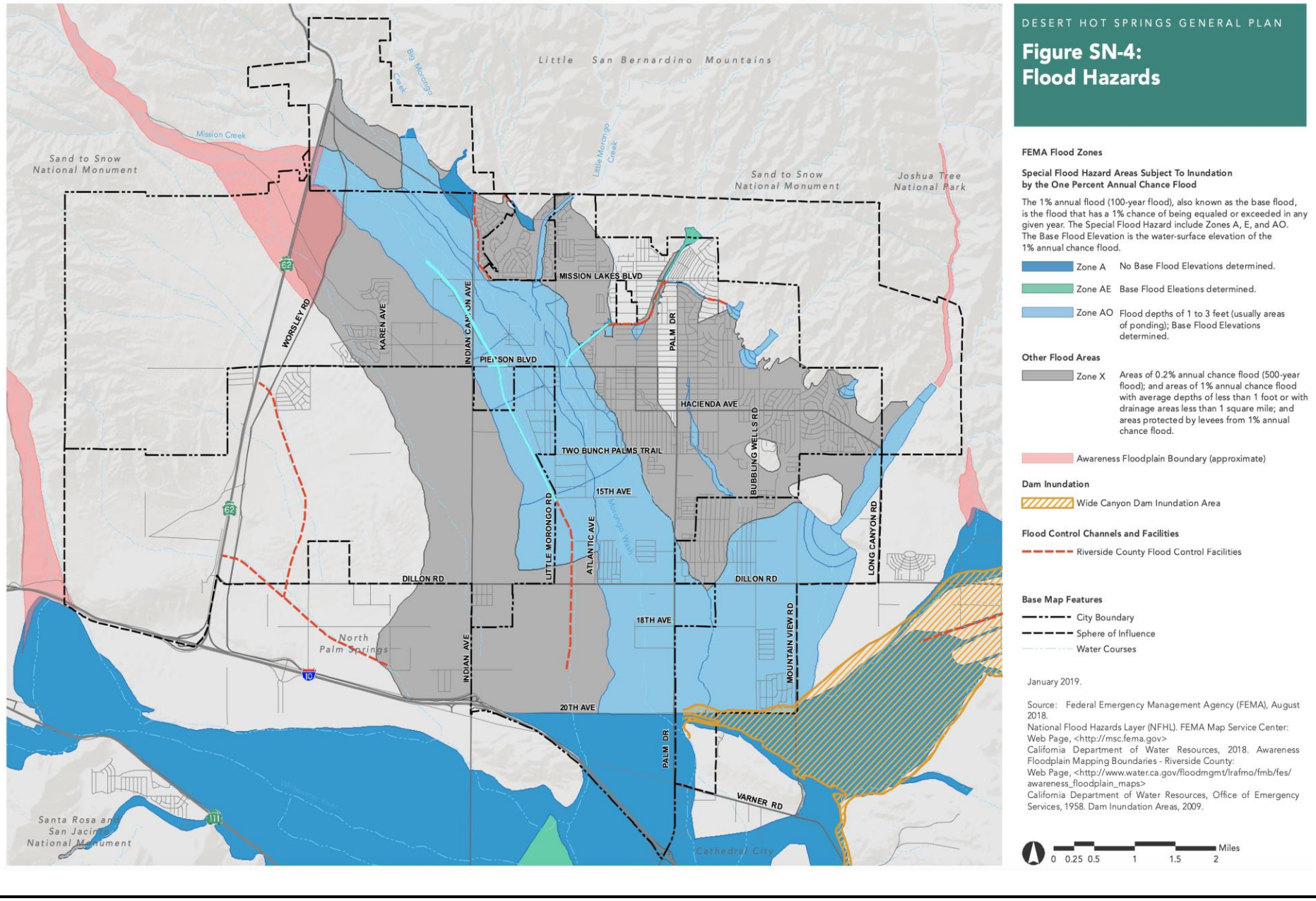


SOURCE: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

FIGURE IX-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

State Responsibility Area

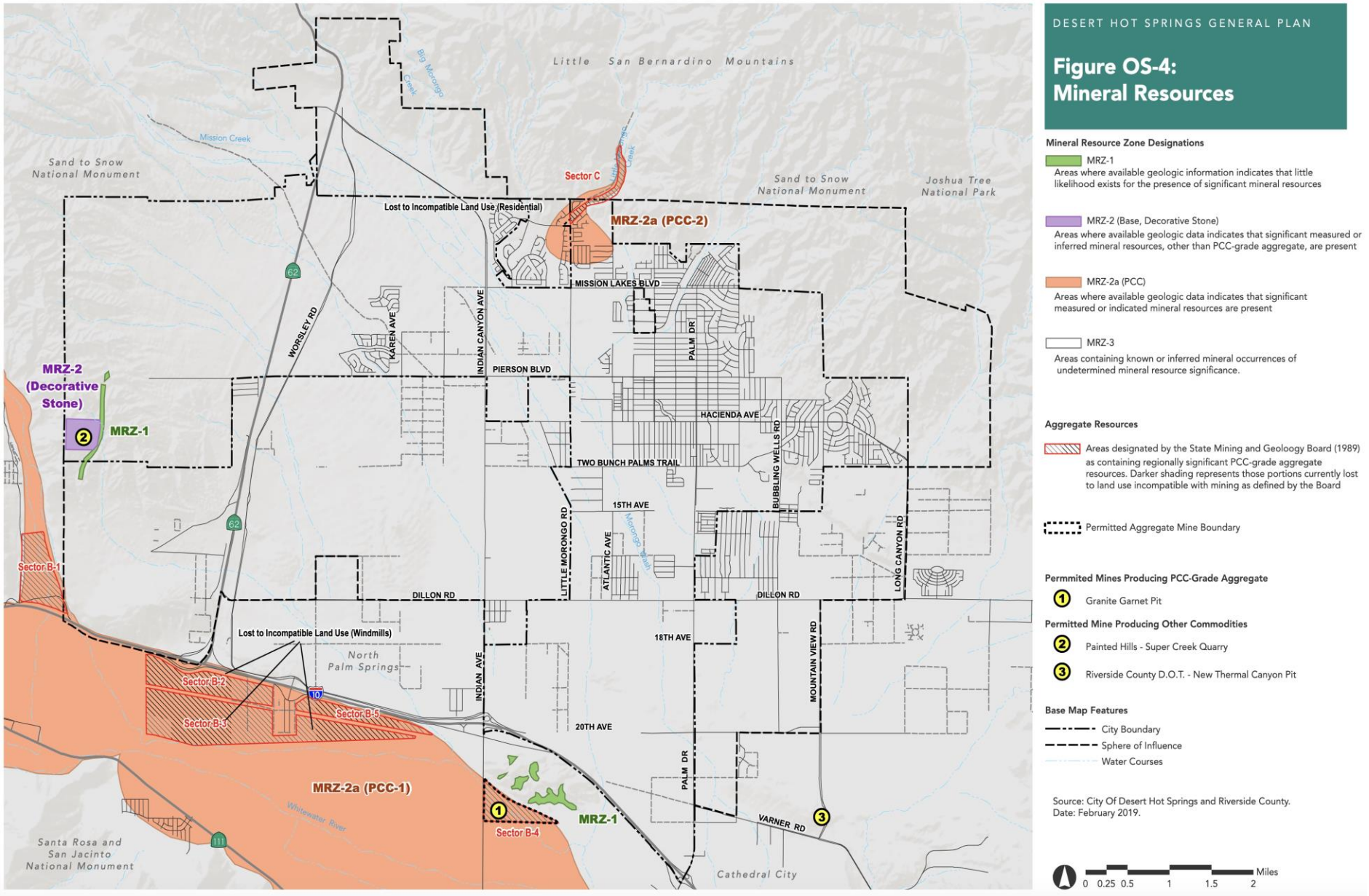


SOURCE: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

FIGURE X-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Flood Hazard Map



SOURCE: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

FIGURE XII-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Mineral Resources