Conejo Canyons Bridge at Hill Canyon Treatment Plant

Draft Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration

prepared by

City of Thousand Oaks
Community Development Department
2100 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Thousand Oaks, California 91362
Contact: Jessica Magaña, Associate Planner

prepared with the assistance of

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
180 North Ashwood Avenue
Ventura, California 93003

September 2021

RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC.
Environmental Scientists | Planners | Engineers
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Initial Study

1. Project Title

Conejo Canyons Bridge at Hill Canyon Treatment Plant

2. Lead Agency Name and Address

City of Thousand Oaks, Community Development Department
2100 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Thousand Oaks, California 91362

3. Contact Person and Phone Number

Jessica Magaña, Associate Planner
805-449-2510
jmmagana@toaks.org

4. Project Location

The 0.61-acre project site is located in the city of Thousand Oaks, on the west side of Hill Canyon Road, approximately 1.75 miles south of the intersection of Santa Rosa Road and Hill Canyon Road, and approximately 330 feet northwest of the treatment ponds at the Hill Canyon Treatment Plant (HCTP) (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). The project site is located on approximately 0.61 acre of a larger 495-acre parcel identified as Assessor's Parcel Number 667-0-120-160. The new bridge will span over Arroyo Conejo Creek in Hill Canyon.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

City of Thousand Oaks, Public Works Department
2100 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Thousand Oaks, California 91362

6. General Plan Designation

The property where the project is proposed is designated as Existing Parks, Golf Courses, Open Space (City of Thousand Oaks 2021).

7. Zoning

The property where the project is proposed is zoned as Open Space (O-S) (City of Thousand Oaks 2021).

Figure 1 Regional Location

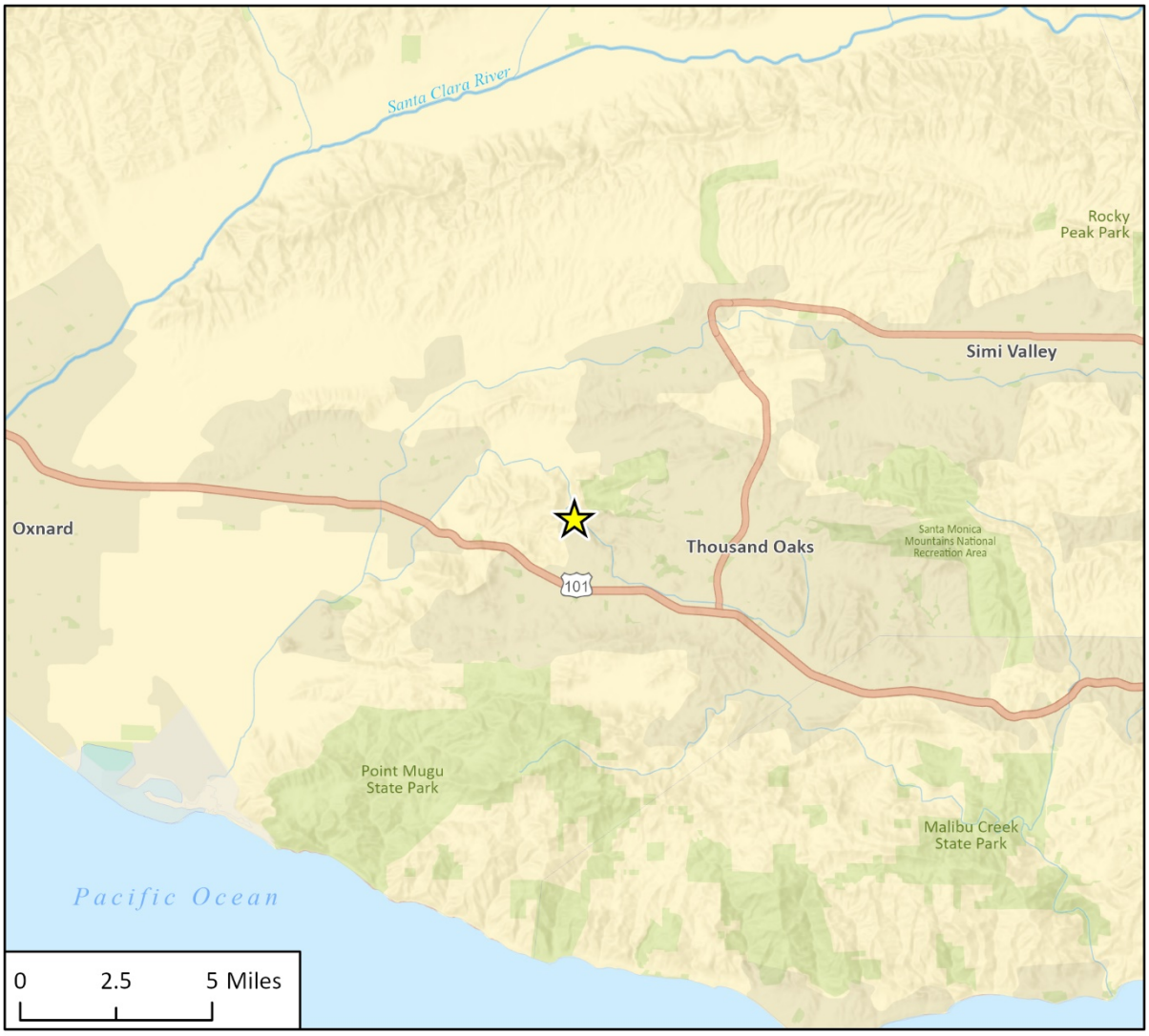
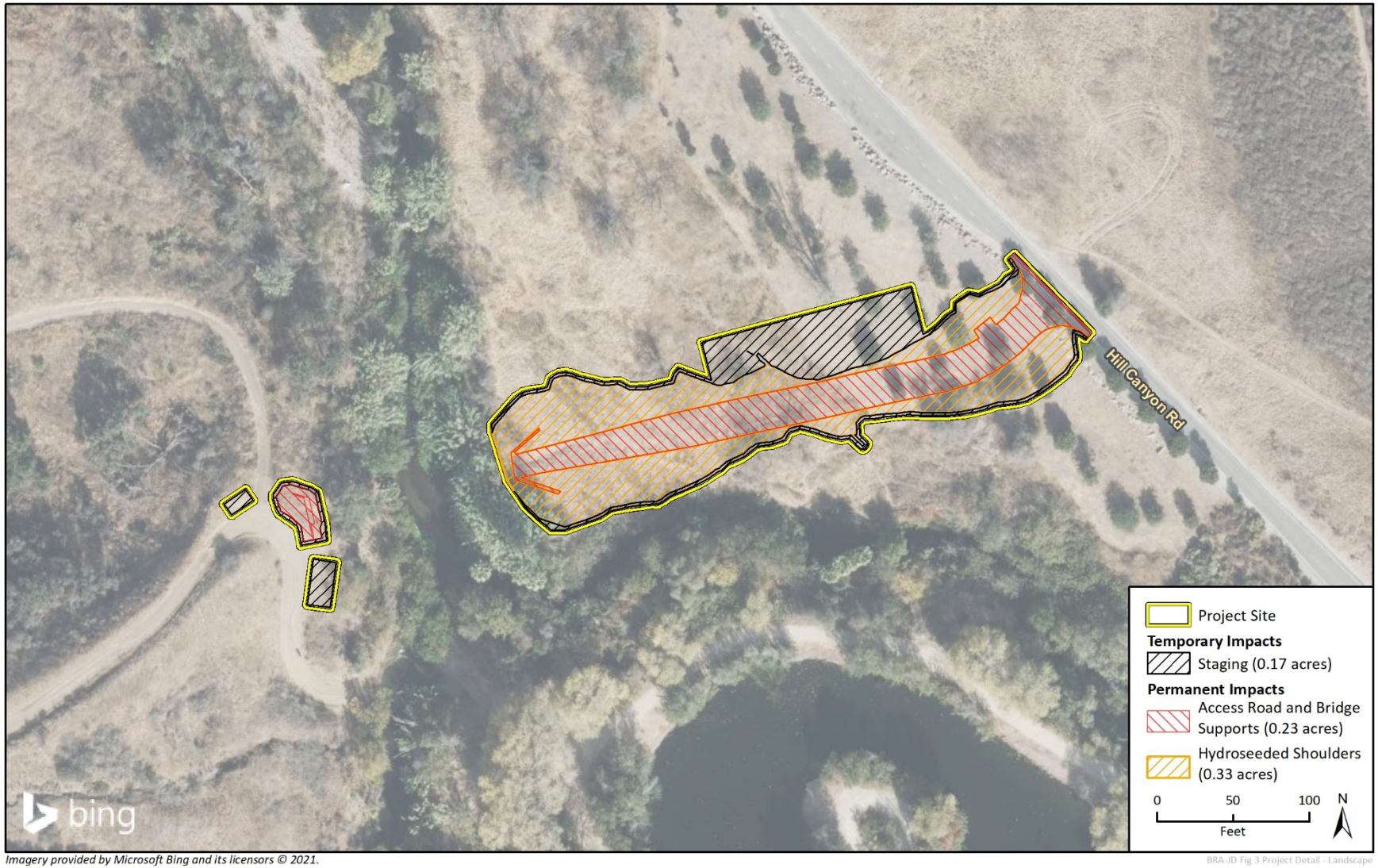


Figure 2 Project Location and Detail



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Additional data provided by City of Thousand Oaks, 2019.

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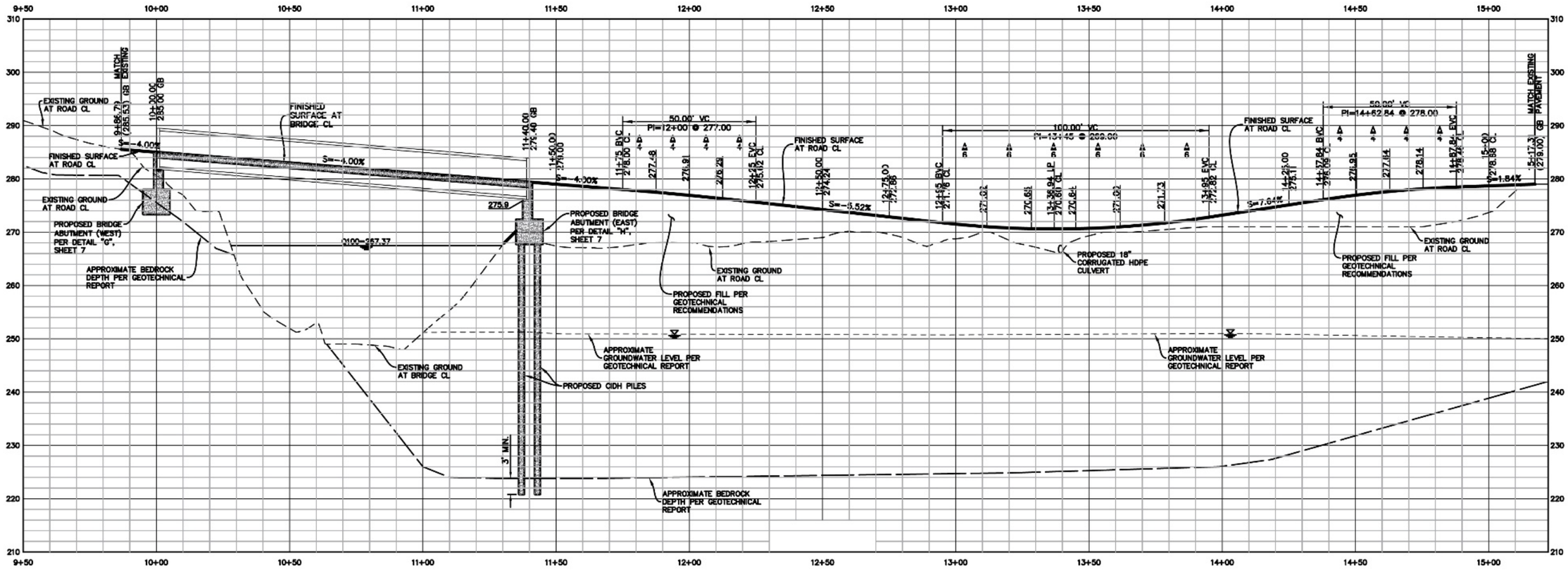
Figure 3 Bridge Profile



Source: Stantec, 2019.

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8. Description of Project

The Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA), a joint powers authority consisting of the City of Thousand Oaks (City) and the Conejo Recreation and Park District, and the City's Public Works Department are proposing the Conejo Canyons Bridge Project (project), composed of a new bridge which would span Arroyo Conejo Creek in Hill Canyon, and an associated access road to connect the eastern side of the new bridge to the existing Hill Canyon Road. The western end of the proposed bridge would be positioned to tie into the existing Hill Canyon fire road which descends into the canyon from the north end of Rancho Conejo Drive. The east end of the proposed bridge would connect to Hill Canyon Road through construction of a short, new access road.

The purpose of the new bridge is to improve access to existing open space areas for outdoor recreationists as well as City and COSCA staff vehicles. Present access into this area of Hill Canyon is provided by three non-connecting routes: (1) the fire road that descends into the south side of the canyon from Rancho Conejo Road; (2) Hill Canyon Road, which extends into the canyon from the north and provides access only to areas on the east and north sides of the channel; and (3) Hill Canyon Trail, which also enters the canyon from the north but provides access only to areas on the west and south sides of the channel. Figure 4 shows the access routes in the vicinity of the project site. The lack of interconnectivity impedes emergency ingress and egress for City and COSCA staff and first responders, impairs COSCA's ability to efficiently access open space areas for the purposes of maintenance and resource stewardship, and forces open space visitors interested in accessing Wildwood Canyon onto Hill Canyon Road, which was not designed for public pedestrian access. Due to these issues, the bridge was identified in COSCA's Conejo Canyons Management Plan as a high priority open space amenity for improving public and emergency access (COSCA 2010).

The proposed bridge would connect existing trails and access roads on either side of the creek and would provide a key link in the trail system between the Conejo Canyons and Wildwood open space areas. It would provide trail users (e.g., hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians) safe access between Wildwood Park and Conejo Canyons by allowing them to remain on the existing Hill Canyon trail and Arroyo Conejo trail rather than utilizing Hill Canyon Road. Additionally, the bridge would provide COSCA Park Rangers better accessibility to open space areas in support of maintenance and resource management. It would provide emergency vehicular access out of Hill Canyon as well as a direct route for City Public Works vehicles between the City's Municipal Service Center at the north end of Rancho Conejo Boulevard and the City's HCTP.

The specific location for the bridge was selected because it best achieves the goals described above with the fewest environmental impacts. With regard to open space visitors, the bridge would allow for trail users to cross Hill Canyon Road at a single point with adequate visibility in both directions. Their passage across the road would be facilitated by a crosswalk, from which they would rejoin the trail on the opposite side of the road. Creating a single crossing for trail users on a service road is a far safer option than the current condition whereby pedestrians and cyclists travel approximately one-mile on a service road intended only for service vehicles and heavy trucks associated with HCTP. With regard to emergency ingress and egress, the bridge would create an important secondary access route. The 2018 Hill Fire burned across Hill Canyon Road effectively preventing its use as an escape route for staff working at HCTP and as an entry point for fire crews. Creating a connection into the canyon from Rancho Conejo Road would improve this substantial limitation. In terms of resource management, improved access to this area would allow COSCA staff

Figure 4 Access Routes in the Project Area

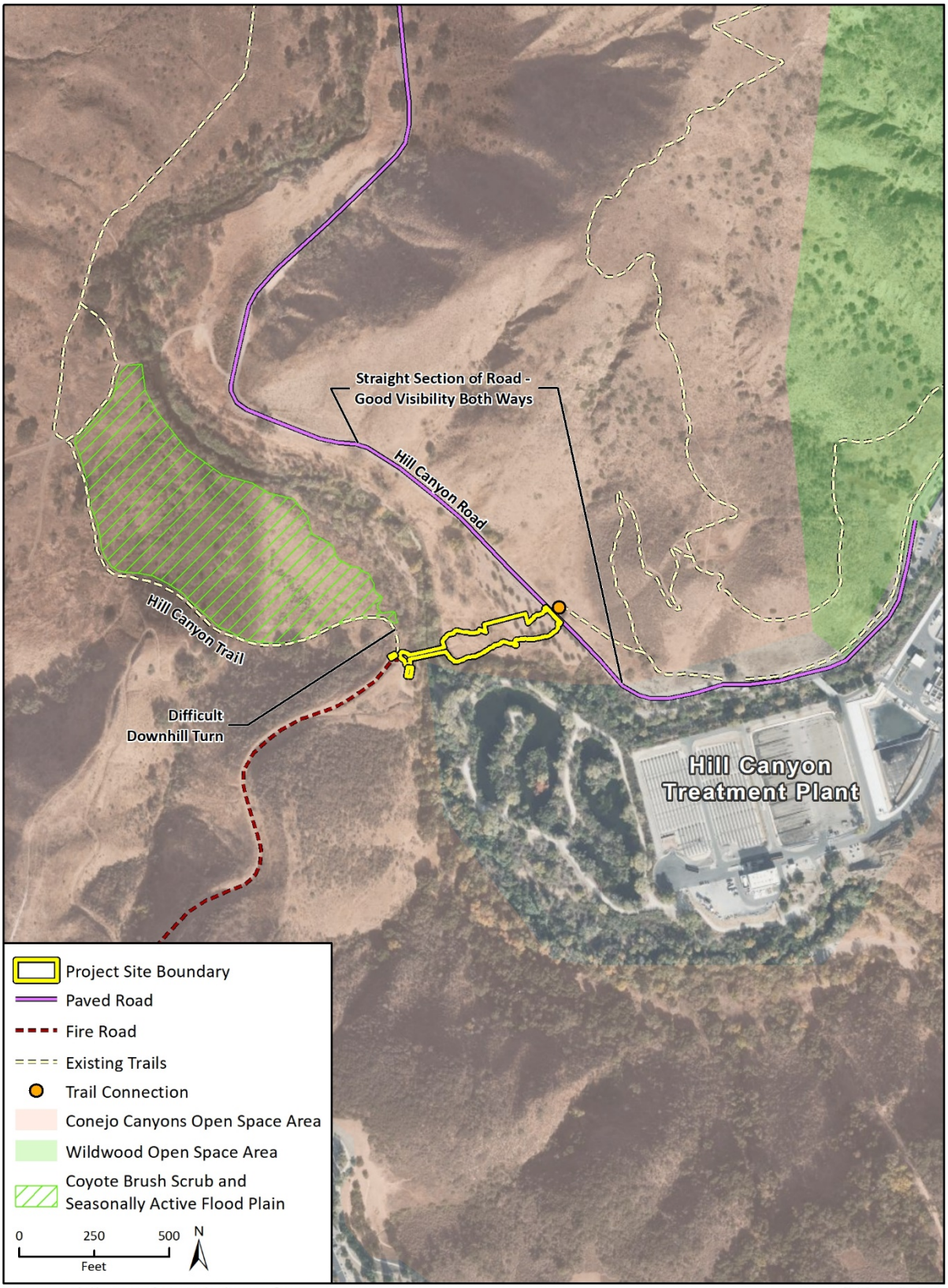

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Fig X Project Site Access

to travel between remote locations more effectively, thereby adding a measure of efficiency to their open space stewardship efforts. Placing the bridge in an alternate location would increase the potential for negative impacts to broad expanses of coyote brush scrub on the southwest side of Arroyo Conejo downstream of the proposed project site, would create a difficult downhill turn for vehicles to navigate at the bottom of the fire road descending from Rancho Conejo Road, and would introduce pedestrians onto Hill Canyon Road at a less than ideal location and require them to remain on the road in order to reach the trail on the opposite side. In addition, the proposed bridge location is higher in elevation than other locations in the canyon, which thus serves to keep the proposed infrastructure safe from high flow events.

The bridge is proposed as a single-span design, meaning that it spans one section between two supports, anchored on either end with no supports in the middle. The bridge would be secured to concrete abutments on either side of the creek. The western end of the bridge would be positioned to tie into the existing Hill Canyon Fire Road, which descends into the canyon from the north end of Rancho Conejo Boulevard, while the eastern end of the bridge would connect to Hill Canyon Road by a 375-foot-long section of new access road that would be installed as part of the project. The bridge would be manufactured off-site and installed using a crane to lower it into place. The bridge footings would consist of concrete abutments positioned at the top of the stream banks to avoid intrusion into the channel. The eastern abutments would utilize 24-inch cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) piles, while the western abutments would be anchored into bedrock.

The proposed bridge would be approximately 140 feet long. An access road that would connect the bridge to Hill Canyon Road would be approximately 375 feet long. It would be 20 feet wide at Hill Canyon Road, and taper to 12 feet wide at the bridge connection. The road surface would consist of 4-inch-thick asphalt concrete, underlain with 10 inches of Class 2 aggregate base.[1] The top approximately 36 inches of native soil would be removed and recompacted to accommodate the new road section, and approximately 3,000 cubic yards of imported fill would be applied. The bridge itself will be composed of pre-weathered steel with a concrete deck.

The bridge footings would consist of concrete abutments positioned at the top of the stream banks to avoid intrusion into the channel. Existing access roads would be used during construction activities, including Rancho Conejo Boulevard and Hill Canyon Road. A culvert would be installed at approximately the midpoint of the new access road to accommodate an existing swale. The culvert would be an 18-inch high-density polyethylene (HDPE) corrugated pipe approximately 80 feet long with grouted riprap pads at either end. The riprap pads would be approximately 5 feet long by 4 feet wide and 1 to 1.5 feet in depth, for a total volume of 40 to 60 cubic feet.

Water would not need to be extracted or diverted for this project. However, groundwater may be encountered when piles are constructed for the eastern abutment. In anticipation of this, the contractor would prepare and submit a dewatering plan for approval that covers how expelled water would be captured and/or contained and treated. If necessary, a location for a sump has been identified adjacent to the project site.

Construction is anticipated to commence in fall 2022 and take approximately 180 days. Equipment consistent with bridge construction and earth moving would be utilized for this project, such as loaders, dozers, drilling rigs, and cranes. No construction would occur in Conejo Creek and erosion control measures would be in place to prevent soil from entering the stream. Project construction would entail pile drilling for the bridge abutments, and import of fill and grading for the access road

[1] Class 2 aggregate base is used in roadways and is an aggregate made of a specific recipe of different sizes and quality of rock inclusive of 20 millimeters (0.75 inch) to fine dust.

Operation of the project would involve approximately 14 vehicle trips per week over the proposed access road and bridge. These vehicle trips would occur regardless of whether the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips.

Construction of the project has been deemed feasible by the Geotechnical Report (Appendix A, Twining 2019), provided that the report's design feature recommendations are implemented. These design features include recommendations for site preparation, footings for ancillary structures and abutment walls, CIDH piles, retaining walls, drainage control, expansive soils, and corrosive soils. In general, the main geotechnical design features are as follows:

- Proposed bridge abutment walls will be supported on competent bedrock. The abutment walls may be supported by shallow foundations or deep foundations consisting of spread footings or CIDH piles, respectively
- Ancillary structures that are lightly loaded may be supported by shallow foundations bearing on bedrock or engineered fill

In addition to geotechnical design features, the project would implement design features intended to minimize impacts to local air quality. These design features include:

- Employ water, as needed, for dust control during grading
- Cease all grading, clearing, earth moving, and excavation operations during periods of high winds (20 miles per hour or greater in one hour). The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD) can be contacted for meteorological information
- Cover all truck loads as required by California Vehicle Code, Section 2311.4
- Personnel involved in grading operations, including contractors and subcontractors, will be advised to wear respiratory protection in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations
- Sweep streets at the end of the day if visible soil material is carried over to adjacent roads
- Maintain equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune as per manufacturer's specifications
- Keep all grading and construction equipment on or near the site until those phases of development are completed
- Equipment idling time will be minimized
- To the extent feasible, use alternately-fueled construction equipment, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), bio-diesel, or electric

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The project site is preserved as designated open space and located just west of Hill Canyon Road. Vegetation in the area was burned by the Hill Fire on November 8, 2018 (see Figure 5). Vegetation on flood plain areas presently consists of non-native grasses and herbaceous species and recovering riparian vegetation along Conejo Creek. Vegetation on surrounding hillslopes includes recovering chaparral and non-native grasses and herbaceous species.

The project site is surrounded by undeveloped land to the north, west, east, and south. The City's HCTP is located approximately 330 feet to the southeast.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

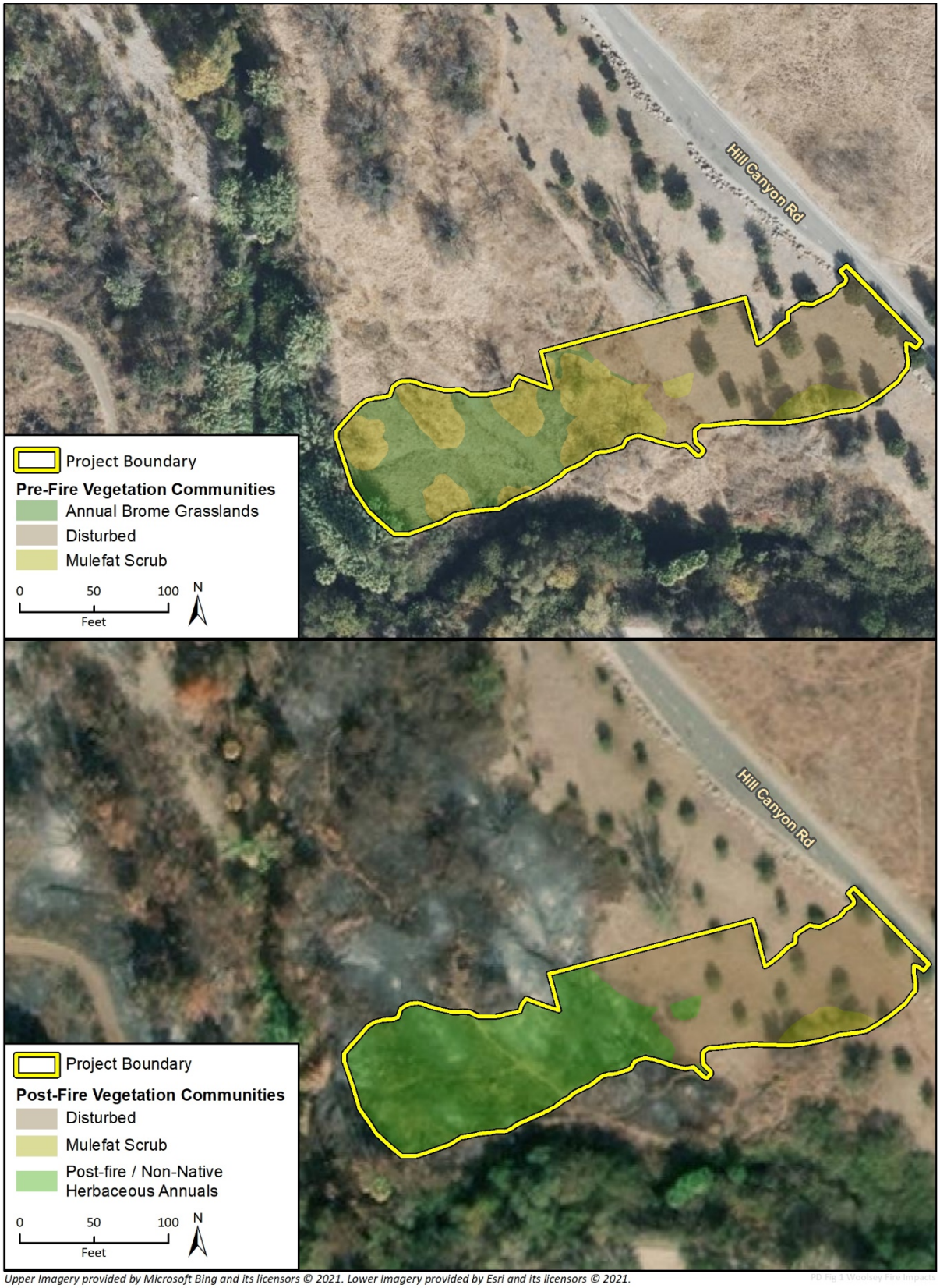
The United States Army Corps of Engineers has confirmed this elevation is beyond its jurisdictional boundary and no permit is required. As the project site is located within the jurisdictions of the Ventura County Watershed Protection District and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), regulatory approval is being sought from these agencies.

The City of Thousand Oaks will be processing a building permit, a development permit, and an oak tree permit for the proposed project. Additional regulatory approval will be obtained from the Ventura County Watershed Protection District and CDFW.

11. Have California Native American Tribes Traditionally and Culturally Affiliated with the Project Area Requested Consultation Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1?

On October 15, 2019 the City received a tribal consultation request, in compliance with AB 52 (California Public Resources Code, Section 21074), from the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians as their records indicated the presence of significant cultural resources within distance of the project location. Tribal consultation was concluded once the City and the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians agreed upon mitigation measures for potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

Figure 5 Woolsey Fire Impacts



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PD Fig 1 Woolsey Fire Impacts

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

This project would potentially affect the environmental factors checked below, involving at least one impact that is "Potentially Significant" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" 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

Based on this initial evaluation:

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

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

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

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "less than significant with mitigation incorporated" 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.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potential 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.

Signature

9/14/2021

Date

Jessica M. Magaña

Printed Name

Associate Planner

Title

Environmental Checklist

1 Aesthetics

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

a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

The project site is vacant open space and consists primarily of non-native grasses, herbaceous species, and post-fire riparian vegetation and woodland habitat. Sloping terrain exists beyond the project site on all sides. The proposed bridge would be comprised of materials and colors that blend into the surrounding natural setting, and the access road surface would consist of 4-inch-thick asphalt concrete. Additionally, the project site is not adjacent to designated scenic trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a state scenic highway (City of Thousand Oaks 1974, 2013). Therefore, the project would not cause an adverse effect on a scenic vista or substantially damage scenic resources, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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

The project has been designed to be unobtrusive through the use of weathered steel for the bridge structure, such that the color is compatible with the natural surroundings. The surface of the access road would be paved with asphalt concrete. Native vegetation would be installed adjacent to the bridge and access road to facilitate its integration with the surrounding undeveloped land. Construction of the project would not constitute a significant adverse impact due to the temporary nature of construction. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts to the visual character and quality of public views of the site and its surroundings.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?

Construction would occur between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and would only occur during daylight hours. No lighting after sunset would be required. The proposed project would not include lighting during operational use. Additionally, the bridge would be weathered steel, which would be allowed to rust naturally and would therefore not be reflective or produce glare. Therefore, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that is incompatible with adjacent uses or that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area and impacts would be less than significant.

NO IMPACT

2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on 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?	☐	☐	☐	■

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

b. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

c. Would the project 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. Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

e. Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project site is owned by the City of Thousand Oaks and has a land use designation of Existing Parks, Golf Courses, Open Space. The current zoning for the site is Open Space (O-S), which allows for the preservation of open space and for new recreational facilities. The project site is not located on agricultural land, and therefore the proposed project would not convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland or statewide importance to non-agricultural uses (California Department of Conservation 2021). Additionally, the project site is not under a Williamson Act contract, and there are no uses associated with forestry on the project site or adjacent properties. Therefore, the project would result in no impact on agriculture and forestry resources.

NO IMPACT

3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

A significant air quality impact could occur if a project is not consistent with the applicable Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) or if the project would represent a substantial hindrance to implementing the policies or obtaining the goals of that plan. According to the VCAPCD's Guidelines, a project may be inconsistent with the applicable air quality plan if it would cause the existing population to exceed forecasts contained in the most recently adopted AQMP. The VCAPCD adopted the 2016 Ventura County AQMP to demonstrate a strategy for, and reasonable progress toward, attainment of the federal 8-hour ozone standard (VCAPCD 2017). The 2016 Ventura County AQMP relies on the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) forecasts of regional population growth in its AQMP population projections.[2]

The 2016 SCAG RTP/SCS forecasts an increase in the City of Thousand Oaks' population to 131,700 persons by 2040. As the proposed project would not involve the construction of residential or commercial developments, it would not directly or indirectly induce population growth. Therefore, the project is within the growth assumptions that underlie the emissions forecasts in the 2016 AQMP. As a result, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

[2] On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council formally adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS (titled *Connect SoCal*). However, the 2016 AQMP was adopted prior to this date and relies on the demographic and growth forecasts of the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS; therefore, these forecasts are utilized in the analysis of the project's consistency with the AQMP.

b. Would the project 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?

Air pollutant emissions are generated primarily by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories:

- Point sources occur at a specific location and are often identified by an exhaust vent or stack. Examples include boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat.
- Area sources are widely distributed and include such sources as residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and some consumer products.

Mobile sources refer to emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions, and can also be divided into two major subcategories:

- On-road sources that may be legally operated on roadways and highways.
- Off-road sources include aircraft, ships, trains, and self-propelled construction equipment.

Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when high winds suspend fine dust particles.

The project site is located within the jurisdiction of the VCAPCD in the South Central Coast Air Basin.

Construction

The project would involve the construction of an approximately 375-foot-long access road and a 140-foot-long bridge. Pursuant to the VCAPCD's Guidelines, a project would result in a potentially significant air quality impact if it would result in emissions of 25 pounds per day or more of Reactive Organic Compounds or nitrogen oxides. However, according to the Guidelines, these quantitative thresholds are not intended to apply to temporary construction emissions (VCAPCD 2003). The VCAPCD also indicates that a project that may generate fugitive dust emissions in such quantities as to cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons, or which may endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such person, or which may cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property, would result in a significant air quality impact.

Construction is anticipated to commence in fall 2022 and take approximately 180 days. Equipment consistent with bridge construction and earth moving would be utilized for this project, such as loaders, dozers, drilling rigs, and cranes. Given the project's relatively small disturbance area (less than one acre) and given the relatively short construction duration, the project would not require long-term use of heavy equipment or generate substantial amounts of fugitive dust in excess of any VCAPCD thresholds. Construction emissions would be temporary in nature, and therefore would not be unusual. Additionally, the project would be subject to VCAPCD Rule 51, Nuisance, which prohibits discharge of air contaminants or any material from a source that would cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to the public, and Rule 55, Fugitive Dust, which requires implementation of control measures during construction and demolition to reduce dust emissions. As such, project construction would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant , and no impact would occur.

Operation

After project construction, it is estimated that approximately 14 vehicle trips per week would occur along the proposed access road and bridge. These vehicle trips would occur regardless of whether the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips. Therefore, project operation would not substantially increase pollutant emissions and would not cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

c. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

As discussed in Section 8, *Description of Project,* construction would take approximately 180 days. The closest sensitive receivers are Newbury Park Adventist Academy and Conejo Adventist Elementary, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the project site. Due to the lack of sensitive receivers near the project site and the limited nature of the grading period, it is unlikely that significant impacts would occur. However, to ensure that workers as well as sensitive wildlife and vegetation in the project vicinity are not exposed to excessive levels of suspended particulate matter, several project design features have been included as part of project design (see Section 8, *Description of Project*).With implementation of the project design features, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

d. Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

The proposed access road and bridge would be used by pedestrians, equestrians, and city vehicles. The project would be located only within designated open space, and would be approximately 1.3 miles from the nearest sensitive receiver. Therefore, the project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and 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, or 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?	☐	☐	☐	■

Rincon Consultants, Inc. prepared a Biological Resource Assessment (BRA) for the project site in July 2021. The BRA is included as Appendix B of this document. The project site is located within the Conejo Canyons Open Space in Thousand Oaks. According to the BRA, 14 vegetation communities exist within the biological survey area: arroyo willow – mulefat thickets, ashy buckwheat scrub, bigpod ceanothus chaparral, California walnut groves, coast live oak woodland, coyote brush scrub, toyon-laurel sumac chaparral, mulefat thickets, purple sage scrub, red brome grasslands, upland mustards, open water, ornamental woodland, and disturbed/developed (Figure 6). Of these vegetation communities, California walnut groves and ashy buckwheat scrub are considered to be sensitive natural communities.

One special-status plant species, the California walnut (*Juglans californica*), was observed on site during the field survey, while four other plant species were identified as having low potential to occur. Modified protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), a federally and state endangered species, were conducted in 2018 by Padre Associates, Inc. Although no least Bell's vireos were detected on site during the 2018 surveys by Padre Associates, Inc. or the 2021 biology surveys by Rincon Consultants, Inc., due to the high potential for least Bell's vireo to occur on the project site, this species is conservatively assumed to occur in the project site. The remaining 25 special status wildlife species that are known or have the potential to occur on or in the vicinity of the project site have not been observed during field surveys conducted by Rincon.

As discussed in the project's Arborist Report prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc., prepared in July 2021 and included as Appendix C of this document, the project site contains 16 trees, including coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), California walnut, toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), and California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*). Of the 16 trees within this area, 14 are City-protected oaks, none of which are historic or landmark trees. Although no nests or birds exhibiting nesting behaviors were observed during field surveys, these trees and other vegetation located on and adjacent to the property provide suitable habitat for nesting birds.

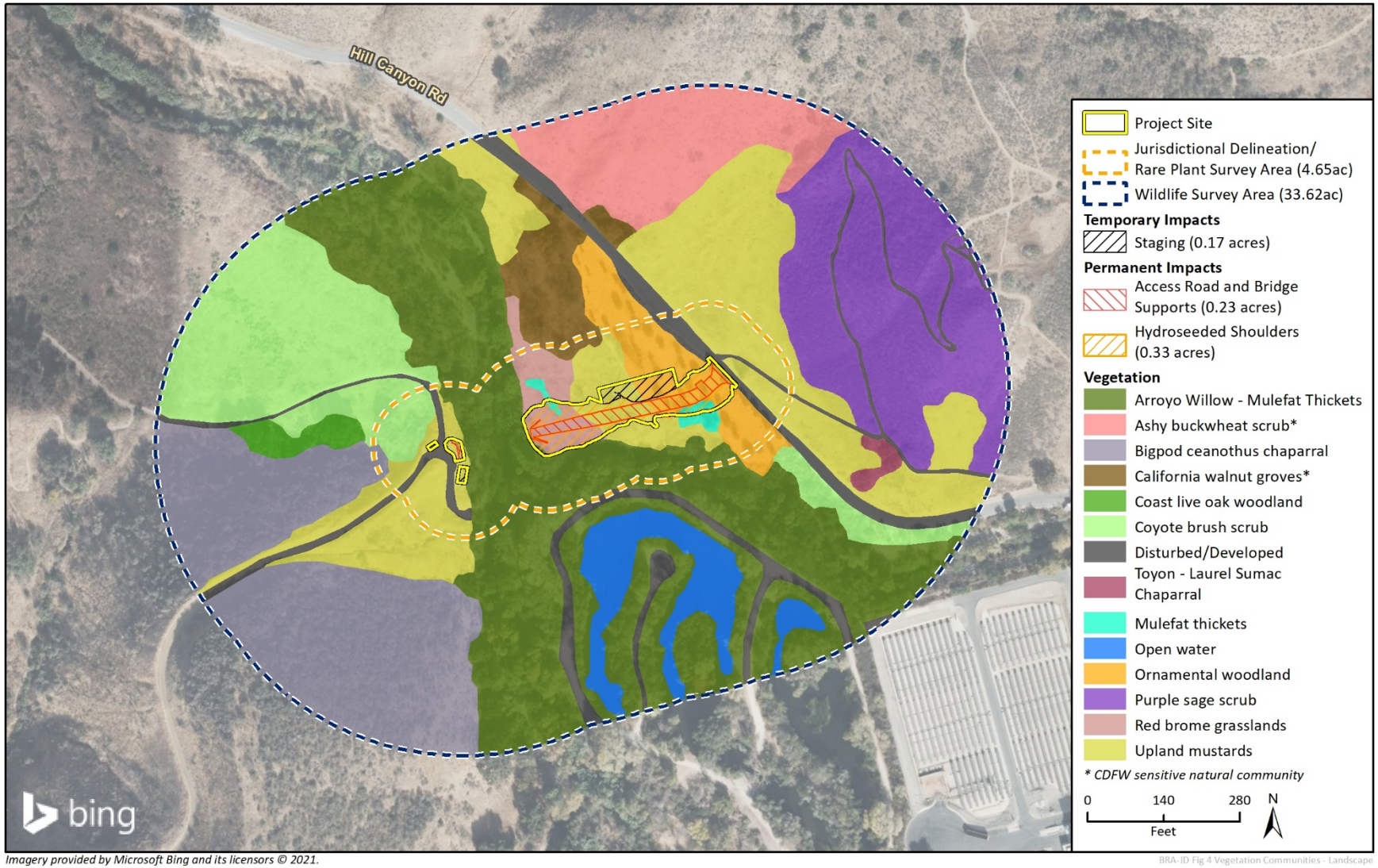
No other sensitive biological resources occur on or adjacent to the project site.

a. Would the project 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?

Special Status Plant Species

Rincon biologists conducted a focused rare plant survey that was timed to coincide with the typical blooming periods of those special-status plants having potential to occur within habitats found in the plant survey area. Based on the habitat type and condition within the survey area, it was determined that four special status plant species have a low potential to occur, none of which were observed during surveys. One special status plant species, California walnut, was found within the rare plant survey area, outside the project site boundaries. Direct impacts to California walnut due to injury or mortality to individuals during construction are not anticipated, as they are situated at least 40 feet away from the project site boundaries. Indirect impacts could result from habitat modifications by the introduction of invasive plants from construction equipment. Potentially significant impacts to special status plants would be mitigated to less than significant levels by implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2.

Figure 6 Vegetation Communities



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Additional data provided by City of Thousand Oaks, 2019.

BRA-JD Fig 4 Vegetation Communities - Landscape

Special Status Wildlife Species

The proposed project may impact special status wildlife species if they are present on the site during construction, or through habitat modification.

Direct impacts to aquatic species such as arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*), a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Species of Special Concern, would not occur, as ground disturbance would not occur within the channel and would be confined to the upper banks and uplands outside of Arroyo Conejo Creek and North Fork Arroyo Conejo Creek. Potentially significant indirect impacts to water quality may occur due to sedimentation or erosion during construction. These potential impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through adherence to Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2.

Special status wildlife species, including western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), two-striped gartersnake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), and San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), may be impacted if individuals are present during project construction. Project construction could also result in impacts to woodrat nests if construction activities occur during their nesting season (February 1 – May 31). However, adherence to Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 would reduce potential direct and indirect effects to these species to a less than significant level.

The arroyo willow thicket community provides suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo. If the species is present within the vicinity of the project during initial vegetation clearance, the proposed project would have the potential to impact the least Bell's vireo directly (by destroying a nest) or indirectly (removal of habitat, construction noise, dust, and other human disturbances that may cause a nest to fail). Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4 would ensure that no potential direct or indirect effects to the species would occur, and implementation of BIO-1 through BIO-3 would ensure that impacts are avoided through the duration of construction activities. Impacts to the species would be less than significant with the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-4.

The project site contains habitat with the potential to support special status birds, including resident and migrant passerine species and raptors protected under the California Fish and Game Code and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Although no nests were observed, bird nesting habitat is present in the trees and shrubs occurring in and adjacent to the site, and raptors could nest within the taller trees in the area. Therefore, the project could result in direct or indirect impacts to nesting birds. Direct impacts may include mortality from vehicle or equipment strikes as foraging birds move through the project site, and physical impacts to active nests within project site. Indirect impacts could result from noise, vibrations, and dust from construction activities throughout the project site. Noise, vibrations, and dust can cause birds to flush out of cover and become exposed to predators or vehicle strikes. Adults may not return to nests, predators may feed on eggs or chicks in unprotected nests, or vibrations could cause eggs to fall out of nests. Noise, vibrations, and dust may also cause avian species to leave regular foraging areas that are within and adjacent to the project site. If construction activities occur during the nesting season (generally February 1 – August 31), noise, vibrations, and dust can also cause nest failures. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-5 would ensure that no potential direct or indirect effects occur to nesting birds, and implementation of BIO-1 through BIO-3 would ensure that impacts are avoided through the duration of construction activities. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3 and BIO-5, impacts to nesting birds would be less than significant.

Impacts to special status bat species may occur if individuals are roosting within the project site during project activities. Direct project impacts could include the removal of roost trees and mortality or harassment of bats through noise, light, and dust pollution. Indirect impacts could include a degradation of riparian habitat which provides foraging opportunities for special status bat species. These potential direct and indirect impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-6.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Worker Environmental Awareness Program

Prior to initiation of all construction activities (including staging and mobilization), all personnel associated with project construction shall attend a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training, conducted by a qualified biologist, to assist workers in recognizing special status biological resources with the potential to occur in the project site. This training shall include information about all special-status species determined to be present or to have a moderate or high potential to occur on site. Training shall also address protected nesting birds, special status plants, sensitive habitats, as well as other special status species potentially occurring in the project site.

The specifics of this program shall include identification of special status species and habitats, a description of the regulatory status and general ecological characteristics of special status resources, and review of the limits of construction and measures required to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources within the project site. A fact sheet conveying this information shall also be prepared for distribution to all contractors, their employees, and other personnel involved with construction of the project. All employees shall sign a form provided by the trainer documenting they attended the WEAP and understand the information presented. The crew foreman shall be responsible for ensuring crew members adhere to the guidelines and restrictions designed to avoid impacts to special status species. If new construction personnel are added to the project, the crew foreman shall ensure the new personnel receive the WEAP training before starting work.

BIO-2 General Best Management Practices

General requirements which shall be followed by construction personnel are listed below.

- No project construction, activities, and equipment staging shall occur within bed and banks of the stream channel. Any work, including operation of loaders, dozers, drilling rigs, cranes, and vehicles, that occurs within 30 feet from the top of stream banks will be minimized to the extent practicable to reduce impacts to special status wildlife species that may occur within the riparian habitat. Only work that is required to occur within this buffer (e.g., installation of bridge supports) may be performed. Vehicles and workers shall not be allowed to enter or cross the stream channel to move between the east and west side of the project site. Fencing and signage shall be installed 30 feet from the stream banks to exclude entry into the stream channel for the duration of the project. Fencing and signage shall not be moved, except to facilitate work that is required to occur within 30 feet of the stream banks, and must be maintained for the duration of the project. The contractor shall advise all workers of the intent of the protection measures prior to the start of project construction and activities. No living native vegetation shall be removed from the channel, bed, or banks of the Arroyo Conejo.
- Project-related vehicles shall observe a 5-mile-per-hour speed limit within the unpaved limits of construction.

- All open trenches shall be fenced and sloped to prevent entrapment of wildlife species.
- All hollow posts and pipes shall be capped, and metal fence stakes shall be plugged with bolts or other plugging materials to prevent wildlife entrapment and mortality.
- All food-related trash items such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and food scraps generated during proposed project construction shall be disposed of in closed containers only and removed daily from the project site.
- No deliberate feeding of wildlife shall be allowed.
- No pets shall be allowed on the project site.
- No firearms shall be allowed on the project site.
- If vehicle or equipment maintenance is necessary, it shall be performed in the designated staging areas.
- During construction, heavy equipment shall be operated in accordance with standard Best Management Practices (BMPs). All equipment used on site shall be properly maintained to avoid leaks of oil, fuel, or residues. The contractor shall prevent oil, petroleum products, or any other pollutants from contaminating the soil or entering a watercourse (dry or otherwise). When vehicles or equipment are stationary, mats or drip pans shall be placed below vehicles to contain fluid leaks. Provisions shall be in place to remediate any accidental spills.
- Materials shall be stored on impervious surfaces or plastic ground covers to prevent any spills or leakage and shall be at least 50 feet from drainage features. Construction materials and spoils shall be protected from stormwater runoff using temporary perimeter sediment barriers such as berms, silt fences, fiber rolls, covers, sand/gravel bags, and straw bale barriers, as appropriate.
- While encounters with special status species are not likely or anticipated, any worker who inadvertently injures or kills a special status species or finds one dead, injured, or entrapped shall immediately report the incident to the construction foreman or biological monitor. The construction foreman or biological monitor shall immediately notify the City. The City shall follow up with written notification to United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or CDFW within five working days of the incident. All observations of federally listed species shall be recorded on CNDDB field sheets and sent to CDFW by the City or the biological monitor.
- Refueling of any equipment shall only occur in designated areas. On the west side of the stream, refueling areas shall only occur on the dirt road. On the east side of the stream, refueling shall only occur in the disturbed area by Hill Canyon Road. Designated areas shall not be located near any storm drain inlets, drainage swales, or surface waterway. When refueling gas powered equipment or mixing herbicide, workers shall refuel or mix over an appropriately-sized drip pan to catch any spillage. The designated refueling area shall be inspected frequently to ensure no spill of hazardous materials has occurred and could contaminate the ground or water. The Contractor shall advise workers to clean and report spills immediately.
- Grubbing and grading shall be conducted in a manner to avoid islands of habitat where wildlife may take refuge and later be killed by heavy equipment. Grubbing and grading shall be done from the center of the project site, working outward towards adjacent habitat off site where wildlife may safely escape.
- Before starting or moving construction vehicles, especially after a few days of nonoperation, operators shall inspect under all vehicles to avoid impacts to any wildlife that may have sought refuge under equipment. All large building materials and pieces (e.g., sections of the bridge) with crevices where wildlife can potentially hide shall be inspected before moving. If wildlife is

detected, a qualified biologist shall move wildlife out of harm's way or temporarily stop activities until the animal leaves the area.

- After the conclusion of the project, COSCA and the City shall install appropriate public information signage on both sides of the stream to: 1) educate and inform the public about wildlife present in the area; 2) advise on proper avoidance measures to reduce human-wildlife conflicts; 3) advise on proper use of open space trails in a manner respectful to wildlife; and 4) provide local contact information to report injured or dead wildlife. Signage shall be written in the language(s) understandable to all those likely to recreate and use the trails. Signage shall not be made of materials harmful to wildlife such as spikes or glass. COSCA and the City shall provide a long-term maintenance plan to repair and replace the signs.

BIO-3 Preconstruction Terrestrial Wildlife Surveys and Biological Monitoring

A CDFW-approved qualified biologist familiar with special status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur in the project site shall conduct preconstruction surveys for two-striped garter snake, western pond turtle, coastal whiptail, coast horned lizard, and San Diego desert woodrats. The biologist shall be on site immediately prior to and during ground and habitat disturbing activities to move special status species or other wildlife of low mobility out of harm's way that could be injured or killed. Collected wildlife shall be removed and placed onto adjacent and suitable species-specific habitat in the vicinity that is out of harm's way. A qualified biological monitor shall have the authority to halt construction to prevent or avoid take of any special status species and/or to maintain compliance with all avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (i.e., BIO-1 through BIO-6). The biologist shall recommend measures to maintain compliance with all avoidance and minimization measures, applicable permit conditions, and any conditions required by the City. When the biological monitor is present on site, they shall be responsible for:

- Ensuring procedures for verifying compliance with environmental mitigation are followed
- Lines of communication and reporting methods
- Daily and weekly reporting of compliance
- Construction crew WEAP training
- Authority to stop work
- Action to be taken in the event of non-compliance

If the CDFW-approved biologist finds active woodrat nests (middens) during the peak nesting season (February 1 through May 31), the Permittee shall implement a 50-foot radius buffer area around the nests in which land clearing activities shall be postponed until the end of peak nesting season. If the biologist finds active woodrat nests outside of the peak nesting season, a CDFW-approved biologist may wish to relocate the nest(s) if there is concern that individual woodrats may be impacted by construction activities. If the biologist determines that a woodrat nest should be relocated, the following methods shall be implemented:

- Create new habitat on adjacent areas not impacted by the project by providing a vertical structure using local native material, such as tree and shrub trimmings, stacked horizontally in areas that are under shady canopies and upslope of seasonal drainages. Piling rocks removed from the construction area can also be used to help achieve a structure. If multiple nesting material structures are created, they shall be a minimum of 25 feet apart. The CDFW-approved biologist shall place the new nesting material under shady areas in order to increase the chance that woodrats shall use the nests. These areas shall be in locations that do not presently provide

this habitat structure to create new nesting opportunity and to reduce potential competition with existing woodrats.

- After creation of habitat outside of the construction footprint, vegetation clearance around the nest shall be conducted to reduce woodrat dispersal back into the project site.
- Nudge the nest with an excavator bucket to flush the woodrats from the nest. They shall usually abandon the nest and run out into adjacent cover.
- Carefully and slowly pick up the nest material with the excavator bucket (to allow any additional woodrats to escape), while maintaining a safe distance from the nest to reduce health hazards to the workers. Dust masks shall be used even when operating equipment.
- Move the nest material to the creation area and place the nest material adjacent to the created nesting structure.

BIO-4 Least Bell's Vireo Preconstruction Surveys

Prior to initiation of project construction and activities within or adjacent to suitable nesting habitat during least Bell's vireo breeding season (March 15 – September 15), a CDFW-approved biologist with experience surveying for least Bell's vireo shall conduct at least three focused surveys, as required by USFWS established protocols to determine whether breeding least Bell's vireos are present. If least Bell's vireo is present, the biologist shall determine its breeding territory, and no construction shall take place from March 15 through September 15.

BIO-5 Nesting Birds

Project-related activities shall occur outside of the bird breeding season (generally February 1 – August 31) to the extent practicable. If construction must occur within the bird breeding season, then no more than three days prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities (including, but not limited to site preparation, grading, excavation, and trenching) within the project site, a nesting bird pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the disturbance footprint plus a 100-foot buffer (300-foot for raptors), where feasible. If the proposed project is phased or construction activities stop for more than one week, a subsequent pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be required within three days prior to each phase of construction.

Pre-construction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted during the time of day when birds are active and shall factor in sufficient time to perform this survey adequately and completely. A report of the nesting bird survey results, if applicable, shall be submitted to COSCA for review and approval prior to ground and/or vegetation disturbance activities.

If nests are found, an appropriate avoidance buffer ranging in size from 25 to 50 feet for passerines, and up to 300 feet for raptors depending upon the species and the proposed work activity, shall be determined and demarcated by a qualified biologist with bright orange construction fencing or other suitable material. Active nests shall be monitored at a minimum of once per week until it has been determined that the young have fledged the nest. No ground disturbance or vegetation removal shall occur within this buffer until the qualified biologist confirms that breeding/nesting has ended, and all the young have fledged. If no nesting birds are observed during pre-construction surveys, no further actions would be necessary.

BIO-6 Bat Surveys and Protection

The presence or absence of any bat roosts shall be confirmed prior to the initiation of project activities. A qualified bat specialist shall conduct bat surveys within the project site and within a 500-foot buffer to identify potential habitat that could provide daytime and/or nighttime roost sites, and any maternity roosts. Acoustic recognition technology shall be used to maximize detection of bats. Night roosts are typically utilized from the approach of sunset until sunrise. Maternity colonies, composed of adult females and their young, typically occur from spring through fall.

If bats are not detected, but the bat specialist determines that roosting bats may be present at any time of year and could roost in trees, trees planned for removal shall be pushed down using heavy machinery rather than felling it with a chainsaw. To optimize the warning for any roosting bats that may still be present, trees shall be pushed lightly two to three times, with a pause of approximately 30 seconds between each nudge to allow bats to become active. The tree shall be initially pushed slowly so as to allow roosting bats to escape. After a suitable bat roosting tree is felled, it shall remain in place until it is inspected by a bat specialist. Trees that are confirmed to be bat roosts shall not be bucked or mulched immediately, instead, a period of at least 24 hours, and preferably 48 hours, shall elapse prior to such operations to allow bats to escape.

If maternity roosts are found, to the extent feasible, work shall be scheduled between October 1 and February 28, outside of the maternity roosting season when young bats are present but are not yet ready to fly out of the roost (March 1 to September 30).

If maternity roosts are found and trees must be removed during the maternity season, a qualified bat specialist shall conduct a preconstruction survey to identify those trees proposed for disturbance that could provide hibernacula or nursery colony roosting habitat. Acoustic recognition technology shall be used to maximize detection of bats. Each tree identified as potentially supporting an active maternity roost shall be closely inspected by the bat specialist no more than seven days prior to tree disturbance to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats more precisely. If maternity roosts are detected, trees determined to be maternity roosts shall be left in place until the end of the maternity season. Work shall not occur within 100 feet of an active roost and construction shall not occur between 30 minutes before sunset and 30 minutes after sunrise.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

b. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Of the 14 vegetation communities in the biological survey area, CDFW defines ashy buckwheat scrub and California walnut groves as sensitive natural communities. Construction activities are not expected to directly impact these communities. However, indirect impacts from construction such as erosion, runoff, dust from excavation and construction equipment could result in potentially significant indirect impacts to these sensitive communities. Potential impacts associated with runoff would be minimized through implementation of appropriate BMPs, including, but not limited to: straw wattles, silt fencing, and plastic covers for soil spoils. Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would further reduce potential indirect impacts to sensitive habitats to a less-than-significant level.

Construction activities could introduce non-native invasive plants or pathogens to the site via contaminated equipment and supplies. Soil disturbance due to project activities could also encourage the growth and spread of non-native plant species currently in the seedbank. The project

may result in the spread of pathogens if potentially diseased trees are removed and transported off-site. This could negatively impact native vegetation on and downstream of the project site and degrade habitats that sensitive wildlife species depend upon, a potentially significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7 would reduce these potential impacts to less than significant by protecting the surrounding native habitats against spread of non-native seeds and pathogens.

Mitigation Measure

BIO-7 Protection Against Spread of Non-Native Seeds and Pathogens

Prior to entering the project site, workers shall inspect their clothing, including shoes, all vehicles, and equipment for invasive plant seeds or plant parts. The undercarriage and tires of loaders, dozers, drilling rigs, cranes, vehicles, power tools, and other equipment, shall be power washed and clean from any seeds, pathogens, and mud before entering the project site for the first time. All soil and fill material shall be inspected and determined free of any invasive plant seed prior to leaving the facility where the material is coming from. Any straw, wood, or other mulch shall be purchased from a certified weed-free vendor.

Excavated soil containing non-native plants shall be stored in a previously disturbed area or staging area at least 50 feet from potential jurisdictional features. Any soil contaminated by non-native species shall be placed at the bottom of the trench or spoils pile to reduce the spread of non-native species.

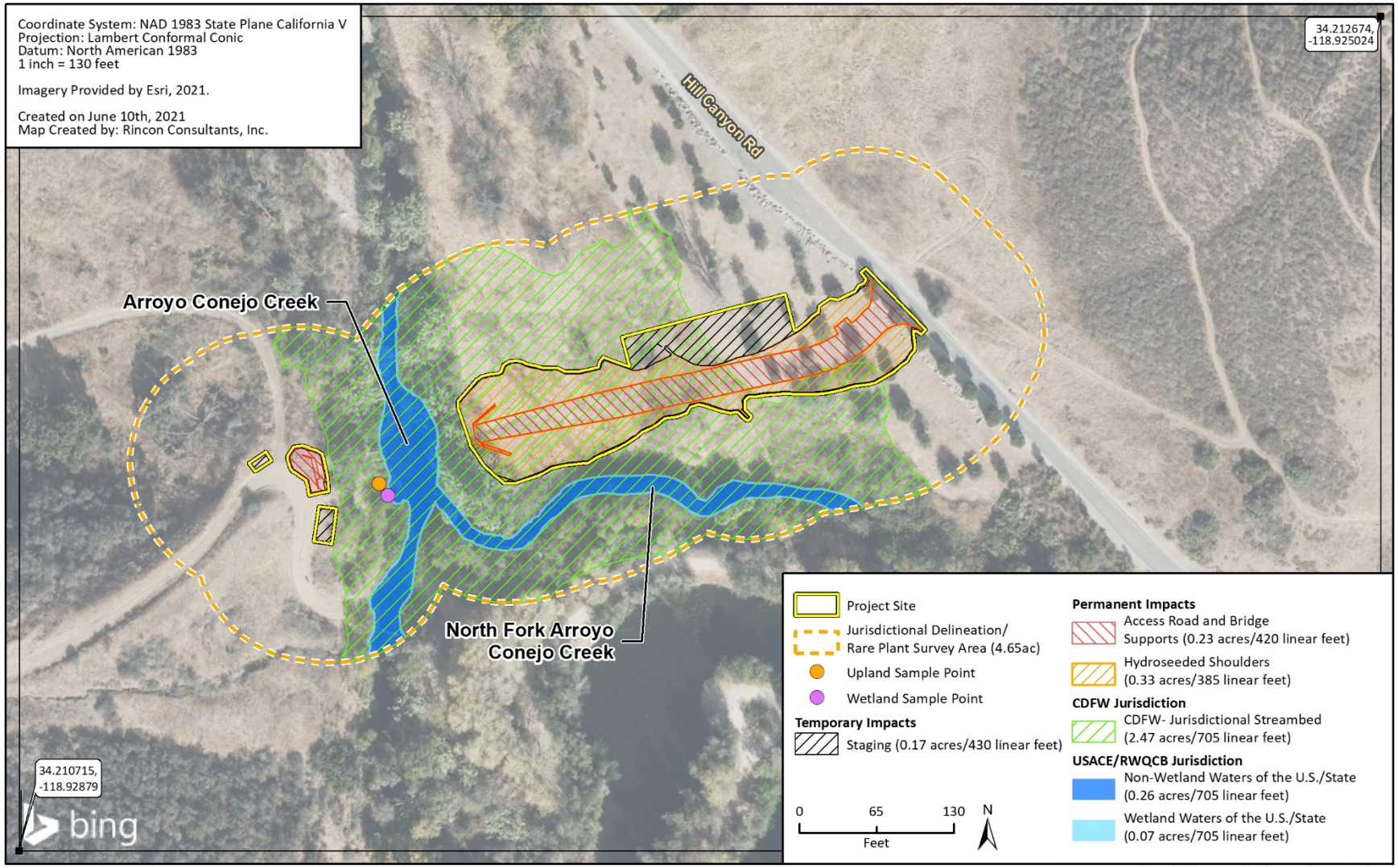
Removed trees shall not be removed from the site to reduce the potential for spread of infectious pathogens. Trees shall be left on site and shall be chipped for use as ground cover, mulched, or placed to provide upland habitat structure. No tree material shall be placed in the stream channel unless the City coordinates with CDFW and determines woody material would create suitable habitat structure for aquatic reptiles and fish. Pruning and power tools shall be cleaned and disinfected before use on site to prevent introducing pathogens, and after use to prevent spread of pathogens to new areas.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

c. Would the project 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?

Direct impacts may occur to Arroyo Conejo due to bridge installation and construction staging. Excavation and construction activities were designed to be confined to the upper banks of Arroyo Conejo, outside the 100-year peak flow elevation. Accordingly, impacts to the bed and banks of Arroyo Conejo would be avoided. Potential jurisdictional areas within the jurisdictional delineation survey area are presented in Figure 7. Table 1 shows the extent of proposed impacts within resource agency jurisdiction. Table 2 shows the extent of proposed temporary and permanent impacts to vegetation communities within resource agency jurisdiction.

Figure 7 Potential Jurisdictional Areas



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Additional data provided by City of Thousand Oaks, 2019.

Table 1 Anticipated Impacts to Potentially Jurisdictional Areas

	USACE		CDFW	RWQCB	
Impact Type	Non-Wetland Waters of the U.S. (acres [lin. ft.])	Wetland Waters of the U.S. (acres [lin. ft.])	CDFW Jurisdictional Streambed (acres [lin. ft.])	Non-wetland Waters of the State (acres [lin. ft.])	Wetland Waters of the State (acres [lin. ft.])
Temporary	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.074 (90)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Permanent	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.362 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Table 2 Anticipated Impacts to Vegetation Communities within Resource Agency Jurisdiction

Impact Type	Arroyo Willow – Mulefat Thickets (acres)	Mulefat Thickets (acres)	Red Brome Grasslands (acres)	Upland Mustards (acres)	Total (acres)
Temporary	0.002	0.004	0.009	0.059	0.074
Permanent	0.003	0.032	0.200	0.127	0.362

If the project occurs during the rainy season, Arroyo Conejo and North Fork Arroyo Conejo may be impacted by means of indirect effects (e.g., increased turbidity, altered pH, decreased dissolved oxygen levels, etc.) after a rain event. In addition, 0.035 acre of riparian vegetation is expected to be permanently lost as a result of the project. Indirect impacts to the jurisdictional features could occur as the addition of new paved surfaces as a result of the project would reduce natural groundwater infiltration and potentially increase surface flow into Arroyo Conejo, though these impacts are anticipated to be negligible due to the relatively small size of the project.

If groundwater is encountered during excavation, dewatering may be necessary. This could lower the water table in the project site and potentially result in increased drought stress on nearby vegetation. Moreover, this could cause a decline in the health of riparian and upland vegetation adjacent to the project site. Adherence to Mitigation Measures BIO-2, BIO-8, and BIO-9, as well as adherence to agency permits and existing regulations, would reduce potential direct and indirect impacts to jurisdictional waters and wetlands to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-8 Compensatory Mitigation

COSCA and the City shall retain a qualified biologist and restoration specialist to create a Restoration Plan. This plan will mitigate for impacts to existing habitat, including arroyo willow – mulefat thickets, disturbed ornamental woodland, and the removal of protected trees (including City-protected coast live oak and southern live oak trees). This plan will be submitted for review and approval by CDFW. Because the riparian habitat impacted by project activities provides suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo, this plan will include the components necessary for a Least Bell's Vireo Habitat Restoration Plan. Elements of the plan shall include (but are not limited to) methods, timing, monitoring, and reporting procedures.

Compensatory mitigation for temporary and permanent impacts to arroyo willow and mule fat scrub restoration is required. For these riparian communities, a minimum 3:1 and 5:1 mitigation ratio shall be used for temporary and permanent impacts, respectively. For 0.006 acre of temporary

impacts and 0.035 acre of permanent impacts to arroyo willow thickets and mulefat thickets subject to CDFW jurisdiction, 0.018 acre and 0.175 acre shall be restored, respectively, for a total of 0.193 acre. Restoration shall be in kind and shall use an appropriate combination of mulefat cuttings and willow stakes. Arroyo willow restoration shall follow a Least Bell's Vireo Habitat Restoration Plan.

Compensatory mitigation for 0.068 acre of temporary impacts and 0.327 acre of permanent impacts to red brome grasslands and upland mustards within CDFW jurisdiction is also required. As these areas do not contain riparian vegetation and are relatively disturbed, temporary and permanent impacts will be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio. Accordingly, 0.395 acre of compensatory mitigation is required for impacts to red brome grasslands and upland mustards. Habitat restoration for permanently impacted red brome grasslands and upland mustards shall occur within the 1.06-acre area classified as ornamental woodland. Temporarily impacted red brome grasslands and upland mustards shall be restored in place. Off-site restoration areas, including the coast live oak tree installation, shall be approved by COSCA and included in the Restoration Plan. Restoration activities shall consist of hydroseeding the native seed mix shown below in Table 3 below. Species native to the region that are characteristic of the local riparian habitat types found on-site but not included on the plant and seed palette may also be used as substitutes, as described in the mitigation plan.

Table 3 Restoration Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acmispon glaber	deerweed
Artemisia californica	California sagebrush
Bromus carinatus	California brome
Encelia californica	California sunflower
Eriogonum cinereum	ashy buckwheat
Eschscholzia californica	California poppy
Festuca microstachys	small fescue
Lupinus succulentus	arroyo lupine
Plantago insularis	plantain
Salvia leucophylla	purple sage

In addition, the following container plants shall be installed:

- Twenty (20) coast live oak trees;
- Twenty (20) blue elderberry seedlings;
- Forty (40) mulefat cuttings; and
- Twelve (12) California walnut seedlings.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

d. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project occurs within the Arroyo Conejo wildlife corridor recognized in the City of Thousand Oaks General Plan (City of Thousand Oaks 2013). Wildlife are expected to utilize the riparian corridors associated with Arroyo Conejo and North Fork Arroyo Conejo, and the adjacent upland habitats. Wildlife movement may be temporarily disrupted due to construction activities (e.g., noise, light, dust, human presence). Wildlife present in the project site during construction may become entrapped or crushed.

No alterations would be made in the creek channels, and operation of the bridge and access path would not impede wildlife movement as the project would not include fencing or gates that would prevent wildlife from using the bridge or creek channels as movement corridors. However, operation of the project may lead to increased recreation and human presence in the area that may negatively impact wildlife movement in the area. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-6 and BIO-9 would reduce potential impacts to wildlife movement to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

BIO-9 Protection Against Impacts to Wildlife Movement

Work shall be limited to daylight hours and shall not occur within the 30 minutes before sunset and within the 30 minutes after sunrise. The project shall avoid non-essential lighting and artificial lighting. Any artificial lighting shall be of the lowest illumination, be selectively placed, and shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillage into the adjacent natural habitats.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The Conservation Element of the City's General Plan contains objectives and policies for biological resources relevant to the proposed project given its location and/or proposed activities. These objectives and policies focus on conservation of existing natural areas; restoration of damaged natural vegetation; protection of wetlands, oak trees and other indigenous woodlands, and endangered or threatened species and habitat; consideration of wildlife habitat resources including wildlife corridors; protection and preservation of cultural resources; and recreational trail access.

Necessary permits and authorizations from the City for the removal and trimming of trees within the project footprint would be necessary prior to project construction activities. Through adherence to Mitigation Measures BIO-10 and BIO-11, the project would maintain compliance with the City's tree protection policies and ordinances, and potential impacts to protected trees would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-10 Minimize Impacts to Protected Trees

The project shall comply with the requirements of the City's Oak Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines (Res. 2010-14) and Landmark Tree Ordinance (No. 1217-NS). These include but may not be limited to:

- Preserve protected trees on site whenever feasible and avoid pruning branches or roots of protected trees.
- The tree protection zone (TPZ) shall be defined as five feet beyond the natural dripline of the tree, or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever is greater.
- Tree protection shall be established at the TPZ or at the greatest distance feasible from all trees not planned for removal.
- The limits of the TPZ shall be staked in the field prior to commencement of construction activities.
- Any brush clearing or pruning required within the TPZ of trees not planned for removal shall be accomplished with hand tools.
- All trimming, pruning or removal of trees shall be conducted or directly supervised by an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist or Tree Worker. Pruning shall be conducted in accordance with current ANSI A300 Standards.
- No materials, equipment, spoil, waste or washout water may be deposited, stored or parked within the TPZ.
- If equipment placement within the TPZ is necessary for construction activities, ground protection shall be placed to prevent soil compaction, consisting of two inches of mulch placed underneath plywood.
- Any roots over one inch in diameter exposed during construction activities shall be exposed to sound tissue and cut cleanly with a saw. No pruning of limbs or roots two inches or greater in diameter shall occur without an approved tree permit from the City. No more than 20 percent of live foliage or ground disturbance within the TPZ of a protected tree should occur. Pruning or ground impacts exceeding 20 percent of the tree canopy or TPZ, respectively, shall be pre-approved by the City.

BIO-11 Oak Tree Replacement

Removed trees will be replaced at a 4:1 ratio, in accordance with the City's tree protection policies and ordinances. For impacts to one coast live oak tree and seven southern live oak trees, 32 coast live oak trees will be planted that include 20 trees planted on-site and 12 trees planted at a City-approved off-site location (refer to Table 5 and Figure 1 of the Arborist Report for this project [Appendix C]). Coast live oak trees installed on-site will compensate for impacts to one coast live oak tree and four southern live oak trees, while coast live oak trees planted off-site will compensate for impacts to the remaining three southern live oak trees. Locations and details of offsite planting areas will be provided in the Restoration Plan described in Mitigation Measure BIO-8. The precise location of trees to be installed on-site will be determined by a qualified restoration specialist and will take into account existing groundcover species, level of soil disturbance, and other factors that may influence tree growth. If considered necessary by the restoration specialist, soil may be decompacted by the use of hand tools to encourage root growth.

Oak tree mitigation shall also include restoration of appropriate ground cover, subshrub, or shrub understory species. Ground cover installed around the trees will consist primarily of native herbaceous, shrub, and subshrub species currently present in upland portions of the impacted areas. Species native to the region that are characteristic of the local woodland habitat types found on-site may also be used.

Additional details regarding the oak tree mitigation and oak woodland habitat restoration areas will be addressed in the Restoration Plan described in Mitigation Measure BIO-8.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

f. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

The project site is not in an area covered by an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur. However, the project would comply with the goals and objectives of the Conejo Canyons Open Space Management Plan through implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-12.

NO IMPACT

5 Cultural Resources

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

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

The project site does not contain and is not adjacent to any known or potential historic structure or site. Additionally, the project site is not located within or adjacent to any known or potential historic district (City of Thousand Oaks 2013). Therefore, no impact to historical resources would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Based on the City's Sensitive Cultural Resource map, the project area is not expected to contain previously undiscovered cultural resources. However, given that the project site is located downstream from identified significant cultural sites within the Conejo Valley, it is possible that some artifacts may have been washed away over time and deposited at the project site. Implementation of the Mitigation Measures CR-1 and CR-2 would ensure minimization of potential impacts to unknown archaeological resources. Therefore, with mitigation incorporated, potential impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would be implemented during construction to avoid damaging and/or inadvertent destruction of undiscovered cultural resources:

CR-1 Pre-Construction Training

Prior to earthmoving activities, a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archeology (2008) shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for construction personnel conducting rough grading and trenching. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of cultural resources that may be encountered, and of the

proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains (see Mitigation Measure CR-2). Construction personnel completing rough grading and trenching shall attend the training and shall retain documentation demonstrating attendance.

CR-2 Unanticipated Discovery of Cultural Resources

In compliance with Thousand Oaks Municipal Code Section 7-3.09(i), in the event of the discovery of archaeological materials, all grading shall cease, and the grading permit shall be deemed suspended. The finding of a site which may be a significant archaeological or historical site shall be reported to the Public Works Director and the Community Development Director within seventy-two (72) hours from the time the site is found. The Community Development Director, upon receiving such a report, shall cause a preliminary investigation of the site to be made by qualified professionals within five (5) working days after the time such a report is received. If the preliminary investigation should confirm that the site is or may be a significant archaeological or historical site, the grading permit shall remain suspended for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days after the date the finding of the site was first reported to or learned by the City. During the period of suspension, and as promptly as reasonably possible, the Community Development Director shall develop conditions to be attached to the grading permit pursuant to the provisions of subsection (1) of this Municipal Code subsection. When such conditions are developed and attached to the permit, the permit shall be deemed reissued subject to such conditions, and the suspension shall be deemed terminated. In extraordinary circumstances, the suspension may exceed forty-five (45) days if, upon application of the Community Development Director to the Council, the Council shall concur.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

c. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Based on the City's Sensitive Cultural Resource map, the project area is not expected to contain previously undiscovered burial sites. However, given the project site is located downstream from identified significant cultural sites within the Conejo Valley, it is possible that some remains may have been washed away over time and deposited at the project site. Implementation of the Mitigation Measure CR-3 would ensure minimization of potential impacts to unknown human remains. Therefore, with mitigation incorporated, potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measure would be implemented during construction to avoid damaging and/or inadvertent destruction of undiscovered burial sites.

CR-3 Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains

In compliance with Thousand Oaks Municipal Code Section 7-3.09(i), in the event of the discovery of human remains, all grading shall cease, the grading permit shall be deemed suspended, and the Ventura County Coroner shall be contacted in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be notified, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, subdivision (c), and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 (as amended by Assembly Bill [AB] 2641). The Native American Heritage

Commission shall designate a Most Likely Descendant for the human remains per Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The Thousand Oaks Community Development Department shall ensure that the immediate vicinity where the Native American human remains are located is not damaged or disturbed by further development activity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, until the landowner has discussed and conferred with the Most Likely Descendant regarding their recommendations, as prescribed in Public Resources Codes Section 5097.98, taking into account the possibility of multiple human remains. The Most Likely Descendant shall have 48 hours from being granted site access to make recommendations for the disposition of the remains. If the Most Likely Descendant does not make recommendations within 48 hours of being granted site access, the landowner shall reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from subsequent disturbance.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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6 Energy

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

a. Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

The proposed project would use nonrenewable resources, such as petroleum and diesel fuels, during construction activities and operational use through the use of construction equipment and worker vehicle trips.

Construction Energy Demand

During project construction, energy would be consumed in the form of petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment on the project sites, construction worker travel to and from the project site, and vehicles used to deliver materials to the site. Energy use during construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. In addition, construction contractors would be required to comply with the provisions of California Code of Regulations Title 13 Sections 2449 and 2485, which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and off-road diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes and would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Construction equipment would be subject to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, which would also minimize inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption. These practices would result in efficient use of energy necessary to construct the project. In the interest of cost-efficiency, construction contractors also would not utilize fuel in a manner that is wasteful or unnecessary. Overall, construction of the project would be temporary and typical of similar projects. Therefore, the project would not involve the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary use of energy during construction, and the construction-phase impact related to energy consumption would be less than significant.

Operational Energy Demand

After project construction, it is estimated that approximately 14 vehicle trips per week would occur along the proposed access road and bridge. These vehicle trips would occur regardless of whether

the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips. No other energy would be consumed by project operation. Therefore, project operation would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The City of Thousand Oaks adopted its Energy Action Plan (EAP) in 2012 in partnership with the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance, which aims to increase energy efficiency, expand renewable energy, and achieve carbon emission reductions at City facilities (City of Thousand Oaks 2013a). The City of Thousand Oaks also adopted the Sustainability Plan for Municipal Operations in 2018, which includes sustainable actions for energy efficiency and strives to reduce energy use for municipal operations (City of Thousand Oaks 2018a).

The General Plan contains several policies related to energy consumption. The Conservation Element contains Policy CO-39, which supports the efforts to reduce GHG emissions, consistent with the intent of the State of California's California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). The implementation measures of Policy CO-39 include reducing energy use and utilizing sustainable energy sources at City facilities where feasible, in accordance with City-adopted EAP (City of Thousand Oaks 2013a). The project would not consume energy or emit greenhouse gases beyond the short-term construction period (180 days). The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening existing maintenance vehicle trips. Therefore, no impact related to consistency with plans for energy efficiency and renewable energy would occur.

NO IMPACT

7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1. 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?	☐	☐	☐	■
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	■
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	■
4. 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 on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	■	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative 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?	☐	☐	☐	■

This analysis is based largely on a Geotechnical Evaluation report dated January 30, 2019 provided by Twining (Twining 2019). The Geotechnical Evaluation is included as Appendix A of this IS-MND.

a.1. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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?

a.2. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

a.3. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

a.4. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

As with the majority of southern California, the site is in a seismically active area and has historically experienced earthquakes from various regional faults. Geotechnical analysis conducted for the project (Appendix A) indicates the project site is not located within an earthquake fault zone. The closest mapped Earthquake Fault Zone, the Simi-Santa Rosa Fault Zone, is located approximately 1.6 miles to the north. The geotechnical report for the project indicates that the likelihood of fault rupture occurring at the site is low (Twining 2019). However, the site may be subject to strong ground motion from occasional earthquakes in the region. Bridge design would comply with seismic requirements in the California Building Code, and thus, reduce potential impacts associated with ground shaking.

According to the California Geological Survey/State Geologist, the project site is located within a Zone for Required Investigation for both liquefaction and earthquake-induced landslides. The geotechnical analysis for the project site indicates the soils at the site are not susceptible to liquefaction. Additionally, the geotechnical analysis for the project site indicates the potential for earthquake-induced landslides is low. Based on site conditions, project construction and operation is not anticipated to cause liquefaction or landslides (Twining 2019). Regardless, the bridge and access road design would comply with seismic requirements in the California Building Code. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

A significant impact would occur if construction activities or proposed uses would result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Project construction would entail pile drilling for the bridge abutments, and import of fill and grading for the access road. Construction of the access road would result in ground surface disturbance during site clearance and grading, which could create the potential for soil erosion via wind and stormwater. Wind erosion would be minimized through compliance with VCAPCD Rule 55, which requires BMPs such as watering disturbed soils to prevent wind-blown dust. Although the project site is relatively flat and has a low potential for soil erosion, peak stormwater runoff could result in short-term erosion in areas of exposed soils during precipitation events. The potential for soil erosion from stormwater would be minimized through implementation of project design features to prevent erosion. The project would require the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which includes BMPs to reduce erosion and topsoil loss from stormwater runoff (also see the discussion in Section 10, *Hydrology*

and Water Quality). In addition, the project would be required to comply with grading requirements established in Title 7, Chapter 3 of the Thousand Oaks Municipal Code, which includes erosion control and drainage requirements for construction projects involving grading. Compliance with standard conditions, BMPs, and project design features would minimize the potential for substantial soil erosion. Therefore, impacts related to erosion would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

Subsidence occurs when a large portion of the land is displaced vertically, usually due to the withdrawal of groundwater, oil, or natural gas. The project site is not located within an area of known ground subsidence and there is no extraction of groundwater, gas, oil, or geothermal energy proposed. Furthermore, the project site is not located on a geologic unit that is unstable or would become unstable as a result of project construction or operation (Twining 2019). Therefore, no impact to soil stability would occur.

NO IMPACT

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

Expansive soils contain high amounts of clay particles that swell when wet and shrink when dry. Foundations constructed on these soils are subject to uplifting forces caused by the swelling. According to the project's geotechnical report, exposed soils at the project site have a medium expansion potential (Twining 2019). Recommendations presented in the geotechnical report have been incorporated into the project design. Therefore, impact to life or property due to development on expansive soils would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

e. Would the project 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?

The proposed project includes the construction of a new access road and bridge. As such, no septic tanks or alternative on-site wastewater disposal systems are necessary, nor are they proposed for the project. Therefore, no impact regarding this issue would occur.

NO IMPACT

f. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

The City of Thousand Oaks lies in the Transverse Range Geologic Province of Southern California, and consists mainly of igneous rocks which generally do not contain fossils. Virtually all fossils within the city are contained within sedimentary rocks (City of Thousand Oaks 2013). However, no fossil bearing subsurface sedimentary bedrock or surface outcroppings are present on site, and therefore the project would cause no impact to paleontological resources.

NO IMPACT

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8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

Significance Thresholds

Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period of time. Climate change is the result of numerous, cumulative sources of GHG emissions contributing to the "greenhouse effect," a natural occurrence which takes place in the Earth's atmosphere and helps regulate the temperature of the planet.

Individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to influence climate change directly. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to significant cumulative effects, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. The issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact would be cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[h][1]).

a. Would the project generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Construction Emissions

Construction of the proposed project would be short term in nature, approximately 180 days, and generate temporary GHG emissions. Emissions would primarily result from operation of construction equipment on site as well as from vehicles transporting construction workers to and from the project site, and heavy trucks to transport building materials. Due to the relatively small size of the project site (less than one acre), impacts would be less than significant.

Operational Emissions

Project operation would involve an estimated 14 vehicle trips per week along the proposed access road and bridge for City and COSCA maintenance purposes. These vehicle trips would occur

regardless of whether the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area as well as trips between City's Municipal Services Center and HCTP. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips. Project operation would not increase electricity consumption at the site. Therefore, project operation would not generate substantial GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Several plans and policies have been adopted to reduce GHG emissions in the southern California region, including the State's 2017 Scoping Plan and the City's General Plan. The 2017 Scoping Plan's goals include reducing fossil fuel use and energy demand and maximizing recycling and diversion from landfills. As discussed in Section 6, *Energy*, the City's General Plan Conservation Element contains Policy CO-39, which supports the efforts to reduce GHG emissions, consistent with the intent of the State of California's California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). Because the proposed project would not result in a significant increase in GHG emissions, it would not conflict with any applicable plans, policies or regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material 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 in 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?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

b. Would the project 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?

Grading and construction activities would use a limited amount of hazardous and flammable substances/oils during heavy equipment operation for site preparation and building construction. Standard construction BMPs for the use and handling of such materials would be implemented to avoid or reduce the potential for such conditions to occur. Further, the transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during construction of the project would be conducted in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws, such as the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, the California Hazardous Material Management Act, and the California Code of Regulations, Title 22.

Operation of the project would not entail routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and therefore, would not pose a significant hazard to the public involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Operation of the project would be conducted in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws, as explained above. With adherence to applicable laws, the project would not create a significant hazard or emit hazardous emissions to the public or the environment, and impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?

There are no schools within 0.25 mile of the project site. The nearest school is Newbury Park Adventist Academy, located approximately one mile southwest of the site. Therefore, no impact regarding hazardous emissions within 0.25 mile of a school would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. Would the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

The following databases and listings compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 were reviewed by Rincon Consultants, Inc. on May 4, 2021 for known hazardous materials contamination at the project site:

- **State Water Resources Control Board**
  - GeoTracker search for leaking underground storage tanks (LUST) and other cleanup sites (State Water Resources Control Board[SWRCB] 2021)
- **California Department of Toxic Substances Control**
  - EnviroStor database for hazardous waste facilities or known contamination sites (Department of Toxic Substances Control [DTSC] 2021)
  - Cortese list of Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites

The project site was not listed in the above environmental databases and no other database listings were shown within 1,000 feet of the project site. Because there is no evidence of existing

contamination or hazardous material facilities/sites on the project site or in the vicinity that would create a significant safety hazard, there would be no impact associated with the project.

NO IMPACT

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

The project site is not located within an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public or private airport. The nearest airport is the Camarillo Airport, approximately nine miles to the west, and the project site is located outside of the Camarillo Airport's existing and future noise contours lines (County of Ventura 2011). Therefore, the project would not expose future residents or workers to safety hazards or excessive noise, and there would be no impact.

NO IMPACT

f. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project would increase connectivity between Hill Canyon Road and Hill Canyon Fire Road by providing a more accessible evacuation from the open space area for hikers, equestrians, and potentially municipal workers from the HCTP in the event of an emergency. Installation of the project is anticipated to improve ingress and egress to the Hill Canyon and Conejo Canyons area. Therefore, the project would result in a beneficial, rather than adverse, impact to evacuation and emergency response plans. As the project would not substantially impair an adopted evacuation or emergency response plan, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

g. Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

The project site is located within a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) identified Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CalFire 2020). The project site and surroundings also experienced a major wildfire in 2018 (Hill Fire). However, the project would increase connectivity between Hill Canyon Road and Hill Canyon Fire Road by providing a more accessible evacuation from the open space area for hikers, equestrians, and potentially municipal workers from the HCTP in the event of a wildland fire. The bridge would be constructed of materials resistant to fire, composed primarily of steel and concrete. Furthermore, the proposed project would improve access for firefighting capabilities.

Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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10 Hydrology and Water Quality

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

a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Project-related construction activities would require temporary ground disturbance and removal of vegetative cover to provide a clear area for the installation of concrete bridge footings; one concrete footing would be installed on either side of Hill Canyon, allowing the new bridge to span over Arroyo Conejo Creek. The project site topography is primarily characterized by Hill Canyon; however, the bridge footing sites on either side of the canyon are relatively flat and would be appropriately leveled as part of project construction. The bridge footings would be placed to avoid intrusion into Arroyo Conejo Creek; however, due to the need to conduct ground-disturbing activities near the creek, erosion control measures in the form of BMPs would be implemented to avoid or minimize the potential for project activities to result in erosion that could subsequently result in water quality degradation in the creek.

During construction, the contractor would develop and implement standard BMPs, including structural and non-structural erosion, sediment, waste, and pollutant control BMPs. The BMPs would include measures that would be implemented to prevent creation and discharge of eroded soils from the construction site and sedimentation of surface waters on or off the site. Standard construction BMPs for the use and handling of such materials would be implemented to avoid or reduce the potential for such conditions to occur.

Operational use of the project would result in no impact to water quality standards or waste discharge requirements because no ground-disturbing activities or associated potential for water quality degradation would occur during project operation. In addition, the access road would include a culvert under the roadway, which would be sized to accommodate surface runoff that occurs during precipitation events, and provide adequate capacity for that runoff to be conveyed under the road without resulting in soil erosion or associated water quality degradation. Potential impacts of the project to water quality would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Water would not need to be extracted or diverted for this project. However, groundwater may be encountered when piles are constructed for the eastern abutment. In anticipation of this, the contractor would prepare and submit a dewatering plan for approval that covers how expelled water would be captured and/or contained and treated. If necessary, a location for a sump has been identified adjacent to the project site.

Groundwater supplies can be directly impacted through pumping and consumption, or indirectly impacted through changing infiltration rates or patterns such that less groundwater is recharged to the subsurface. Project construction would require a water supply for dust control, which would be obtained from a local water supplier for temporary use during construction and would not decrease groundwater supplies. The project would introduce new impervious surfaces in the form of the concrete bridge footings on either side of Hill Canyon and access road connecting the bridge to Hill Canyon Road; however, although the footings themselves would be impermeable, they represent a negligible percentage of the overall surface area of the underlying groundwater basin, such that surface runoff would be able to infiltrate elsewhere within and surrounding the project site. Potential impacts to groundwater supplies or recharge would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c.(i) Would the project 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

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

The project would not alter the course of a stream or river. Project-related ground disturbing activities would avoid the stream channel, and grading would be restricted to only what is necessary for the safe installation of concrete bridge footings and the relatively short (approximately 375 feet) access road. These features would result in site-specific drainage pattern alterations, and standard erosion control measures and BMPs would be implemented to minimize or avoid potential impacts. Due to the small overall scale of the project, the project and its components (bridge abutments, paved access road, culvert installation, and possible dewatering) are not expected to create surface runoff that would result in flooding. The proposed access road would be slightly crowned so water runoff from it would be absorbed by pervious ground within the project site. Additionally, project design for the access road includes a culvert which would be sized to accommodate surface runoff during precipitation events. If groundwater is encountered during drilling activities, it will be captured and transported to the HCTP for disposal. Potential impacts associated with drainage pattern alterations and surface runoff would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c.(iii) Would the project 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 that would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

The project would not alter the course of a stream or river, and would not result in a substantial new source of surface runoff, as discussed above for Checklist Item 10.c.2. Drainage patterns through the project area would be maintained following the implementation of the project features, with site-specific alterations around the bridge footings and new access road. The proposed access road would be slightly crowned so water runoff from it would be absorbed by pervious ground within the project site. Therefore, the project would not result in exceedance of the capacity of an existing or planned drainage system. Water quality impacts are characterized under Checklist Item 10.c.1; no additional water quality impacts would occur as a result of drainage pattern alterations. Impacts to existing drainage systems and pollutant levels in surface runoff would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

c.(iv) Would the project 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 impede or redirect flood flows?

The project would not alter the course of a stream or river, and would introduce minimal new areas of impervious surfaces, consisting of the concrete bridge footings and an approximately 375-foot-

long access road. The proposed access road would be slightly crowned so water runoff from it would be absorbed by pervious ground within the project site. The project would be constructed above the 100-year peak flow elevation, and access road design includes a culvert which is sized to accommodate surface runoff that might occur during precipitation events. Therefore, the project would not impede or redirect flood flows, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The project site is approximately 10 miles from the Pacific Ocean and is not designated as a Tsunami Inundation Area according to the California Department of Conservation's (2009) Tsunami Inundation Maps. Additionally, the project site is not located near large bodies of water subject to seiches. Similarly, the project site is not located in the 100-year flood hazard area, as shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Hazard Map relevant to the project site (Map No. 06111C0958E, effective date January 20, 2010; FEMA 2010). This map shows the site is in Zone A, which includes areas subject to inundation by 0.1 percent annual chance flood events. Therefore, the project is not subject to flood, tsunami, or seiche inundation, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

e. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Water quality impacts of the project are fully characterized under Checklist Item 10.a. Construction-related water quality impacts would be avoided or minimized to a less-than-significant level. Operation of the proposed project would not involve the use or storage of potentially hazardous materials, would not consume water (groundwater or otherwise), and would not entail construction of housing. Therefore, there would be no conflict with an existing water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

11 Land Use and Planning

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

a. Would the project physically divide an established community?

b. Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The project site is undeveloped open space and does not support an established community. The Land Use Element of the General Plan designates the site as Parks, Golf Courses, Open Space and the property is zoned Open Space (O-S). The construction of a pedestrian bridge is compatible with these provisions. The project would meet the intent of following goals and policy from the City's General Plan (City of Thousand Oaks 1970, as amended):

Goal: To provide and maintain a system of natural open space and trails.

Goal: To provide and maintain a permanent park and recreational system of sufficient size and quality to serve current and future needs, consonant with community expectations.

Policy: A multi-use system of equestrian, biking and hiking trails should be implemented to provide access between and within open space reserves

The project would also meet the intent of the following goal and objective related to facilities from COSCA's Conejo Canyons Management Plan (COSCA 2010):

Goal: Provide all user groups with adequate visitor facilities while protecting the natural resources and ensuring the health and safety of the public.

Objective: Provide convenient parking and access to trails and open space by locating trailheads and neighborhood access points around the perimeter of the Conejo Canyons area so each [open space unit] is directly accessible.

As such, the project would not physically divide an established community or conflict with the General Plan designation and zoning. Additionally, the project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Therefore, no impact related to land use and planning would occur.

NO IMPACT

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12 Mineral Resources

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

a. Would the project 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. Would the project 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?

As stated in the City of Thousand Oaks General Plan Conservation Element, the region does not contain any known significant mineral resources (City of Thousand Oaks 2013). As there are no known mineral resources within the region, the proposed project would not result in the loss of locally available or important mineral resource recovery. Therefore, no impact to mineral resources would occur.

NO IMPACT

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13 Noise

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

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

Construction of the proposed project would result in a temporary increase in noise levels above existing ambient noise levels. However, there are no sensitive noise receivers located near the site. Sensitive noise receivers include residences, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, and nursing homes. The closest sensitive receivers are Newbury Park Adventist Academy and Conejo Adventist Elementary, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the project site. Construction would be restricted to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, per Chapter 4.9 of the City's Noise Element (City of Thousand Oaks 2000). Once constructed, the project would be subject to 14 vehicle trips per week (or two trips per days) as well as use by some hikers, and equestrians. The 14 vehicle trips would occur regardless of whether the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips. Due to the short-term nature of periodic construction noise and the lack of operational noise the project would create, impacts to noise would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

The proposed project would involve a new bridge and associated access road within designated open space that would be used by pedestrians, equestrians, and city vehicles. Operational use of the proposed project would not generate excessive groundborne vibration or noise. Although construction activities may generate periodic groundborne vibration or noise, this impact is not significant due to the short-term nature of these events. Additionally, there are no sensitive receivers within the vicinity of the project area. The closest sensitive receivers are Newbury Park Adventist Academy and Conejo Adventist Elementary, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the project site. Due to the lack of sensitive receptors nearby, impacts associated with groundborne vibration and noise would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public or private airport. The closest airport is the Camarillo Airport, which is approximately nine miles west of the project site. The project site is not within identified noise contours of the airport (County of Ventura 2011). Therefore, no impact related to exposure to aircraft noise would occur.

NO IMPACT

14 Population and Housing

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

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

b. Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project would not include the construction of residential units, and therefore, would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. Rather, the project consists of a new pedestrian, equestrian, and City vehicle bridge and associated access road within designated open space. The project site is also substantially surrounded by designated open space. No impact on population or housing would occur.

NO IMPACT

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15 Public Services

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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:				
	1 Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	■
	2 Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	■
	3 Schools?	☐	☐	☐	■
	4 Parks?	☐	☐	☐	■
	5 Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	■

a.1. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

a.2. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

a.3. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, or the need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

a.4. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks, or the need for new or physically altered parks, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

a.5. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other new or physically altered public facilities, or the need for other new or physically altered public facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

As discussed in Section 14, *Population and Housing,* the proposed project would not induce direct or indirect population growth, substantial or otherwise. As such, the proposed project would not result in the need for new or expanded fire protection, police protection, public schools, park facilities, or services beyond existing conditions in the area. Therefore, no impact to public services would occur.

NO IMPACT

16 Recreation

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

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?

The proposed project is expected to help alleviate the existing overcrowding at the primary Wildwood Trailhead on West Avenida de los Arboles. This would improve connectivity between the Conejo Canyons and Wildwood Regional Park trail system, thereby enabling visitors to better access open space from a variety of existing entry points. Although the proposed project would allow for greater accessibility between Conejo Canyons and Wildwood Regional Park, it would not in itself generate a substantial demand for regional parks or recreational facilities. Additionally, the proposed project would not increase deterioration of existing facilities, nor would it require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities resulting in adverse physical effects on the environment. Rather, by providing a connection between trail systems to alleviate overcrowding, the proposed project would reduce the speed of deterioration due to excess usage at the primary Wildwood Trailhead. Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. 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 use (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	■

a. Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Construction

Construction of the project would not involve any vehicle or equipment staging on Hill Canyon Road, or temporary lane closures due to construction of the access road. Construction worker and hauling traffic may result in increased traffic in the vicinity of the project site; however, these impacts would be short-term and temporary and limited to the construction period. Construction transportation impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Vehicular Access

Currently, Hill Canyon Road is the sole roadway to and from the project site. To access the Conejo Canyons trail system, City and COSCA employees currently need to enter through the designated trailheads around the open space. The proposed project would increase access to the trail systems for City and COSCA employees through the bridge and access road. The project would not include improvements or changes to existing public roadways. The proposed infrastructure would be situated on the site in a manner that would support vehicle flow (approximately 14 vehicle worker trips per week) in the project area. Operation of the proposed project would not generate traffic and therefore would not conflict with applicable programs, plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system.

Bicycle Access

Currently, no bike lanes exist in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Mountain bikers are able to use the trails that would ultimately be connected by the proposed bridge and access road, and would be able to use the associated infrastructure after construction. Because construction activities are expected to be staged within the project site, project construction would not affect existing trail access. The project would not impair the City's ability to implement changes discussed in the Active Transportation Plan (2019). Therefore, no impact to bicycle access would occur.

Pedestrian Access

The project would connect the trail systems between Conejo Canyons and Wildwood Park via the proposed bridge and access road. The project would not affect access to local bus stops. The closest bus stop is approximately 1.7 miles south of the project site. As such, the project would not support or inhibit pedestrian access to nearby bus stops. No impact to pedestrian access would occur.

Circulation

The City of Thousand Oaks General Plan outlines transportation goals and policies; the primary transportation goal of the General Plan is "to provide an integrated circulation and transportation system consistent with the Valley's form and needs" (City of Thousand Oaks 2020). The project would align with this goal by enhancing the pedestrian environment within the Conejo Canyons Open Space through connecting existing trail systems in the project area. Furthermore, as discussed above, construction and operation of the project would not involve changes to the local roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, or public transportation environment that could impede circulation or conflict with the General Plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) identifies appropriate criteria for evaluating transportation impacts. It states that land use projects with vehicle miles traveled (VMT) exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact, and that projects that decrease VMT compared to existing conditions should be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact. The City has adopted an administrative policy stating that thresholds of significance would be determined on a case-by-case basis and a significant impact would occur if the VMT per capita or VMT per employee exceeds the citywide average VMT per capita or per employee of the baseline.

As stated in Section 8, *Description of Project,* the proposed project would provide COSCA Park Rangers better accessibility to open space areas, and provide a direct route for City Public Works vehicles to the City's HCTP. Operation of the project would involve approximately 14 vehicle trips per week over the proposed access road and bridge. These vehicle trips would occur regardless of whether the project is constructed because they are related to maintenance of the designated open space area. The proposed access road and bridge would allow easier, more straightforward access to the areas in the open space that open space maintenance crews are maintaining, thereby slightly shortening maintenance vehicle trips. The proposed project would not induce VMT; rather, it would provide a more direct route for traffic that already exists and therefore, has the potential to slightly reduce VMT. Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

c. Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?

The proposed project would involve the construction of an access road west of Hill Canyon Road. The turn onto the road would have a slight curve, typical of those found at intersections. The access road would be utilized by public recreationists, as well as City and COSCA staff vehicles. As no hazardous design feature or incompatible uses would occur, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

The project would provide connectivity over Arroyo Conejo Creek via an access road and bridge where none currently exist, which would increase local access for emergency responders. This increased connectivity would provide a more accessible evacuation from the open space area for hikers, equestrians, and potentially municipal workers from the City's HCTP in the event of an emergency. Installation of the project is anticipated to improve ingress and egress to the Hill Canyon and Conejo Canyons area. Therefore, the project would result in a beneficial, rather than adverse, impact to evacuation and emergency response plans. Therefore, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

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18 Tribal Cultural Resources

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

Assembly Bill 52 of 2014

As of July 1, 2015, California Assembly Bill 52 of 2014 (AB 52) was enacted and expands CEQA by defining a new resource category, "tribal cultural resources." AB 52 establishes that "A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (Public Resources Code Section 21084.2). It further states that the lead agency shall establish measures to avoid impacts that would alter the significant characteristics of a tribal cultural resource, when feasible (Public Resources Code Section 21084.3).

Public Resources Code Section 21074 (a)(1)(A) and (B) defines tribal cultural resources as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe" and is:

1. 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
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying these criteria, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

AB 52 also establishes a formal consultation process for California tribes regarding those resources. The consultation process must be completed before a CEQA document can be certified. Under AB 52, lead agencies are required to "begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project." Native American tribes to be included in the process are those that have requested notice of projects proposed within the jurisdiction of the lead agency.

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 that is 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)?

A search of the City of Thousand Oaks Archeology Records and General Plan Conservation Element was conducted for the project. No tribal cultural resources (either listed or eligible for listing) were identified within the project site as a result of the records search. The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a listed or eligible tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 and Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k). Therefore, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code 21074 that is 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?

On October 15, 2019 the City received a tribal consultation request, in compliance with AB 52 (California Public Resources Code, Section 21074), from the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians as their records indicated the presence of significant cultural resources within distance of the project location. While the project site has been impacted by previous grading activity and natural erosion, a range of tribal cultural sites and isolated artifacts have been documented throughout the vicinity and warrant precautions when proposing any ground disturbing activities. Tribal consultation was concluded once the City and the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians agreed upon mitigation measures for potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

In the unlikely event that potentially significant cultural resources are encountered during project construction, the following mitigation measures would ensure the find is protected in place and receives an appropriate level of evaluation to determine significance and, if necessary, additional work, such as preparation of an archaeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery.

Mitigation Measures

TCR-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resources

In the event that Native American cultural resources are discovered during Project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall assess the find. All tribes that that had consultation with the City shall be contacted to consult if any such find occurs. The archaeologist shall complete all relevant California State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Series forms to document the find and submit this documentation to the applicant, Lead Agency, and the respective tribes.

TCR-2 Tribal Consultation

The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with any tribe that had consultation with City on the disposition and treatment of any Tribal Cultural Resource encountered during the Project grading.

TCR-3 Tribal Remains

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. If the human remains are determined to be Native American in origin by the County coroner, the applicant shall immediately notify the Lead Agency, and any tribe that had consultation with City.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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19 Utilities and Service Systems

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

a. Would the project 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?

The proposed project would include the construction of a bridge over Arroyo Conejo Creek and a new access road connecting the bridge to Hill Canyon Fire Road. There would be no operational water usage associated with the project. As such, the project would not require the construction of new water supply facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Additionally, the project would not require or result in new wastewater facilities. Therefore, no impact associated with water supply and wastewater would occur.

As part of the project, a culvert would be constructed under the access road. No other stormwater infrastructure would be constructed or would be necessary. Because the proposed culvert is part of the project, this IS-MND includes analysis of potential impacts associated with the culvert. According to the analysis, the culvert would not cause significant environmental effects. Therefore, impacts related to stormwater drainage would be less than significant.

The proposed project would not consume electricity or natural gas during construction or operational use, and therefore, would result in no impact related to electric power infrastructure or natural gas infrastructure.

As mentioned in Section 14, *Population and Housing,* the proposed project would not induce population growth. As such, the project would not create additional demand on telecommunication facilities such that a new facility must be constructed or an existing one be relocated. Therefore, no impact related to telecommunication facilities would occur.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

b. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

c. Would the project 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?

The proposed project would include the construction of a bridge over Arroyo Conejo Creek and a new access road connecting the bridge to Hill Canyon Fire Road. There would be no operational water usage associated with the project. As such, the project would not affect water supply availability during normal, dry, or multiple dry years during project operation. Additionally, the project would not require or result in new wastewater facilities. Therefore, no impact associated with water supply and wastewater would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. Would the project 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. Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The proposed project would not generate solid waste. However, green waste is expected to be generated during construction as a result of on-site vegetation removal. This material would be transported to a green waste recycling facility to be composted for beneficial reuse. As such, the proposed project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, and would comply with federal, State, and local management statutes and regulations. Furthermore, the proposed project would be required to participate in the City's diversion requirements for any debris generated during construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

20 Wildfire

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

a. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project site is located within a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) identified Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) (CALFIRE 2020). The project site and surroundings experienced a major wildfire in 2018 (Hill Fire). However, the project would increase connectivity between Hill Canyon Road and Hill Canyon Fire Road by providing a more accessible evacuation from the open space area for hikers, equestrians, and potentially municipal workers from the City's HCTP in the event of a wildland fire. The bridge would be constructed of materials resistant to fire, composed primarily of steel and concrete. Therefore, the project would result in a beneficial, rather than adverse, impact to evacuation and emergency response plans. As the project would not substantially impair an adopted evacuation or emergency response plan, no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

b. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Heavy duty equipment used during project construction equipment may produce sparks that could ignite vegetation. The project would comply with requirements related to construction equipment and fire suppression (e.g., California Public Resources Code Section 4442). With compliance with applicable State requirements, the project would not exacerbate wildfire risk. Additionally, the project would not have occupants and would provide additional emergency access for fire-fighting services. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

c. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project 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?

The project would involve the construction of a pedestrian, equestrian, and municipal vehicle bridge and a relatively short access road connecting to Hill Canyon Road. Neither the bridge or access road would require ongoing maintenance once installed. Although the access road and bridge would be constructed in a VHFHSZ, the project would provide greater emergency access for fire-fighting services. The project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, and no impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

d. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The project site is located within the undeveloped area of Conejo Canyons Open Space. Conejo Canyons is frequented by hikers and equestrians using the trails throughout the year. Construction of the bridge and accompanying short access road would not expose people or structures to significant risks such as flooding or landslides as a result of post-fire conditions. Rather, the bridge and access road would allow individuals an evacuation route to the main road in the event of flooding in Arroyo Conejo Creek. As mentioned in Section 7, *Geology and Soils,* the project is not located on a geologic unit that is unstable or would become unstable as a result project installation or utilization (Twining 2019). Therefore, the project would not cause or exacerbate risk of landslides to individuals within the surrounding area. No impact would occur.

NO IMPACT

21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Does the project:				
a. 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. 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. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	■

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?

The project site is located within an area that is recognized to contain sensitive wildlife and floral species and habitats as described under the Biological Resources section. However, impacts to the environment have been determined to be less than significant with mitigation. In addition, the proposed project would not cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community.

The Cultural Resources section describes the potential for cultural resources to be encountered due to the proposed project. Because construction activities would be confined to areas that have

experienced long-term and repeated disturbances, it is unlikely that significant cultural resources would be encountered during project implementation. Nevertheless, because the potential remains that previously undiscovered cultural resources could be exposed, inclusion of standard mitigation measures during construction would ensure that potential impacts to such resources are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

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)?

As discussed in the environmental checklist Sections 1 through 20, the project would have no impact, a less than significant impact, or a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated for all environmental issues. These include short-term, long-term, and where appropriate, cumulative impacts. Based on the relatively small size of the project site, temporary impacts associated with construction, and low number of vehicle worker trips, impacts to air quality and GHG emissions would be less than significant when compared to applicable thresholds that take into account cumulative impacts. The project would not contribute to cumulative operational noise increases due to the short-term nature of periodic construction noise and the lack of operational noise the project would create. In addition, as discussed in Section 17, *Transportation*, the project would not result in significant VMT related impacts and the project's contribution to cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Certain resource areas (e.g., agriculture and forestry resources, energy, land use, mineral resources, population and housing, and public services) were determined to result in no impact in comparison to existing conditions. Therefore, the project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to these issues. Other issues (e.g., geology and soils, and hazards and hazardous materials) are by their nature project-specific and impacts at one location do not add to impacts at other locations or create additive impacts. In addition, the project would not generate substantial population growth in exceedance of regional and City forecasts; therefore, it would not contribute substantially to cumulative increases in demand for utilities such as water, wastewater, and solid waste service. Accordingly, the project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

Based on the analysis provided in this IS-MND, the proposed project would not result in any environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The project site is located within designated open space and is substantially surrounded by designated open space. The project also would connect two existing recreational trails, which would be beneficial to outdoor recreationists and City and COSCA employees. The proposed project would also be beneficial to recreationists by improving public safety as the new bridge would help keep recreationists off Hill Canyon Road, which was not designed to accommodate such users.

NO IMPACT

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