County of San Diego

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March 1, 2022

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

1. Title; Project Number:

   Live Oak Springs Water System Improvements Project; 1023303

2. Lead agency name and address:

   County of San Diego, Department of Public Works
   5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 410
   San Diego, California 92123-1239

3. a. Contact Gail Getz, Environmental Planning Manager
   b. Phone number: (619) 373-2156
   c. E-mail: Gail.Getz@sdcounty.ca.gov

4. Project location:

   The proposed project is located along Old Highway 80, in the subcommunity of Live Oak Springs, in the Boulevard Community Planning Area, in southeastern unincorporated San Diego County. The project site is bounded by Old Highway 80 to the west and southwest, Royal Drive to the south, Buckthorn Trail to the east, and open space of an Indian Reservation to the north, west and east. The main water system site is at 37820 Old Highway 80, Boulevard, California 91905.

5. Project Applicant name and address:

   County of San Diego, Department of Public Works
   5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 410
   San Diego, California 92123-1239

6. General Plan.

Community Plan: Mountain Empire Subregional Plan

County of San Diego-owned project site Land Use Designation:
Semi-Rural (SR-10)

Other project site Land Use Designations within the project site:
Semi-Rural 10 (SR-10)
Semi-Rural Residential (SR-4)
Semi-Rural Residential (SR-10)
Rural Lands 20 (RL-20)

7. Zoning.

County of San Diego-owned project site Use Regulation:
S92, General Rural

Other project site Use Regulations within the project site:
C42, Visitor Service Commercial
RRO, Residential-Recreation Oriented
RMH6, Mobilehome Residential
RS, Single Family Residential

8. Description of project:

Introduction, Project Description, and Location

The County of San Diego (County) Department of Public Works (DPW) proposes the Live Oak Springs Water System Improvements Project ("project" or "proposed project"), which includes potable water distribution system upgrades and improvements. The project is located along Old Highway 80, in the subcommunity of Live Oak Springs, in the Boulevard Community Planning Area of unincorporated southeastern San Diego County.

The goals of the proposed project are to bring the existing water system up to the State Water Resources Control Board's current standards and to upgrade the system to provide a reliable source of water for the community. The proposed project would be completed in phases. The project components include construction of a new well, upgrade and replacement of existing water system components, installation of a backup generator for the water system, and an increase in water distribution capacity by 25 percent. These improvements would provide a reliable source of fire suppression to the community, provide redundant infrastructure to ensure the continued availability of water to the community, and would accommodate the additional forecasted demand for water.

Phase I of the project is currently designed and funded and would consist of improvements to convert a pilot well (a testing well created to determine the

location, depth, and target productivity presence of groundwater) to a secondary well and installation of associated infrastructure to ensure a reliable source of water for the community.

The conversion of the pilot well to a secondary well would create a backup for the existing primary well. This would involve drilling to widen the existing pilot well hole from 6-inches to 8-inches in diameter to make the secondary well operational. No additional depth drilling would occur. Phase I would also include installation of up to 50 feet of underground piping to connect the secondary well to the existing water system, installation of electrical and control upgrades and connections, installation of a diesel emergency generator within the existing water system's footprint as backup power to the water system, and placement of gravel, fencing and a gate around the new well site. Phase I improvements would occur within the existing County-owned parcel and construction is anticipated to last approximately 4 months.

A number of potential future phases of the project have been identified at the concept-level but have not yet been designed or funded. They may include construction of two new above-ground 100,000-gallon water storage tanks and associated new water piping, replacement of an existing aerial water line, replacement of existing underground potable water distribution system piping within the project site and throughout the Live Oak Springs residential community, paving of an existing driveway, culvert replacement, and buildout of an additional well. Although these components are conceptual with no engineering design, there is sufficient information about their associated activities, which are described in subsequent paragraphs, and potential impacts from these later phases would be considered throughout this environmental document.

Water Tanks and Booster Pump Station-

- Construction of two above-ground 100,000-gallon water storage tanks and a booster pump station is anticipated. The new vertical water tanks would replace two existing horizontal 20,000-gallon water tanks on the western end of the site. The new tanks would either replace the current tanks within the same footprint or be built nearby and at similar elevation. To transition from the existing tanks to new ones, temporary above-ground water tanks may be used, if needed. Construction of the water tanks and the pump station would also require installation of an underground pipeline system, to connect various water system components. Sensitive vegetation would be avoided.

Water Distribution Piping-

- Other potential future improvements to meet the anticipated demand for potable water and fire suppression include installation of 1,200 linear feet of new piping and realignment or replacement of 400 linear feet of existing piping throughout the County-owned parcel. The existing 4-inch water system piping would be replaced with 6-inch lines. The water distribution piping improvements within the County parcel may also include installation of a new water line that

would extend south, to create a loop within the water system. This would allow distribution of potable water to the adjacent residential community from either the north or the south and would reduce the number of water service interruptions when repairs are needed. These improvements would require excavation to install the new water lines.

- Additional improvements may involve replacement of 50 linear feet of an existing aerial water line that crosses Campo Creek through a suspended support system. Current pipeline may be replaced in the same location with a more stable and secure utility bridge supported by concrete pier structure, or the waterline may be undergrounded. The undergrounding could potentially result in temporary impacts to Campo Creek, if an open-trench method is used. This could result in temporary loss of vegetation and possible dewatering of Campo Creek for the duration of construction.
- Other long-term proposed work includes replacement of existing underground potable water distribution system piping throughout the Live Oak Springs residential subcommunity, to increase capacity for fire suppression and potable water distribution flows. This work would consist of excavation and replacement of up to 10,000 linear feet of underground water lines.

Driveway Entrance Off Old Highway 80-

- An asphalt concrete driveway is proposed within the existing footprint to formalize a portion of the existing dirt driveway and access road from the main, northern entrance from Old Highway 80.

Culvert Crossing Royal Drive-

- Other associated improvements include replacement of an existing culvert under Royal Drive, located in the southeastern corner of the County-owned parcel. The Campo Creek crossing in this area currently functions as an Arizona crossing because the culvert is almost completely blocked with sediment and the pipe is undersized and, thus, unable to handle an expected 100-year storm event. Therefore, the culvert would be replaced within approximately 20 feet of its current location and designed to convey low-flows from Campo Creek with a stabilized road surface to ensure the road does not wash out during larger rain events. Culvert replacement work could result in temporary impacts to Campo Creek due to excavation and temporary loss of vegetation; however, it is anticipated that no net increase of fill would occur in the creek; therefore, no permanent impacts are expected to occur.

Additional Water Well-

- Finally, other improvements may include buildout of an additional well to replace the future secondary well, at which time the secondary redundant well would become primary and the present primary well may be decommissioned.

Construction duration of future phases would vary; however collectively, they are anticipated to last approximately 12 to 18 months, excluding Phase I, which would last approximately 4 months. Construction of the project phases would largely

occur either on the County-owned parcel or within the existing County water line easements. If needed, temporary construction access would be coordinated with the surrounding property owners. Minimal use of potable water would be required during construction for dust control, to avoid contamination of the well by the use of recycled water. This water would be hauled in from off site by the contractor and no on-site groundwater would be used for dust control.

Standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs), including dust suppression measures, erosion and sediment control measures (sand and gravel bags, fiber rolls, and silt fencing), use of weed-free erosion control products, noise suppression measures, trash containment methods, and preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, would be implemented during construction of project components. Upon completion of each project phase, excavated areas would be backfilled with native soil, restored to the original contours, and hydroseeded using an appropriate native plant seed mix as approved by the County.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting:

The project site and surrounding area can be characterized as semi-rural residential, general commercial, open space of an Indian Reservation to the north, west and east, and rural lands uses, as well as undeveloped lands. Existing development within the project area includes the existing potable water system site, various businesses, residences, and Live Oak Springs Resort Park.

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

Permit Type/Action	**Agency**
401 Permit – Water Quality Certification	Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
404 Permit – Dredge and Fill	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
1602 Permit – Fish & Game Code	California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)

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

YES ☒ NO ☐

Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52, consultation was conducted with culturally affiliated tribes. County DPW staff sent letters to the identified Tribal representatives on November 8 and 9, 2021 and followed up via email and

telephone calls on November 19 and December 7, 2021. Three Tribes requested AB 52 consultation: Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, and Campo Band of Mission Indians; one Tribe requested Sacred Lands consultation - La Posta Band of Diegueño Mission Indians; and one Tribe requested both AB 52 and Sacred Lands consultation - Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians. For further information on tribal consultation, please refer to Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources. As of the date of this Initial Study, tribal consultations have concluded.

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

☐ 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:
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works Environmental Services finds that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works Environmental Services finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works Environmental Services finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Gail Getz Digitally signed by Gail Getz
Date: 2022.02.25 15:54:30 -08'00'

Signature	Date
Gail Getz	Environmental Planning Manager
Printed Name	Title

INSTRUCTIONS ON EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

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

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

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

4. "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
    a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
    b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
    c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

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

7. The explanation of each issue should identify:
    a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
    b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

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

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

NO IMPACT: The project site and surrounding area can be characterized as developed, rural lands, rural commercial, semi-rural residential land uses, and undeveloped lands. Existing development adjacent to the project site includes local restaurants, a gas station, rural residential, Live Oak Springs Resort Park, and the Campo Indian Reservation to the north, east, and west. Based on a site visit completed by County staff on April 13, 2020, and DPW staff Gail Getz and Masha Landau on December 6, 2021, the proposed project is not located near or within a scenic vista and would not substantially change the composition of an existing scenic vista in a way that would adversely alter the visual quality or character of the view. The proposed project would conduct phased water system improvements and upgrades to improve service reliability, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The proposed project would be consistent with the rural residential aesthetic of the surrounding area and would not result in a significant visual change as the improvements would primarily be underground. Therefore, the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. No impact would occur.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: State scenic highways refer to those highways that are officially designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as scenic (Caltrans - California Scenic Highway Program). Generally, the area defined within a State scenic highway is the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. The dimension of a scenic highway is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision, but a reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon. The scenic highway corridor extends to the visual limits of the landscape abutting the scenic highway. Interstate 8 and State Route 94 are proximate to the project site, but both are only eligible and not officially designated state scenic highways, and the project would not interrupt views of either.

The proposed project is located approximately 320 feet to the east of Old Highway 80, which is considered a historic scenic highway based on the County's General Plan (2011), but not a State scenic highway. Due to the topography of the site, difference in elevation between the road and project site, and shrub vegetation in the line of site, the project would not damage or remove visual resources within the viewshed from Old Highway 80.

The nearest state-designated scenic highway is State Route 125, approximately 37 miles westerly of the project site at its closest point. Additionally, the project is not located on or near state-designated scenic resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic resource within a state scenic highway and no impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: Visual character is the objective composition of the visible landscape within a viewshed. Visual character is based on the organization of the pattern elements line, form, color, and texture. Visual character is commonly discussed in terms of dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity. Visual quality is the viewer's perception of the visual environment and varies based on exposure, sensitivity and expectation of the viewers. The existing visual character and quality of the project site and surrounding area can be characterized as developed, rural lands, rural commercial and semi-rural residential land uses. Existing developments adjacent to the project site include restaurants, a gas station, residences, and Live Oak Springs Resort Park.

The project would consist of improvements and upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity.

The development would be consistent with the provisions in the goals and policies outlined in Chapter 5 of the County General Plan specific to development siting and design, which require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features (County of San Diego 2011). The proposed project would not result in a significant visual change, as most of its components would be replaced within the existing footprint and be limited to sub-terranean improvements and upgrades. Additionally, due to the topography of the site, difference in elevation between the road and project site, and shrub vegetation in the line of site, the project would not damage or remove visual resources within the viewshed of Old Highway 80, a historic scenic highway designated by the County's General Plan. The proposed project would not alter the visual character of the existing or surrounding community and would be consistent with the rural residential aesthetic of the Live Oak Springs community, as well as the vision, community character, Dark Skies, and other provisions of the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan.

The project would not result in cumulative impacts on visual character or quality because the proposed project, in combination with potential future cumulative projects, would not degrade the existing visual character, or quality of the site and its surroundings, or result in incompatible changes in visual character or degrade the overall quality of a scenic vista. Therefore, the project would not result in any adverse project or cumulative level of effect on visual character or quality on-site or in the surrounding area. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would upgrade the existing deficient water distribution system and does not propose construction of new outdoor daytime or nighttime lighting. An existing security nighttime lighting exists on the project site and is downward facing. This lighting source will remain and continue to fulfill the same function after the proposed project's completion. The project does not propose any use of building materials with highly reflective properties such as highly reflective glass or high-gloss surface colors and majority of the improvements would be undergrounded. Therefore, the project would not create any new sources of light pollution that could contribute to skyglow, light trespass or glare and adversely affect day or nighttime views in area. Therefore, no impact would occur.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site includes rural residential development and undeveloped natural open space. The eastern portion of the project site is mostly developed with the rural residential subcommunity of Live Oak Springs and the western portion is mostly undeveloped with contiguous areas of both disturbed and native vegetation, including the Campo Creek riparian corridor, along with areas of disturbed habitat and developed land. The water distribution system upgrades and improvements would generally occur within the footprint of the existing water system, to bring the system up to the public water system's standards, provide a reliable source of water to the community and increase water system's distribution capacity. According to the California Department of Conservation's Important Farmland Finder (2021), the project site is classified as Urban Built-Up Land and Other Land and does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide. The project site is underlain by both Prime Soils and Soils of Statewide Significance, according to the County GIS mapping application (2021) for Agricultural land designations. However, the proposed project would not modify the use of any of agricultural lands to a non-agricultural use or otherwise negatively affect agriculture as the project would be primarily replacing and upgrading an existing water system. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site is zoned General Rural on the western portion and Residential, Residential-Recreation Oriented, and Mobilehome Residential on the eastern portion. The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract, nor is it zoned for an agriculture use. Additionally, the proposed improvements would not conflict with agricultural uses since the project would, primarily, be replacing and/or upgrading an existing water distribution system within its existing above ground and underground

footprint. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site does not contain forest lands or timberland. The County does not have any existing Timberland Production Zones. In addition, the project is consistent with existing zoning, and a rezone of the property is not proposed. Therefore, proposed project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland production zones. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site does not contain any forest lands, as defined in California Public Resources Code, Section 12220(g); therefore, project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use. In addition, the project is not in the vicinity of off-site forest resources. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site does not contain active agricultural operations or lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (2021) of the California Resources Agency. The project site is underlain by both Prime Soils and Soils of Statewide Significance, according to County GIS (2021), Agricultural land designations. However, the project would not involve any changes to the existing environment that would result in the conversion of farmland to a non-agriculture use, as the site is not designated for agriculture and would be upgrading an existing water distribution system within its existing above ground and underground footprint. Therefore, no impact would occur.

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) or applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)?

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The applicable air quality planning documents for the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) are the 2016 Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) (SDAPCD 2016) and the Ozone Attainment Plan (SDAPCD 2020), which is the SDAPCD portion of the State Implementation Plan. The SDAPCD prepared the RAQS and Ozone Attainment Plan for the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to include as part of the State Implementation Plan. These plans demonstrate how the San Diego Air Basin would either maintain or strive to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Both documents were developed in conjunction by the SDAPCD to reduce regional ozone (O3) emissions**.** A project is deemed inconsistent with air quality plans if it would result in population and/or employment growth that exceeds estimates used to develop applicable air quality plans, which, in turn, would generate emissions not accounted for in the regional emissions budgets. Therefore, the proposed project is evaluated to determine if it is consistent with the land use designations and growth anticipated in the RAQS and ozone attainment and maintenance plans prepared for the San Diego region.

The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the existing adjacent community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase the water system’s distribution capacity.

The project would not result in a change in land use designation or zoning that would conflict with San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) growth projections. In addition, operation of the proposed project would not generate additional vehicle trips that could contribute to air quality impacts. The only new emissions from the project would be from construction. Construction would occur in phases, as the project components would be constructed over several years. Phase I is anticipated to last approximately 4 months and potential future phases would take approximately 12 to 18 months to complete and emissions would be minimum necessary to complete the improvements and remain temporary and localized. No new emissions would occur as a result of operations of the project, as the proposed project would operate passively and similarly to the current conditions, using the same type of equipment. Therefore, the project would not affect implementation of applicable air quality plans or SANDAG growth projections used in development of the RAQS and SIP. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with either the RAQS or the SIP on a project-based or cumulative level and impact would be less than significant.

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

San Diego County is presently in non-attainment for the 1-hour and 8-hour concentrations under the California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS) for ozone (O_3). San Diego County is also presently in non-attainment for the annual geometric mean and for the 24-hour concentrations of particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns (PM_{10}) and for 24-hour concentrations of particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$) under the CAAQS. O_3 is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) react in the presence of sunlight. VOC sources include any source that burns fuels (e.g., gasoline, natural gas, wood, oil), solvents, petroleum processing and storage, and pesticides. Sources of PM_{10} in both urban and rural areas include motor vehicles, wood burning stoves and fireplaces, dust from construction, landfills, agriculture, wildfires, brush/waste burning, and industrial sources of windblown dust from open lands.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Air emissions associated with the project include emissions of PM_{10}, NO_x, and VOCs from construction and grading activities. However, grading operations associated with the construction of the project would be subject to the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, which requires the implementation of dust control measures. Emissions from the construction phase would be minimal, localized and temporary, resulting in PM_{10} and VOC emissions below the screening-level criteria established by the Land Use and Environment Group (LUEG) guidelines for determining significance.

The proposed project would consist of upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The proposed project would generate criteria pollutants and precursors in the short-term during the construction period; however, there would be no long-term increase due to operations. The proposed project would not significantly increase road trips nor would it change any road capacity; therefore, the project would not result in an operational increase in O_3 emissions from traffic. In addition, there would be no increase in operational emissions from before and after construction. Potential emissions associated with the project are not expected to create a cumulatively considerable impact nor a considerable net increase of $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10} or any O_3 precursors. As such, the proposed project's potential impacts due to a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants would be less than significant.

A list of past, present and future projects within the surrounding area were evaluated and none of these projects emit significant amounts of criteria pollutants or are considered projects under CEQA. The proposed project, as well as past, present, and future projects within the surrounding area, have emissions below the screening-level criteria established by the LUEG guidelines for determining significance; therefore, the construction and operational emissions associated with the proposed project are not expected to create a cumulatively considerable impact, nor a considerable net increase of $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10}, or any O_3 precursors.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (preschool–12th grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, or day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. The County of San Diego also considers residences as sensitive receptors since they house children and the elderly. The nearest receptors to the project site are residences located approximately 135 feet to the west of the western project site boundary, at its closest point. The nearest school is Clover Flat Elementary School, approximately 2.6 miles to the southeast.

The analysis of project-related impacts on human health focuses on those localized pollutants with the greatest potential to result in a significant, material impact on human health. This is consistent with the current state-of-practice and published guidance by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (2009), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (2015), and CARB (2005). These pollutants are locally concentrated diesel particulate matter (DPM) and carbon monoxide (CO).

Health risks related to DPM are assessed qualitatively based on anticipated emissions and proximity to sensitive receptors. Construction generates DPM emissions from the use of heavy-duty equipment and trucks. DPM concentrations, and thus cancer health risks, dissipate as a function of distance from the emissions source. Because construction activity would be very limited and short-term, significant DPM emissions are not anticipated.

The second source of potentially significant health risk is CO. Elevated CO concentrations are typically found in areas with significant traffic congestion. CO is a public health concern because it combines readily with hemoglobin and reduces the amount of oxygen transported in the bloodstream. The County requires an analysis of localized CO concentrations associated with traffic congestion to ensure concentrations remain below CAAQS and National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The County has developed a set of preliminary screening criteria that can be used to determine whether a project would cause or contribute to an existing or future violation of the ambient air quality standards. The criteria include placement of receptors within 500 feet of a signalized intersection operating at or below level of service (LOS) E, or degradation of road intersections with peak-hour trips exceeding 3,000 to LOS E or worse. The proposed project would consist of improvements and upgrades of an existing water distribution system and would not result in a significant increase in trips on surrounding roadways during construction and would not result in an increase in trips during project's operations. In addition, due to the rural nature of the area, crowded intersections resulting in a CO hotspot are highly unlikely.

The project does not propose uses or activities that would result in exposure of these identified sensitive receptors to significant pollutant concentrations and would not place receptors near carbon monoxide hotspots. In addition, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations because the proposed project, as well as potential future cumulative projects, have emissions below the screening-level criteria established by the LUEG guidelines for determining significance. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: CARB's Air Quality and Land Use Handbook (2005) includes a list of the most common sources of odor complaints received by local air districts for ongoing operational impacts. Typical sources of odor complaints include

facilities such as sewage treatment plants, landfills, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, and livestock operations.

Construction associated with the proposed project could result in minor amounts of odor compounds associated with diesel-heavy equipment exhaust. In addition, the project could produce objectionable odors during construction from paving and equipment operation; however, these substances, if present, would be minimal and temporary. Odors associated with construction would not result in substantial nuisance odors that would result in a significant impact.

The project would consist of improvements and upgrades of an existing deficient water distribution system and would not include any substantial odor-causing sources. Therefore, the project would not result in significant odors during operation, and impact would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

The following analysis is based on the Biological Resources Letter Report (BLR) prepared by Harris & Associated (Harris 2022) for the proposed project. The report includes the results of a database review, biological resources surveys conducted on Aril 29 and 30, 2021, protocol least Bell's vireo surveys conducted in May, June and July 2021, rare plants surveys conducted in May and August 2021, and aquatic resources delineation conducted on April 28 and May 7, 2021, which serve to document the existing biological conditions of the project site.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICAN IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Sensitive Wildlife Species

Biological resources were mapped within the entire project site boundary (Harris BLR 2022, Figure 4). Seventy-one wildlife were observed within the survey area, of which 7 are sensitive, and they are: bobcat, red-shouldered hawk, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, turkey vulture, western bluebird, white-tailed kite, and yellow warbler (Harris BLR 2022, Figure 10). Of the sensitive wildlife species not observed but with a potential to occur on the project site, none were determined to have a high potential to occur on

the project site. An active red-tailed hawk nest was observed in a cottonwood in the southwestern portion of the project site. The project site is likely to be used as a movement corridor for both sensitive and common wildlife species because of the presence of the Campo Creek riparian corridor and native vegetation communities, and because it is surrounded by natural, open space. However, development to the north and east likely limit large-scale east–west and north–south wildlife movement in the surrounding area. No state or federally endangered or threatened wildlife species were observed or have a potential to occur on the project site and no critical habitat for sensitive plant or wildlife species occurs on the project site.

The following potential **direct impacts** were identified:

- The project has the potential to directly impact the sensitive wildlife species observed on the project site through temporary construction activities, including those that could displace individual wildlife or eliminate portions of their habitat. Implementation of the project could result in both permanent and temporary direct loss of habitat, including live-in, nesting, and foraging habitat, for the majority of the seven sensitive wildlife species that occur on the project site.
- Potential direct temporary impacts to approximately 0.001 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest would result from the replacement of an existing culvert under Royal Drive, as a component of a potential future phase of the project. If direct temporary impacts to southern arroyo willow riparian forest that supports sensitive raptors and birds were to occur, they would be potentially significant.
- Non-native grassland on the project site provides suitable foraging habitat for sensitive wildlife species that occur on the project site, including San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, red-shouldered hawk, turkey vulture, western bluebird, and white-tailed kite. Temporary impacts to 1.44 acres and permanent impacts to 0.009 acres of non-native grasslands as a result of direct habitat loss during construction could result in potentially significant impacts to these sensitive mammal, raptors, and other sensitive bird species.
- Project implementation has the potential to impact raptor and bird species that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the CFGC Section 3504. If construction is conducted during the raptor and bird breeding season (January 15 through August 31), temporary disturbance and displacement of nesting birds during vegetation removal could result in significant direct impacts to bird species protected under the MBTA. Impacts would be potentially significant.
- If vegetation or tree removal is required as part of Phase I or potential future phases and conducted during the raptor and bird breeding season, this could result in significant temporary direct and indirect impacts to raptor and bird species protected under the MBTA.

The following potential **indirect impacts** were also identified:

- Indirect temporary impacts to sensitive wildlife species during project construction could include noise, dust deposition, increased soil erosion, increased human activity, introduction of non-native species, increased presence of predators

(coyotes, ravens, and other mesocarnivores) from trash, and increased potential of exotic species invasion due to human activity and soil disturbance.

- The project has the potential to drive sensitive wildlife species from the construction area, riparian corridor in the central portion of the project site, and upland habitat in the western and central portions of the project site because of noise, equipment operation, and human activity.
- The native and non-native trees and shrubs that occur throughout the project site provide nesting habitat for sensitive raptor and bird species. Indirect impacts from construction noise and vibration during the clearing, grubbing, and trenching activities under Phase I and potential future phases, if conducted during the bird breeding season, could result in significant temporary impacts to raptor and bird species protected under the MBTA.

To mitigate for these potential direct and indirect impacts to sensitive wildlife species, the following mitigation and minimization measures would be implemented and incorporated into the project design:

BIO-MIT-1: Minimization of Impacts to Sensitive Biological Resources
A qualified biologist provided by the County DPW (or their designee) would be on site periodically during construction activities that require implementation of specific measures. The qualified biologist would be responsible for implementing the following measures:

- Prior to the start of construction, the qualified biologist would be present to oversee the installation of fencing or staking along the limits of construction for all phases. All areas near but outside of the limits of construction that contain sensitive biological resources would be designated as environmentally sensitive areas and would be avoided. To ensure avoidance, the construction limits would be fenced off using snow fencing or other high-visibility fencing or staking material and clearly marked on construction as-built plans. The qualified biologist would check the protective fencing approximately weekly to ensure it remains in place through the end of the construction period, and the fencing around the limits of construction would be maintained throughout construction.
- The qualified biologist would flush sensitive species (i.e., avian or other mobile species) from occupied habitat areas immediately before brush clearing and earthmoving activities. The biological monitor would be authorized to halt all associated project activities that may be in violation of the project mitigation measures.
- The qualified biologist would instruct the contractor's personnel in providing daily cover and/or adequate escape ramps/routes for wildlife from excavated areas and oversee compliance by visiting the construction site approximately weekly. All steep trenches, holes, and excavations during construction would be covered at night with backfill, plywood, metal plates, or other means, and the edges would be covered with soils and plastic sheeting such that small wildlife cannot access them. Soil piles would be covered at night to prevent wildlife from burrowing in. The edges of the sheeting would be weighed down by sandbags. These areas may also be

fenced to prevent wildlife from gaining access. Exposed trenches, holes, and excavations would be inspected to monitor for wildlife entrapment by the contractor's personnel daily and by an approved biologist during site visits. Excavations would provide an earthen ramp to allow for a wildlife escape route.

BIO-MIT-2: Nesting Season Avoidance and Pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys

- Grubbing, trimming, or clearing of vegetation from the project site would avoid the raptor and bird breeding season (January 15 through August 31) to the greatest extent feasible.
- If grubbing, trimming, or clearing of vegetation cannot feasibly occur outside of the general bird breeding season, the qualified biologist would perform a pre-construction nesting bird survey no more than 1 week prior to the start of vegetation grubbing, trimming, or clearing to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. Should an active bird nest be located, the qualified biologists would establish a buffer and direct vegetation clearing away from the nest until the project biologist has determined that the young have fledged or the nest has failed. If no nesting birds (including nest building or other breeding or nesting behavior) are on the project site, grubbing, trimming, or clearing would proceed.
- In the event that grubbing, trimming, or clearing of vegetation for future phases cannot feasibly occur outside of the general bird breeding season, and are greater than 500 feet away from the previous construction activity, a qualified biologist would perform a pre-construction nesting bird survey no more than 1 week prior to the start of construction.

In addition, post construction, all temporary impact areas would be revegetated to pre-construction conditions or better and/or mitigated for off-site with appropriate ratios. This mitigation measure is detailed in **BIO-MIT-3,** Restoration of Sensitive Vegetation Communities, and discussed lower in Section IV(a) after the detailed discussion of impacts to vegetation communities.

The following **General Avoidance and Minimization Measures** would be implemented during construction to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive wildlife species.

General Avoidance and Minimization Measures:

- A Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) was prepared and standard construction BMPs would be implemented, including: dust suppression measures, erosion and sediment control measures (sand and gravel bags, fiber rolls, and silt fencing), use of weed-free erosion control products, spill prevention and control, concrete waste management, solid waste management, and sanitary waste management.
- Pursuant to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System General Construction Permit (Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ), a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) may be prepared and implemented. The SWPPP would address the potential sources and locations of stormwater contamination characteristics, impacts of specific contaminants, and temporary and permanent erosion-control practices and would include water sampling data, construction

practices that minimize stormwater contamination, coordination of BMPs with planned construction activities, and compliance with County, state, and federal regulations.
- The project is designed to use the disturbed habitat areas (primarily the existing dirt roads) for project impacts to avoid temporary and permanent impacts to the majority of the higher quality vegetation communities on the project site.
- For all proposed project phases, upon completion of construction, areas disturbed during excavation or grading would be backfilled with native soil and restored using a native species hydroseed and/or plantings.

With the implementation of the above General Avoidance and Minimization Measures, and implementation of Mitigation Measures **BIO-MIT-1**, Avoidance and Minimization of Impacts to Sensitive Biological Resources, **BIO-MIT-2**, Nesting Season Avoidance and Pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys, and **BIO-MIT-3,** Restoration of Sensitive Vegetation Communities (discussed lower in Section IV(a) for restoration of vegetation communities), temporary and permanent direct and indirect impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status wildlife species and nesting birds and raptors from project construction would be reduced to less than significant.

Sensitive Plant Species

Based on the Biological Resources Letter Report for the Live Oak Springs Water System Improvements Project dated January 12, 2022 (BLR), biological resources were mapped within the entire project site boundary (Harris BLR 2022, Figure 4). Only one sensitive and state-endangered plant species – Jacumba milk-vetch – was observed on the project site. It occurs in the non-native grassland and at the edges of the disturbed areas in the northwestern portion the project site, in the montane manzanita chaparral in the northeastern portion, and in the disturbed coast live oak woodland in the southeastern portion of the project site (Harris BLR 2022, Figure 8a and 8b). In addition, one sensitive and state-endangered plant species – Tecate tarplant – was not observed but was determined to have a high potential to occur in the chamise chaparral, buck brush chaparral, and scrub oak chaparral habitats that are adjacent to disturbed open areas in the western portion of the project site. No other state or federally endangered or threatened plant species were observed or have a high potential to occur on the project site.

Impacts to vegetation communities may occur if earthwork, grading, or vegetation trimming/clearing would occur. The following **direct permanent and temporary impacts** were identified:

- Of the approximately 91 Jacumba milk-vetch individuals occurring on the project site, approximately 4 individuals are in the dirt access road in the northwestern portion of the project site. These four individuals could be impacted during project construction activities, including construction vehicle access and improvements to the access road entrance. Consistent with the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance, impacts to less than 5 percent of a County List A plant

species or its habitat may be considered less than significant, contingent upon the determination that the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the long-term survival of that plant species. Impacts to the four Jacumba milk-vetch individuals constitute less than 5 percent of the total population on the project site and, therefore, are considered a less than significant impact to the species. No adverse impact to the larger population of Jacumba milk-vetch on the project site would occur because most of the population is outside of the impact areas.

The following potential **indirect impacts** may occur as a result of construction:

- Indirect impacts to sensitive plants would primarily result from adverse edge effects during construction of the project. Edge effects could include trampling; dust, which could disrupt plant vitality in the short term; construction-related pollutant discharges; soil erosion; and runoff.

The following **Sensitive Species Impact Avoidance Measures** would be implemented during construction to avoid impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status plant species and vegetation communities on-site.

- **Sensitive Plant Species Impact Avoidance Measures** Tecate tarplant can potentially occur on the project site. The chamise chaparral, buck brush chaparral, and scrub oak chaparral vegetation communities would also be avoided to the greatest extent feasible by project construction, thereby avoiding potential impacts to Tecate tarplant.
- Prior to construction, protective fencing or staking would be installed to mark the limits of construction to make the avoidance areas easily identifiable by construction crews. In addition, the limits of construction would be clearly marked on the construction plans, and construction activities outside of the construction limits would be prohibited.

With the implementation of **General Avoidance and Minimization Measures** and the **Sensitive Plant Species Impact Avoidance Measures**, potential impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status plant species and vegetation communities observed and with a high potential to occur on the project site would be less than significant.

Cumulative impacts from the project were evaluated in consideration of past, present, and future projects within the project vicinity. While there would be a minor permanent loss of Jacumba milk-vetch and a small number of non-native grassland areas, the impacts would be minimal and are not expected to contribute to a cumulative loss of sensitive plant species or habitat for sensitive wildlife species with potential to occur on or around the proposed project area.

Therefore, any 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 CDFW or USFWS would be mitigated to a level below significance.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED: Based on the BLR (Harris 2022, Figure 4), biological resources were mapped within the entire project site boundary. Eleven sensitive vegetation communities were identified on the project site and they are: coastal and valley freshwater marsh, non-vegetated channel, fresh water, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, big sagebrush scrub (including disturbed), buck brush chaparral, chamise chaparral, montane manzanita chaparral, scrub oak chaparral, coast live oak woodland (disturbed), and non-native grassland (Harris BLR, Figure 6). Of these thirteen, four sensitive vegetation communities have the potential to be impacted by the project, and they include: non-vegetated channel, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, big sagebrush scrub, and non-native grassland.

Table BIO-1 presents permanent and temporary impact acreages of four of the sensitive vegetation communities on the project site that would result from implementation of the project.

Table BIO-1. Impacts to Sensitive Vegetation Communities on the Project Site

Vegetation Community	Project Site (acres)	Temporary Impacts (acres)	Permanent Impacts (acres)	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation Required (acres)
Riparian					
Non-vegetated channel (64200)	0.75	0.009	0.00	3:1	0.027
Southern arroyo willow riparian forest (61320)	1.70	0.001	0.00	3:1	0.003
Subtotal	*2.45*	*0.01*	*0.00*	—	*0.03*
Scrub and Chaparral					
Big sagebrush scrub (and disturbed) (35210)	0.56	0.008	0.00	2:1	0.016
Subtotal	*0.56*	*0.008*	*0.00*	2:1	*0.016*
Upland					
Non-native grassland (42200)	18.40	1.44	0.009	0.5:1	0.72

Subtotal	*18.40*	*1.44*	*0.009*	0.5:1	*0.72*
Total[1]	**21.41**	**1.46**	**0.01**	**—**	**0.77**

Sources: Harris 2022 **Notes:** [1]Total acreages rounded up to one-hundredth.

Direct temporary and permanent impacts to approximately 1.47 acres of sensitive vegetation communities would occur on the project site. The sensitive vegetation communities that would be temporarily and permanently impacted on the project site include non-vegetated channel, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, big sagebrush scrub (and disturbed), and non-native grassland.

The following **direct permanent and temporary impacts** were identified:

- Direct impacts to non-native grassland in the northwestern portion of the project site, including approximately 1.44 acres of temporary direct impacts and approximately 0.009 acre of permanent direct impacts would result from construction of Phase I components, including grading and vegetation removal, buildout of a secondary well, generator concrete pad, equipment storage and staging and stockpiling areas, and potential future phase components.
- Direct temporary impacts to approximately 0.008 acre of big sagebrush scrub in the northwestern portion of the project site would result from construction of a potential future replacement of 50 linear feet of an existing aerial water line (aerial line) that crosses Campo Creek. No direct permanent impacts to big sagebrush scrub would result from implementation of Phase I.
- The temporary direct impacts to approximately 0.009 acre of non-vegetated channel and approximately 0.001 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, would result from construction activities associated with the implementation of potential future phase components in the northwestern and southern portions of the project site, due to the replacement of an existing culvert under Royal Drive and of the aerial line in the northwest of the project site
- No direct permanent impacts to coast live oak woodland (and disturbed) or southern arroyo willow riparian forest (SAWRF) would result from implementation of Phase I. Potential direct temporary impacts to approximately 0.001 acre of SAWRF would result from the replacement of an existing culvert under Royal Drive as a component of a potential future phase of the project.

The following potential **indirect impacts** may occur as a result of construction:

- Indirect impacts to riparian habitat or sensitive natural community could result from invasion by exotic species, exposure to construction-related pollutant discharges, dust, soil erosion and runoff, and trampling by humans.

To mitigate for these potential direct and indirect impacts to sensitive vegetation communities, the following mitigation and minimization measures would be implemented and incorporated into the project design:

With the implementation of the **General Avoidance and Minimization Measures** and Mitigation Measure **BIO-MIT-1**, Avoidance and Minimization of Impacts to Sensitive Biological Resources, both discussed in Section IV(a), and implementation of Mitigation Measure **BIO-MIT-3**, Restoration of Sensitive Vegetation Communities, discussed below, Biological Resources, impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities from project construction would be reduced to less than significant.

BIO-MIT-3: Restoration of Sensitive Vegetation Communities

- Direct temporary impacts to approximately 0.008 acre of big sagebrush scrub shall require in-kind revegetation in place at a 1:1 ratio once construction is complete (County of San Diego 2010b).
- Temporary impacts to approximately 0.009 acre of non-vegetated channel and approximately 0.001 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest (both potentially under the jurisdiction of USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW) shall be mitigated for through on-site restoration or off-site mitigation in accordance with ratio as negotiated with the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW through the aquatic resources permitting process (BIO-MIT-4: Section IV(c)).
- Temporary impacts to approximately 1.44 acres of non-native grassland shall require revegetation using native grass seed at a 0.5:1 ratio once construction is complete.
- Direct permanent impacts to 0.009 acre of non-native grassland shall be mitigated at a ratio of 0.5:1 through on-site revegetation or off-site mitigation of the temporary non-native grassland areas using native grass seed once construction is complete.

Cumulative impacts from the project were evaluated in consideration of past, present, and future projects within the project vicinity. While there would be permanent and temporary impacts to non-native grassland, and minor temporary impacts to big sagebrush scrub, non-vegetated channel, and southern arroyo willow riparian forest, these areas would be restored either on-site or off-site and mitigated for in accordance with the ratios established by the County and the resource agencies. Therefore, there is not expected to be a significant cumulative impact.

Therefore, with implementation of BIO-MIT-1 and BIO-MIT-3 mitigation measures and the General Avoidance and Minimization Measures, any adverse effect, whether direct or indirect, on sensitive vegetation communities, including non-vegetated channel, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, big sagebrush scrub (and disturbed), and non-native grassland habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS, would be mitigated to a level below significance.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact

☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Based on an analysis of the County's GIS records, the County's Comprehensive Matrix of Sensitive Species, site photos, and a BLR and an Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR) dated January 2022, prepared by Harris & Associates, it has been determined that wetland and non-wetland waters of the US and State, as defined by Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act, including non-vegetated channel and coastal and valley freshwater marsh, occur on the project site. In addition, these same areas are likely regulated under Section 1600 by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as jurisdictional streambed and wetlands; CDFW would also regulate riparian areas.

The potential federal and state jurisdictional aquatic resources mapped on the project site include Campo Creek, tributary Channels 1 through 6, and Pond 1 through 3. The riparian vegetation communities that occur within the potential federal and state jurisdictional aquatic resources areas on the project site include the approximately 0.04-acre coastal and valley freshwater marsh within the southern extent of Campo Creek, approximately 0.75 acre of non-vegetated channels in Campo Creek and Channels 1 through 6, approximately 1.26 acre of fresh water within Ponds 1 through 3, and approximately 1.70 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest.

Potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources and the permanent and temporary impacts to the aquatic resources are summarized in Table BIO-2, Impacts to Potential Non-Wetland Waters of the United States and State on the Project Site.

Table BIO-2. Impacts to Areas Potentially Under the Jurisdiction of USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW

Jurisdictional Areas	Total Survey Area in Acres	Permanent Impacts in acres	Temporary Impacts in acres	Jurisdiction	
				Federal (USACE)	State (RWQCB and CDFW)
Non-wetland Waters of U.S. and State / Non-vegetated channel/streambed**	0.75 (3,161 linear feet)	0.00	0.009	✓	✓
Riparian zone (southern arroyo willow riparian forest)*	1.70	0.00	0.001	NA	✓
Total		**0.00**	**0.01**	—	—

*CDFW area of jurisdiction includes all USACE jurisdictional waters.
**Non-vegetated channel/streambed area is not included in the riparian zone so that no area is counted twice for the same jurisdiction.

The following **direct permanent and temporary impacts** were identified:

- Direct temporary impacts to 0.009 acre of Campo Creek, a potential jurisdictional non-wetland waters of the US and State and CDFW Streambed, and 0.001 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest in the western portion of the project site would result from construction of potential future phase project components, including the replacement of an existing culvert under Royal Drive (southwestern area) and the replacement of 50 linear feet of an existing aerial water line that crosses Campo Creek (northwestern area) through either a suspended support system or undergrounding using an open-trench method. The Campo Creek non-vegetated channel and the southern arroyo willow riparian forest are potentially under the jurisdiction of the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW, pursuant to Sections 404 and 401 of the CWA and the LSAA.

The following potential **indirect impacts** may occur as a result of construction:

- As described in Sections IV(a) and (b), potential indirect impacts to potential jurisdictional aquatic resources on the project site could result from generation of fugitive dust, changes in hydrology resulting from construction (including sedimentation and erosion), and exposure to construction-related pollutant discharges.

With the implementation of the **General Avoidance and Minimization Measures,** the **Sensitive Plant Species Impact Avoidance Measures,** and Mitigation Measures **BIO-MIT-1**, Avoidance and Minimization of Impacts to Sensitive Biological Resources, discussed in Section IV(a) and **BIO-MIT-4**, discussed below, Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources, temporary direct and indirect impacts to potential federal and state jurisdictional aquatic resources would be reduced to less than significant.

BIO-MIT-4: Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources

- Temporary impacts to the 0.009-acre non-vegetated channel and 0.001 acre of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, both potentially under the jurisdiction of the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW, would be authorized by the USACE through the Section 404 Permit Program, by the RWQCB through a 401 State Water Quality Certification, and by the CDFW through a 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement.
- Approved temporary impacts to the potential federal and state jurisdictional non-vegetated channel and southern arroyo willow riparian forest require mitigation such as on-site habitat restoration, creation, and enhancement. Appropriate restoration and mitigation would be determined through negotiations with the resource agencies to the satisfaction of the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW to achieve a no-net loss of federal and state jurisdictional non-wetland waters and wetlands.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Based on the BLR, the area surrounding the project site provides movement and suitable nesting, foraging, and dispersal areas of wildlife species and connections to nearby open space areas. The project site is likely to be used as a movement corridor for both sensitive and common wildlife species because of the presence of the Campo Creek riparian corridor and native vegetation communities, and because it is surrounded by natural, open space. The presence of the Live Oak Springs rural residential community directly to the east, the Golden Acorn Casino development approximately 1 mile to the north, and the I-8 freeway corridor approximately 1 mile to the north of the project site have the potential to limit large-scale east-west and north–south wildlife movement in the surrounding area. However, the open space immediately surrounding and on the project site has the potential to provide important habitat connectivity both locally and regionally. Potential impacts to aquatic spaces and wildlife species identified in Section IV(c) and IV(a), respectively, would be mitigated by BIO-MIT-1 through BIO-MIT-4, in conjunction with the avoidance and minimization measures and potential habitat restoration, creation, and enhancement. On-site restoration and mitigation would be determined through negotiations with the resource agencies.

The project would not permanently impact the majority of the project site, including the Campo Creek riparian corridor, and would not impede the north–south wildlife movement that the corridor provides. General wildlife movement routes would remain after implementation of the project. Additionally, the project site is not located within or adjacent to any USFWS-designated critical habitat. While the project would cause minimal permanent and temporary impacts to a number of sensitive vegetation communities and sensitive wildlife species, implementation of the project would not substantially interfere with the movement or established migratory corridors of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, including the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, impacts to wildlife movement corridors would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project falls within the draft East County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), which is currently in development and has not yet been adopted. A significant impact would result if the project would conflict with any local policies or

ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. The proposed project would include phased water system improvements and upgrades, to improve service reliability, bring up the system to the current public water systems standards, and increase the system's distribution capacity.

The project would comply with the local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources identified in the County's General Plan. Therefore, no impacts to local policies or ordinances would occur from implementation or construction of the proposed project. Mitigation measures BIO-MIT-1 through BIO-MIT-4, discussed in this Sections IV(a) through IV(c), are proposed to reduce impacts to a level of less than significant.

f) Conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would comply with the local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources identified in the County's General Plan. The project is within the Boulevard Community Planning Area boundary of the Draft East County Plan area of the MSCP (County of San Diego 1998). The Draft East County Plan is currently in development and has not yet been adopted; therefore, the project site is not within a Habitat Conservation Plan and is not subject to the County MSCP Plan, Natural Community Conservation Planning program, or the Biological Mitigation Ordinance. Although the project is not subject to the County MSCP, the project adheres to the mitigation ratios for sensitive vegetation communities designated for non-MSCP County lands (Harris 2022).

If construction activities are to occur within the MBTA avian or raptor breeding season as discussed in Section IV(a), pre-construction surveys as discussed in Biological Resources Section IV(a) BIO-MIT-2, would preclude impacts to nesting birds. In addition, construction activities would have the potential to impact sensitive vegetation communities and implementation of BIO-MIT-3, as discussed in Section IV(a), restoration, would mitigate for potentially significant impacts to these vegetation communities.

The proposed project is exempt from the County's Resource Protection Ordinance, which regulates land within unincorporated San Diego County, because the project is an essential public facility pursuant to Section 86.605, Exemptions, item (c). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with this local policy protecting biological resources.

Therefore, no impacts to local policies or ordinances would occur from implementation of the project.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED: On May 12, 2021, Donna Beddow, Harris & Associates senior archaeologist, and Shuuluk Linton, Red Tail Environmental Kumeyaay Native American monitor, conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of both western and eastern portions of the project site. The results of the survey are provided in a Cultural Resources Survey Report dated July 2021 and prepared by Harris & Associates. Additionally, on April 13, 2020, Nathanial Yerka, archeologist of RECON Environmental and Jason Pinto of the Jamul Indian Village conducted a separate pedestrian survey of a smaller, northwestern portion of the project site. The results of the survey are provided in Cultural Resources Survey Report for the Live Oak Springs Water System Project dated May 5, 2020, prepared by RECON Environmental. No historical resources were identified during either pedestrian survey and a single previously recorded prehistoric site (CA-SDI-85) was not relocated, as discussed lower.

Based on an analysis of records obtained from the California Historical Resources Information System on June 2, 2021 and from the Native American Heritage Commission on August 25, 2021, previous studies, review of historical maps and aerials of the project site, three sites were identified within a half mile of the project site that are considered historical (CA-SDI-12267/P-37-12267, P-37-024023, and P-37-036677) and one site is considered multicomponent because it includes both prehistoric and historical components (CA-SDI-23083/P-37-039473). Table CR-1 shows previously recorded historical resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site.

Table CR-1 Previously Recorded Historical Resources within a 0.5-Mile Radius

Primary Number	Trinomial	Chronological Placement	Site Type	Size	Location
P-37-012267	CA-SDI-12267	Historical	Residence	31x21 feet	Adjacent to project site
P-37-024023	NA	Historical	Road – Old Highway 80	NA	Adjacent to project site
P-37-0036677	NA	Historical	Fencing	1,320x190 feet	Offsite

P-37-039473	CA-SDI-23083	Multicomponent	Lithic Scatter Historic to Modern Refuse	30x30 meters	Adjacent to the project site

Site P-37-012267 is adjacent to the project area and is a residential structure that was constructed in 1923. It was evaluated by Roman Beck and Joyce Joyner (1991) and determined not to be a significant resource. P-37-024023 is Old Highway 80, which is also adjacent to the project site and has been recorded numerous times. It is identified as eligible for listing in the NRHP. Site P-37-036677 is approximately 0.2 mile southwest of the project area. Site P-37-039473 (adjacent to the project site) is a scatter of lithic debitage and historical to modern refuse. This site was recorded in 2021 by ASM Affiliates (Jordan, Rochester, and Brown).

Because P-37-012267, P-37-024023, CA-SDI-23083/P-37-039473, and P-37-036677 are adjacent to and not within the project site, the project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of these historical resources.

However, there is a possibility that subsurface archaeological resources, both prehistoric and historic-period, may occur within the project alignment and could be found during ground-disturbing activities or vegetation clearing and grubbing, particularly within undisturbed native sediments. Mitigation measures **CUL-MIT-1, CUL-MIT-2**, and **CUL-MIT-3** below have been included to address historical and archaeological resources inadvertently discovered during construction.

> **CUL-MIT-1: Cultural Monitoring.** A County-provided qualified archaeologist and Kumeyaay Native American monitor would be present during the project-related vegetation clearing and grubbing and initial ground-disturbing activities. If inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources are made, the County, project archaeologist, and appropriate Native American representative would divert or temporarily halt ground disturbance operations in the area of discovery to assess the significance of the resources and confer regarding the appropriate treatment. (i.e., preservation, avoidance, and/or mitigation for the resources). As part of the objectives, criteria, and procedures required by Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, a lead agency would make provisions for historical or unique archaeological resources inadvertently discovered during construction.
>
> Consistent with California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(b) and Assembly Bill 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014), avoidance would be the preferred method of preservation for cultural resources. Work could continue in other parts of the project site while historical or unique archaeological resource mitigation takes place. The project archaeologist, in consultation with the County, would determine the significance of the discovered resources. For significant cultural resources, a Research Design and Data Recovery Program to mitigate impacts would be prepared by the archaeologist and approved by the County, then carried out using professional archaeological methods.

CUL-MIT-2: Inadvertent Archaeological Find. If during ground disturbance activities, unique cultural resources are discovered, the following procedures would be followed:

i. All ground disturbance activities within 100 feet of the discovered cultural resources would be halted until a meeting is convened between the County, project archaeologist, and appropriate Native American representative to discuss the significance of the find.
ii. At the meeting, the significance of the discoveries would be discussed and after consultation with the County, appropriate Native American representative, and the project archaeologist, a decision would be made as to the appropriate mitigation (documentation, recovery, avoidance, etc.) for the cultural resources.
iii. Grading of further ground disturbance would not resume within the area of the discovery until an agreement has been reached by all parties as to the appropriate mitigation. Work would be allowed to continue outside of the buffer area and would be monitored by additional cultural monitors if needed.
iv. Treatment and avoidance of the newly discovered resources would be consistent with the Cultural Resources Management Plan and Monitoring Agreements entered into with the appropriate tribes. This may include avoidance of the cultural resources through project design, in-place preservation of cultural resources located in native soils and/or reburial-burial on the project property so they are not subject to further disturbance in perpetuity as identified in Non-Disclosure of Reburial Condition.
v. If the find is determined to be significant and avoidance of the site has not been achieved, a Phase III Data Recovery Plan would be prepared by the project archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribe, and would be submitted to the County for their review and approval prior to implementation of said plan.
vi. Consistent with California Public Resources Code, Section 21083.2(b), and Assembly Bill 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014), avoidance would be the preferred method of preservation for cultural resources.

CUL-MIT-3: Cultural Resources Disposition. The following procedures, in order of preference, would be employed with the tribes and carried out for final disposition of the inadvertent discoveries of Native American cultural resources:

i. Preservation in place of the cultural resources, if feasible. Preservation in place means avoiding the resources, leaving them in the place where they were found with no development affecting the integrity of the resources.
ii. Reburial of the resources on the project property. The measures for reburial would include, at least, the following: Measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts in perpetuity. Reburial would not occur until all legally required cataloging and basic recordation have been completed, with an exception that sacred items,

burial goods and Native American human remains are excluded. Any reburial process would be culturally appropriate. Listing of contents and location of the reburial would be included in the confidential Phase IV Report. The Phase IV Report would be filed with the County under a confidential cover and not subject to Public Records Request.

iii. If preservation in place or reburial is not feasible then the resources would be curated in a culturally appropriate manner at a San Diego County curation facility or Tribal curation facility that meets State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the guidelines. The collection and associated records would be transferred, including title, and are to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation. Evidence of curation in the form of a letter from the curation facility stating that subject archaeological materials have been received and that all fees have been paid, would be provided to the County. There would be no destructive or invasive testing on sacred items, burial goods and Native American human remains. Results concerning finds of any inadvertent discoveries would be included in the Phase IV Monitoring Report.

The following procedure would be employed for the disposition of historic period cultural materials:

i. Historic materials would be curated at a San Diego curation facility and would not be curated at a Tribal curation facility or repatriated. The collections and associated records, including title, would be transferred to the San Diego curation facility and would be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation. Evidence would be in the form of a letter from the curation facility stating that the historic materials have been received and that all fees have been paid.

Proposed project construction and operation would not be qualitatively different from current operational activities and would continue to occur within the existing footprint of the water system. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an impact to historical resources. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED: Based on an analysis of records obtained from the California Historical Resources Information System on June 2, 2021 and from the Native American Heritage Commission on August 25, 2021, no cultural resources would be impacted by the project. In total, 19 studies have been conducted within a half-mile radius, and five sites were identified. Of the previously recorded sites, one site is prehistoric (CA-SDI-85/P-37-000085), three sites are historical (CA-SDI-12267/P-37-12267, P-37-024023, and P-37-036677), and one site is multicomponent and includes both prehistoric and historical components (CA-SDI-23083/P-37-039473). One previously recorded site - CA-SDI-85 - was not relocated during the pedestrian surveys.

Table CR-2 shows previously recorded historic and cultural resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The historic resources shown in the table were further evaluated in Section IV (a), above.

Table CR-2. Previously Recorded Cultural and Historic Resources within a 0.5-Mile Radius

Primary Number	Trinomial	Chronological Placement	Site Type	Size	Location
P-37-000085	CA-SDI-85	Late Prehistoric	Ceramic Scatter	100 x 100 meters	Onsite but not relocated
P-37-012267	CA-SDI-12267	Historical	Residence	31 x 21 feet	Adjacent to project site
P-37-024023	NA	Historical	Road – Old Highway 80	NA	Adjacent to project site
P-37-0036677	NA	Historical	Fencing	1,320 x 190 feet	Offsite
P-37-039473	CA-SDI-23083	Multicomponent	Lithic Scatter Historic to Modern Refuse	30 x 30 meters	Adjacent to project site

The study conducted by RECON Environmental (Zepeda-Herman 2020) identified one new prehistoric site (CA-SDI-23150/P-37-039596) and one isolate (P-37-039595). Isolate P-37-039595 consisted of two fine-grained porphorytic metavolcanic flakes, and site CA-SDI-23150 is a bedrock milling feature containing four milling slicks. Site CA-SDI-23150 was not tested for significance. As such, significance is assumed. The RECON Environmental survey did not relocate the previously recorded prehistoric site CA-SDI-85 in 2020.

As stated above**,** Donna Beddow, Harris & Associates senior archaeologist, and Shuuluk Linton, Red Tail Environmental Kumeyaay Native American monitor, conducted an intensive pedestrian survey on May 12, 2021. The goal was to provide a supplemental survey to the survey that was completed by RECON Environmental in 2020 and to identify the location of a known archaeological site CA-SDI-85 and potentially relocate it. The project site was inspected for evidence of archaeological remains, with a focus on trails, dirt roads, and cleared areas. The two parcels that were surveyed on the western portion

of the project site are vegetated with dense cover in the form of non-native grasses. The eastern portion of the survey included the community of Live Oak Springs. The survey in this area was limited to the roadways and road right-of-way areas. Some roads are paved (asphaltic concrete) while others are composed of dirt with a decomposed granite overlay. Cut banks and cleared areas were surveyed for the presence of resources. No resources were identified on the eastern portion of the project.

An isolate (I-LOS-1) was found during the survey of the western portion of the project site. The Native American monitor identified the isolate in the existing dirt trail/road east of the on-site facilities on the eastern portion of the project site. The isolate is a tertiary metavolcanic flake. The flake was evaluated in the field and no use wear was evident. The isolate likely was moved to its current location as a result of historical agricultural use and development of the area within the project site. The isolate was recorded, photographed, and left in place. Because artifact I-LOS-1 is a cultural isolate and isolates are not considered significant because they lack characteristics that would qualify them for listing on the NRHP, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of this prehistoric resource.

Because Site CA-SDI-23150, previously recorded by RECON Environmental in 2020 was not tested for significance, this site was assumed to be a significant cultural resource and this resource would be avoided to preclude a potentially significant impact.

In addition, previously recorded prehistoric site CA-SDI-85 was not relocated, as no evidence of this site was found within the dirt roadways/trails or cleared areas. Site CA-SDI-85 was determined to not be significant due to the lack of identified artifacts and/or cultural materials. However, there is the potential for CA-SDI-85 to contain buried resources that could be unearthed during construction activities. Therefore, there is the potential for the project to disturb unknown buried cultural resources and this impact is potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of **CUL-MIT-4** would reduce potentially significant impacts to CA-SDI-23150 with the implementation of perimeter fencing. Implementation of **CUL-MIT-1, CUL-MIT-2,** and **CUL-MIT-3,** referenced in Section V(a), would reduce impacts to buried cultural resources by providing a cultural monitor during initial project-related clearing and grubbing and during initial ground disturbing activities as well as following proper procedures for inadvertent finds and cultural resources disposition. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to unknown buried cultural resources to less than significant.

> **CUL-MIT-4: Fencing of a Known Resource.** Prior to any initial project-related vegetation clearing and grubbing within the project area, a qualified archaeologist and a Kumeyaay Native American monitor would be present on site to oversee the installation of Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) fencing around the perimeter of CA-SDI-23150 to avoid impacts to the site.

Therefore, due to the inclusion of a qualified archaeologist and Kumeyaay Native American monitor during vegetation clearing and grubbing and initial project-related ground-disturbing activities, along with the inadvertent discoveries and cultural resources disposition mitigation measures, and fencing of a known resource, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA §15064.5.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED: Based on an analysis of records obtained from the California Historical Resources Information System on June 2, 2021, and from the Native American Heritage Commission on August 25, 2021, no known cultural resources would be impacted by the project. A pedestrian survey by Harris & Associates' senior archaeologist and Shuuluk Linton, a Kumeyaay Native American monitor of Red Tail Environmental, was conducted on May 12, 2021 and by RECON Environmental archaeologist Nathanial Yerka and Jason Pinto of the Jamul Indian Village on April 13, 2020. The results of the surveys are provided in Cultural Resources Survey Letter Report dated December 2021 and prepared by Harris & Associates, and Cultural Resources Survey Report for the Live Oak Springs Water System Project, dated May 5, 2020 and prepared by RECON Environmental.

As discussed in Section V(b) above, there is the potential for buried cultural resources to occur within the project site. Due to the overall sensitivity of the project site and in the vicinity, there is the potential for unknown human remains to occur on site to be disturbed during project construction activities. Therefore, this impact is potentially significant. Due to the overall archaeological sensitivity of the project area and per the requests made during the AB 52 and Sacred Lands consultations, the County would provide qualified archaeologist and a Kumeyaay cultural monitor during vegetation clearing and grubbing and initial project-related ground disturbing activities as a minimization measure.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of **CUL-MIT-1**, described in Section V(a), would reduce impacts by requiring a cultural monitor during initial project-related clearing and grubbing and during initial ground disturbing activities. In addition, **CUL-MIT-5** would be implemented to require proper procedures for the handling of any potentially found human remains during construction. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to human remains to less than significant.

CUL-MIT-5: Human Remains Avoidance and Minimization Efforts. A qualified archaeologist and a Kumeyaay Native American monitor would be provided during initial project-related ground-disturbing activities. If human remains are encountered, consistent with California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5, no further disturbance would occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin of the remains. Further, consistent with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98(b), human remains would be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made.

If the County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) would be contacted within 24 hours. The NAHC would immediately identify the most likely descendant(s) (MLD) and notify them of the discovery. The MLD would make recommendations within forty-eight (48) hours after being allowed access to the site and engage in consultations with the landowner concerning the treatment of the remains. The immediate vicinity where the Native American human remains are located is not to be damaged or disturbed by further construction activity until consultation with the MLD regarding their recommendations as required by California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, has been conducted. Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5; and California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5, would be followed.

Therefore, due to the inclusion of a qualified archaeologist and Kumeyaay Native American monitor during vegetation clearing and grubbing and initial project-related ground-disturbing activities, the project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The proposed project does not involve or introduce ongoing operational uses that would create a new source of energy consumption. The water distribution system upgrades and improvements would bring the system up to the public water system's standards, provide a reliable source of water to the community and increase water system's distribution capacity. During construction, temporary consumption of energy resources would occur for approximately 4 months for Phase I and approximately 12 to 18 months for potential future phases. Construction activities

that include the use of natural gas, petroleum, or electricity would be temporary and negligible and would not have an adverse effect. Construction equipment would be required to comply with CARB emissions requirements for construction equipment, which includes measures to reduce fuel-consumption, such as imposing limits on idling and requiring older engines and equipment to be retired, replaced, or repowered. Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, which limit engine idling times and require recycling project-related debris, would reduce short-term energy demand during the project's maintenance, to the extent feasible.

During maintenance, there would be a minor consumption of energy resources for the movement of equipment and materials, but the maintenance would be limited to the area already being maintained, as the project involves the improvements and upgrades of an existing deficient water distribution system. Nominal impacts are expected from project implementation. The project does not include any features that would encourage wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of utilities. Therefore, the project would not result in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during the project's maintenance activities. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

State and local authorities regulate energy use and consumption through various means and programs. These regulations at the state level intended to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These include, among others, Assembly Bill (AB) 1493–Light-Duty Vehicle Standards, California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6–Energy Efficiency Standards, California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11–California Green Building Standards.

NO IMPACT: State plans that address renewable energy and energy efficiency are California Green Building Standards Code, the California Energy Code, and the Renewables Portfolio Standard. The proposed project would include minor temporary energy consumption during construction and only minor energy consumption would be required during project operation, primarily for maintenance activities. During operation, there would be consumption of energy resources for the maintenance, but maintenance would be limited to the area already being maintained, as the project involves the improvements and upgrades of an existing deficient water distribution system. Thus, the project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of these State plans addressing renewable energy.

Additionally, the proposed project would be consistent with the County's Energy Management Program, specifically one of the program's action plans titled "County's 2015-2020 Strategic Energy Plan" (Plan). One of the Plan's components is "County operations energy strategy." Its main objective is to ensure sustainability practices are assimilated into the organization and to minimize utility (water and energy) consumption/costs. The proposed project would include improvements to an existing water system, including needed repairs and upgrades, which would reduce leaks thus making the system more water efficient. In addition, the system includes very limited energy consumption, primarily for maintenance, and this is an existing operation, not anticipated to substantially increase.

Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No impact would occur.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

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

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The County is within Seismic Zone 4 (California Building Code [CBC], Section 1629.4.1), which is the highest seismic zone and, like most of Southern California, is subject to ground shaking. Active faults in the region include segments of the San Jacinto, Elsinore, and Rose Canyon fault zones. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed to prevent construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface of active faults. The project is not in a fault rupture hazard zone identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42, Revised 1997, Fault-Rupture Hazards Zones in California, or within any other area with substantial evidence of a known fault. Additionally, the project would not introduce any habitable buildings or structures because the project consists of improving and upgrading an existing deficient water distribution system. Therefore, impacts from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from a known fault-rupture hazard zone as a result of the project would be less than significant.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: San Diego County is located within a seismically active region; however, strong seismic shaking is a regional hazard and is not particular to any one project site. The risk of people or structures experiencing substantial adverse effects as a result of the project is low because the project does not propose above-ground structures which people would routinely inhabit. Any new development would be required to comply with the seismic zone standards of the most recent California Building Code. The design and construction of the proposed improvements and upgrades to the existing potable water distribution system would be consistent with applicable California and County codes and would not expose people or structures to potential adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking. Impact would be less than significant.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project site is within a “Low Liquefaction Area” as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards (2007). The proposed project would involve phased upgrades and improvements to an existing deficient water distribution system and does not propose any buildings or habitable structures. Therefore, there would be no potentially significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from a known area susceptible to ground failure, including liquefaction. In addition, since liquefaction potential at the site is considered low, earthquake-induced lateral spreading is not considered to be a seismic hazard at the site, and impact would be less than significant.

iv. Landslides?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project site is within a “steep slopes” soil slip susceptibility area, as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards using the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, San Diego,

California (URS 2004). However, the proposed project would involve phased upgrades and improvements to an existing water system and does not propose any buildings or habitable structures. Additionally, the proposed project does not require any significant grading activities. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to landslides. Therefore, there would be low potential for impacts from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from landslides. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site is underlain by Mottsville loamy coarse sand, loamy alluvial, La Posta loamy coarse sand soils, and Tollhouse rocky coarse sandy loam (USDA 2021). Mottsville loamy coarse sand (2 to 9 percent slopes) occurs along the edge of the western portion of the project site and the majority of the eastern portion of the project site. Loamy alluvial soils (0 to 5 percent slopes) occur on the central and northwestern portion of the project site. La Posta loamy coarse sand (5 to 30 percent slopes) occurs on the central and northern areas of the western portion of the project site. A small area of Tollhouse rocky coarse sandy loam (30 to 65 percent slopes) occurs on the southeastern portion of the project site. All four of these soils are defined as well-drained (USDA 2021). However, the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil for the following reasons:

- The project would not result in unprotected erodible soils, would not permanently alter existing drainage patterns, and would not develop steep slopes.
- As mentioned earlier in Section IV, a SWQMP has been prepared. The SWQMP includes some or all of the following BMPs to ensure sediment does not erode form the project site: gravel bags, fiber rolls, spill prevention and control, concrete waste management, solid waste management, and sanitary waste management.

Due to these factors, the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. In addition, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact because all of the past, present and future projects included on the list of projects that involve grading, excavation or land disturbance would be required to follow the requirements of the San Diego County Code of Regulations, Title 8, Zoning and Land Use Regulations, Division 7, Sections 87.414 (Drainage – Erosion Prevention) and 87.417 (Planting); Order 2001-01 (NPDES No. CAS 0108758), adopted by the San Diego Region RWQCB on February 21, 2001; County Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance (WPO) (Ord. No. 9424); and County Stormwater Standards Manual adopted on February 20, 2002, and amended January 10,

2003 (Ordinance No. 9426). Refer to Section XXI for a comprehensive list of the projects considered. Impact due to substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil would not occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project includes improvements and upgrades of an existing deficient water distribution system that would bring the system up to the public water system's standards, provide a reliable source of water to the community and increase water system's distribution capacity. No buildings or habitable structures are being proposed as part of the project and the project site is not in a fault rupture hazard zone. For further information regarding landslides, liquefaction, and lateral spreading, refer to Section VII, Geology and Soils, Section (a) iii - iv listed above. Therefore, the project is not on unstable soil or other geologic conditions, nor would it cause the area to become unstable. The potential for unstable soils due to the project would be low and no impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project does not contain expansive soils as defined by Table 18-I-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994). The project site is underlain by Mottsville loamy coarse sand, loamy alluvial, La Posta loamy coarse sand soils, and Tollhouse rocky coarse sandy loam (USDA 2021). Mottsville loamy coarse sand (2 to 9 percent slopes) occurs along the edge of the western portion of the project site and the majority of the eastern portion of the project site. Loamy alluvial soils (0 to 5 percent slopes) occur on the central and northwestern portion of the project site. La Posta loamy coarse sand (5 to 30 percent slopes) occurs on the central and northern areas of the western portion of the project site. A small area of Tollhouse rocky coarse sandy loam (30 to 65 percent slopes) occurs on the southeastern portion of the project site. Most of these soils have a shrink-swell behavior of low and represent no substantial risks to life or property. The Tollhouse rocky coarse sandy loam has a medium expansion potential but is only located on a small portion of the project site The proposed project involves phased upgrades and improvements to an existing water system, no buildings or habitable structures are being

proposed, and the project site is not located in a fault rupture hazard zone or on expansive soils. Therefore, the project would not create a substantial risk to life or property and impact would not occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The proposed project would consist of phased upgrades and improvements to an existing water system. The project does not propose any septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems since minimal wastewater would be generated. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: According to the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Paleontological Resources (2007), the project site lies in an area classified as "None" for paleontological resources potential and sensitivity. No impact would occur.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

The State of California has developed guidelines to address the significance of climate change impacts based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, which contains two

significance criteria for evaluating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of a project. CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.4, states that the "determination of the significance of GHG emissions calls for a careful judgment by the lead agency consistent with the provisions in Section 15064. A lead agency should make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project."

Section 15064.4(b) further states that a lead agency should consider the following nonexclusive list of factors when assessing the significance of GHG emissions:

- The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;
- The extent to which project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project; and
- The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement statewide, regional, or local plans for the reduction or mitigation for GHG emissions.

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064(h)(1), states that "the lead agency would consider whether the cumulative impact is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable." A cumulative impact may be significant when the project's incremental effect, though individually limited, is cumulatively considerable.

GHGs include carbon dioxide, methane, hydrofluorocarbons, and nitrous oxide, among others. Human-induced GHG emissions are a result of energy production and consumption, and personal vehicle use, among other sources.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water system standards, and increase the water system's distribution capacity. Emissions during project construction would be minimal, occur temporarily, and could include transport of equipment and materials to and from the site, removal of spoils and/or debris, and construction personnel commuting to and from the project site. Emissions from the proposed project would be limited to the construction activities and would not involve land use development that would generate long-term operational impacts. Emissions from the construction phase would be minimal, temporary, and localized and would cease once the project is constructed.

To implement State mandates to address climate change in local land use planning, local land use jurisdictions are preparing GHG emission inventories and reduction plans and incorporating climate change policies into local General Plans to ensure development is guided by a land use plan that reduces GHG emissions. The County's General Plan incorporates various climate change goals and policies. These policies provide direction for individual development projects to reduce GHG emissions (County of San Diego 2011a).

The County prepared a comprehensive CAP in February 2018 to demonstrate how the County may achieve statewide mandates (County of San Diego 2018). In June 2020, the

County CAP was overturned in court and has been set aside as a qualified CAP meeting the requirements of the CEQA Guidelines. However, the County CAP continues to serve as guidance for the County's long-term GHG emissions reduction goals, including the identification of required GHG emissions reduction measures, and remains the best available source of County's GHG emissions data and forecasts, as the data were not challenged in the lawsuit. A CAP Update that will identify necessary actions for the County, based on anticipated future GHG emissions from the current General Plan Land Use Element, is in progress. As such, a project that is consistent with the County's General Plan and would implement applicable GHG emissions reduction strategies, would generate less than significant GHG emissions and comply with the County's efforts to achieve state reduction targets.

In the interim, the County DPW has a Greenhouse Gas Guidance Memorandum (DPW GHG Guidance Memo) dated November 24, 2020, and prepared by Harris & Associates, to estimate the potential GHG emissions associated with recurring infrastructure maintenance activities that DPW regularly performs. The DPW GHG Guidance Memo uses an established screening level that determines which projects warrant a project-specific climate impact analysis.

A screening level based on the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association's (CAPCOA) report CEQA & Climate Change has typically been used to determine whether further analysis would be needed to examine the GHG impacts of a proposed project (CAPCOA 2008). CAPCOA developed a specific screening threshold, by analyzing the capture of 90 percent or more of future discretionary development for residential and commercial projects across the state. A screening level that would capture 90 percent of aggregate annual GHG emissions would not impede achievement of the statewide GHG emissions reduction targets codified by Assembly Bill 32 (2006) and Senate Bill 32 (2016), and, therefore, impacts under CEQA would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Senate Bill 32 sets a GHG emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. To calculate the associated screening threshold, a regression trajectory was calculated, reducing the operational year emissions target from the 900 MT CO2E target in 2020 to 540 MT CO2E target in 2030. This trajectory is outlined in Table GHG-2:

Table GHG-1 GHG Screening Thresholds Trajectory

Year	Emissions Threshold (MT CO_2e)
2020	900
2021	855
2022	813
2023	722
2024	734
2025	697
2026	662
2027	629

2028	598
2029	568
2030	540

Source: CAPCOA 2008; SB 32 MT = metric tons; CO2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
Note: Emissions thresholds reduce by 4.98 percent each year to achieve SB 32's 2030 target.

The annual emissions screening level of 900 MT CO2E was originally developed to address operational impact of GHG emissions from land use development. Since the introduction of the CAPCOA guidance, several air districts in the state have issued additional guidance that construction emissions should be included in assessment of operational GHG emissions by amortizing the total GHG construction emissions over the lifespan of a project, and then adding that amortized total to the operational emissions. This approach ensures all GHG emissions that occur from a project are included in the assessment. While similar to land use developments, different improvements or maintenance activities can vary depending on the improvement, unlike typical land use developments where an average lifespan is used, infrastructure projects should be assessed based on the specific improvement life span.

The 813 MT CO2e screening threshold for year 2022 for ongoing annual emissions is a conservative screening criterion for determining which projects require further analysis and identification of project design features or potential mitigation measures regarding GHG emissions.

The proposed project would include various construction activities, including underground water pipeline segment replacements and new segments installation, small area concrete placement, road paving, culvert replacement, grading, and materials hauling. The most applicable maintenance types for the proposed project covered by the DPW GHG Guidance Memo would include: water and sewer line relining and replacement, concrete pathway installation, asphalt/concrete resurfacing, culvert rehabilitation, grading, and materials hauling. Using estimated work dimensions of the proposed project's various components and their subsequent conversion to the appropriate units of measure in the DPW GHG Memo, when summed up, the proposed project's construction activities would emit approximately 473 MT CO2e[1].

When amortized over 50 years, the assumed average lifespan of the water pipelines and the water system upgrades and improvements, including paving of a road, the proposed construction activities would contribute approximately 9.46 MT CO2e per year. This would be well below the screening threshold for any year along the trajectory outlined in Table GHG-2. Therefore, GHG impacts from construction of the project would be less than significant.

The total project emissions would be far below any relevant numerical threshold in the state. The project would not result in additional vehicular traffic and the project's

[1] 473 MT CO2e calculation: 457.07 MTCO2e (piping replacements and installations) + 0.37 MTCO2e (concrete pouring/installation) + 0.02 MTCO2e (asphalt road paving) + 4.04 MTCO2e (culvert rehabilitation) + 11.69 MTCO2e (grading) = 473 MTCO2e

incremental contribution to cumulative GHG emissions is determined to not be cumulatively considerable because emissions are far below relevant numerical thresholds. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: In 2006, the state passed the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly referred to as Assembly Bill 32, which set the GHG emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law requires that, by 2020, state emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources through regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions. Assembly Bill 32 directed the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to prepare and approve a Scoping Plan to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions from sources or categories of sources of GHGs by 2020 and to update the Scoping Plan every 5 years. The most recent update, the 2017 Scoping Plan, outlines the framework for achieving the 2030 reductions as established in Executive Order B-30-15 and Senate Bill 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan identifies GHG emissions reductions by emissions sector to achieve a statewide emissions level that is 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. CARB recommends statewide targets of no more than 6 MT CO_2e per capita by 2030 and no more than 2 MT CO_2e per capita by 2050 (CARB 2017). Therefore, the 2017 Scoping Plan is the applicable plan with which the project must demonstrate consistency regarding state goals.

Senate Bill 375, passed in 2008, links transportation and land use planning with global warming. It requires CARB to set regional targets to reduce GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. Under this law, if regions develop integrated land use, housing, and transportation plans that meet Senate Bill 375 targets, new projects in these regions can be relieved of certain review requirements under CEQA. Pursuant to Senate Bill 375, SANDAG prepared the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy, which is a new element of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. The strategy identifies how regional GHG emissions reduction targets, as established by CARB, will be achieved through development patterns, transportation infrastructure investments, and/or transportation measures or policies determined to be feasible. Therefore, the Sustainable Communities Strategy is the applicable plan for the project to support regional goals for transportation emissions.

The proposed project would comply with statewide targets and regional regulations for GHG emissions reductions because it would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system. The upgraded and replaced project components, as well as the system overall, would be used in the same or similar capacity as its existing use. In

addition, the project is not considered a new trip generator that would warrant a vehicle miles traveled assessment and, therefore, would not conflict with the Sustainable Communities Strategy. In addition, as demonstrated in Section VIII(a), construction of the proposed project is estimated to emit a total of approximately 473 MT CO2e or 9.46 MT CO2e annually, when amortized over 50 years. The total project emissions would be far below any relevant numerical threshold in the state. The project would not result in additional vehicular traffic and the project's incremental contribution to cumulative GHG emissions is determined to not be cumulatively considerable because emissions are far below relevant numerical thresholds. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions, and impact would be less than significant.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous materials could occur through the following: improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes, particularly by untrained personnel; transportation accidents; environmentally unsound disposal methods; and/or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or waste present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

Construction of the proposed project would involve the as-needed use of limited amounts of potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to solvents, fuels, oils, and transmission fluids associated with construction vehicles and equipment. However, materials used during construction would be contained, stored, and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations established by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations.

Operation of the project would be limited to routine maintenance activities that would not involve the use of hazardous substances. The project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment because it does not propose the storage, use, transport, emission, or disposal of hazardous substances, nor are hazardous substances

currently in use in the immediate vicinity. In addition, the project does not propose to demolish any existing structures that are known to contain hazardous materials on site and, therefore, would not create a hazard related to the release of asbestos, lead-based paint, or other hazardous materials from demolition activities. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: As previously discussed in Section IX(a), construction of the proposed project would involve the as-needed use of potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to solvents, fuels, oils, and transmission fluids. Project operation is not anticipated to involve hazardous substances. Storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials during project implementation would comply with applicable standards and regulations established by the DTSC, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations. In addition, the project does not propose to demolish any existing structures on site and therefore would not create a hazard related to the release of asbestos, lead-based paint, or other hazardous materials from demolition activities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment through a reasonably foreseeable upset or accident condition related to the release of hazardous materials and impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The proposed project would include phased upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Clover Flat Elementary School is the nearest school to the project site, approximately 2.6 miles to the southeast. As discussed previously, the proposed project would not result in a significant hazard affecting the public during project construction or operation.

Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts associated with hazardous materials because materials would be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable standards and regulations established by the DTSC, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations. Additionally, the project site is not within one-quarter mile of an existing school and no new schools are known to be proposed in the vicinity. Therefore, the proposed project does not involve activities that would result in the emission of hazardous materials or acutely hazardous substances within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: Based on a site visit and regulatory database search, the project site has not been subject to a release of hazardous substances. The project site is not included in any of the following lists or databases: the State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances sites list compiled pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65962.5, the San Diego County Hazardous Materials Establishment database, the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health and Quality Site Assessment and Mitigation Case Listing, the Department of Toxic Substances Control Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program Database (“CalSites” Envirostor Database), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System listing, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Superfund Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) database or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s National Priorities List. Additionally, the project does not propose structures for human occupancy or significant linear excavation within 1,000 feet of an open, abandoned, or closed landfill, is not on or within 250 feet of the boundary of a parcel identified as containing burn ash (from the historical burning of trash), is not on or within 1,000 feet of a Formerly Used Defense Site, does not contain a leaking Underground Storage Tank**,** and is not on a site with the potential for contamination from historical uses, such as intensive agriculture, industrial uses, a gas station or vehicle repair shop. Therefore, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment and no impact would occur.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site is not within 2 miles of a public or public use airport. The nearest airport is Jacumba Airport, approximately 10.8 miles to the southeast. The proposed project is not within an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), an Airport Influence Area, or a Federal Aviation Administration Height Notification Surface. Also, the project does not propose construction of any structure equal to or greater than 150 feet in height, constituting a safety hazard to aircraft and/or operations from an airport or heliport. Therefore, the project would not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area and no impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

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

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

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The Operational Area Emergency Plan is a comprehensive emergency plan that defines responsibilities, establishes an emergency organization, defines lines of communications, and is designed to be part of the statewide Standardized Emergency Management System. The Operational Area Emergency Plan provides guidance for emergency planning and requires subsequent plans to be established by each jurisdiction that has responsibilities in a disaster situation. The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an overview of the risk assessment process, identifies hazards present in the jurisdiction, hazard profiles, and vulnerability assessments. The plan also identifies goals, objectives and actions for each jurisdiction in the County of San Diego, including all cities and the County unincorporated areas. The proposed project does not include any characteristics (e.g., permanent road closures or long-term blocking of road access) that would physically impair or otherwise conflict with an Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan. During short-term construction activities,

the proposed project is not anticipated to result in any substantial traffic queuing on nearby streets, and all construction equipment would be staged within the project site. Periodic and temporary detours of smaller roadways or dirt pathways within the residential portion of Live Oak Springs, on the eastern side of the proposed project, may occur during equipment or materials mobilization; however, only a single or a small number of roadways or pathways would be shut down concurrently, thus leaving alternative available community routes for emergency access. The project would not interfere with this plan because it would not prohibit subsequent plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out.

ii. SAN DIEGO COUNTY NUCLEAR POWER STATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

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

iii. OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY ELEMENT

NO IMPACT: The Oil Spill Contingency Element would not be interfered with because the project is not along the coastal zone or coastline. In addition, the only use of oil required for the construction or operation of the proposed project would be associated with the temporary use of construction and maintenance equipment and vehicles accessing the site. No impact would occur.

iv. EMERGENCY WATER CONTINGENCIES ANNEX AND ENERGY SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

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

v. DAM EVACUATION PLAN

NO IMPACT: The Dam Evacuation Plan would not be interfered with because the project is not located within a dam inundation zone. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone according to CalFire's Fire Zone Map Viewer (2021). Fire hazard designations are based on topography, vegetation, and weather, among other factors, with more hazardous sites including steep terrain, unmaintained fuels/vegetation, and wildland urban interface locations. Development within or adjacent to areas designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and/or wildland-urban interface areas has the potential to exacerbate wildfire risk, particularly if it occurs in areas with steep topography and/or prevailing winds because these conditions contribute to the spread of and make it more difficult to contain wildfires.

However, the project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. No new large above-ground building structures would be constructed as part of the project that could exacerbate fire risk. Although a new small above-ground booster pump station and two new above-ground water storage tanks would be installed, they would replace the existing facilities within the same footprint and, therefore, not pose a new risk involving wildland fires.

The main road adjacent to the project site would remain open to traffic at all times during construction, thus, traffic flow, access to homes, and emergency access would be maintained throughout the construction period. In addition, though there is riparian forest and live oak woodland on site, proper BMPs would be implemented to prevent a fire on the project site due to construction activities. The project would comply with the International Fire Code; California Fire Code; regulations set forth in Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code; and Title 14, Division 1.5, of the California Code of Regulations. The project would comply with County ordinances and the County Consolidated Fire Code.

Therefore, based on the location and the type of project, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving hazardous wildland fires. Additionally, the proposed project would create improvements for fire suppression within the community of Live Oak Springs by upgrading and replacing the existing deficient water system components and installing on site water storage tanks larger in volume than the existing tanks. Therefore, no impact would result due to the implementation of this project.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project would not involve or support uses that allow open water to stand for a period of 72 hours (3 days) or more (e.g., artificial lakes, agricultural irrigation ponds). The proposed replacement of two existing with two new water storage tanks on project site would involve only enclosed water storage. The project does not involve or support uses that would produce or collect animal waste, such as equestrian facilities, agricultural operations (chicken coops, dairies etc.), solid waste facility, or other similar uses. Therefore, the project would not substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats, or flies. No impact would occur.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would consist of improvements and upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The proposed project would not conflict with the San Diego Basin Plan. The project is required to implement some or all of the following construction best management practices to reduce potential pollutants to the maximum extent practicable from entering storm water runoff: gravel bags, fiber rolls, spill prevention and control, concrete waste management, solid waste management, and sanitary waste management. These measures would enable the project to meet waste discharge requirements, as required by the Land Use Planning for New Development and Redevelopment Component of the San Diego Municipal Permit (Order No. R9-2013-0001 as amended by Order Nos. R9-2015-001 and R9-2015-0100), as implemented by the San Diego County Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program (JURMP) and BMP Design Manual (BMP DM). Adherence to applicable requirements and implementation of the appropriate BMPs would ensure that potential water quality degradation associated with construction activities would be minimized.

Furthermore, the proposed project would decrease system deficiencies and would not result in an increase in wastewater discharges nor cause a degradation in the surface or groundwater quality. Once operational, implementation of the water distribution system would not be a source of polluted stormwater runoff. Therefore, the proposed project

would not cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses.

The project would not create cumulatively considerable water quality impacts related to waste discharge because the project would conform to Countywide watershed standards in the JURMP and BMP DM derived from State regulation to address human health and water quality concerns. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact to water quality from waste discharges. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would consist of upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the Live Oak Springs subcommunity, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, increase the water system's distribution capacity, and development of an additional well to provide a redundant water supply source for the water system. The project would not introduce a new use of groundwater for any purpose, including irrigation, domestic or commercial demands during operation, or for dust control or other BMPs during construction.

The project does not involve operations that would interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, including but not limited to the following: the project does not involve regional diversion of water to another groundwater basin or diversion or channelization of a stream course or waterway with impervious layers, such as concrete lining or culverts, for substantial distances (e.g., 0.25 mile). These activities and operations could substantially affect rates of groundwater recharge.

To ensure a reliable source of water for the community, the project's objectives are to increase water distribution capacity by up to 25 percent by replacing and upgrading underground potable water distribution piping, construction of a redundant potable water well, integration of new booster pumps, and replacement of two existing on-site water storage tanks from 20,000-gallon to 100,000-gallon. To determine if the underlain groundwater basin/aquifer can sustain a potential long-term withdrawal of an additional 25 percent of groundwater, a Groundwater Resources Evaluation (Evaluation) (January 2013) and a Work Plan for Source Capacity Study (Study) (July 2013) by Dudek for the Live Oak Springs Water Company's (LOSWC) service area were reviewed and referenced.

According to the County's "Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements, Groundwater Resources" (2007), for proposed projects in fractured rock basins, if the results of soil moisture balance test, conducted using a minimum of 30 years of precipitation data (including drought period), conclude that at any time groundwater in storage is reduced to a level of 50 percent or less as a result of groundwater extraction, the project would have significant impacts and the County's 50 percent significance threshold would be met. In this case, the subsurface geology underlain the Live Oak Springs community consists of alluvium, decomposed granite and fractured granitic rock (Dudek 2013) and the results of the soil moisture balance study are discussed below.

The Evaluation and Study were prepared to approximate the long-term availability of groundwater for the LOSWC service area, to meet the demand for Live Oak Springs community ratepayers and off-site water sales. The documents analyzed estimated total water demand and changes to the volume of groundwater in storage over the 30-year period within the Live Oak Springs service area, using 2013 as the baseline year. The results of the studies' analyses and the recharge/soil moisture balance test indicate that the volume of groundwater in storage throughout the 30 years (through approximately 2043) would meet the community's long-term water demand ("water demand" here also implies "water extraction"). The results show that water demand would remain above the County's 50 percent significance threshold, according to the following calculations.

For the Live Oak Springs groundwater basin/aquifer, the 50 percent threshold was calculated to equal approximately 4,194 acre-feet of volume for 30 years and the average volume of groundwater in storage for the LOSWC service area for the duration of 30 years was calculated to be approximately 7,453 acre-feet. The total calculated water demand/extraction for the community was estimated to be 192.50 acre-feet per year or 5,775 acre-feet over the 30 years, starting in 2013. Therefore, based on these data, the volume of groundwater in storage for the duration of 30 years would exceed the community's water demand and would remain above the County's required 50 percent significance threshold for groundwater basin for 30 years.

The water demand evaluation was based on the 2013 customer-base, which comprised of 85 active residences, 5 inactive residences, 1 recreational vehicle (RV) park, 1 mobile home park, 1 restaurant, 1 grocery store, 1 cabin, for a total of 95 connections; plus 20 existing single-family residential homes. According to the California State Water Resources Control Board, Safe Drinking Water Information System (2020), the community's customer base has somewhat declined over the years, totaling approximately 92 current connections in 2020.

To account for any potential changes in aquifer levels/conditions since 2013, a comparison of groundwater conditions at the time the Evaluation and Study were prepared demonstrated that, when compared to year 2020, no significant change in groundwater levels/conditions was evident. This was documented in the "Pilot Test Well

and Hydrogeological Assessment" dated June 2020, prepared by Black & Veatch, and the conditions are not anticipated to change by the time the project becomes operational. Therefore, according to the results of the technical Evaluation and Study discussed above, based on the 2013 water demand and groundwater conditions, the volume of groundwater in storage, through approximately 2043, would remain above the County's 50 percent significance threshold and would exceed the community's 30-year demand. Therefore, the Live Oak Spring's community's water needs would be met, while the groundwater levels would not be adversely affected by the 25 percent increase in distribution capacity. Additionally, for the proposed project, groundwater would be utilized for operations only and not for construction purposes. Accordingly, less than significant impact to groundwater resources would occur.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of a 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;

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Construction of the proposed water system would involve construction activities that may temporarily alter drainage patterns, such as surface grading and trenching. However, these activities would be temporary, and construction BMPs would be implemented as part of the SWQMP prepared for the project. The project would implement some or all of the following construction best management practices to reduce potential pollutants to the maximum extent practicable from entering storm water runoff: gravel bags, fiber rolls, spill prevention and control, concrete waste management, solid waste management, and sanitary waste management. These measures would control erosion and sedimentation and satisfy waste discharge requirements as required by the Land Use Planning for New Development and Redevelopment Component of the San Diego Municipal Permit (Order No. R9-2013-0001 as amended by Order Nos. R9-2015-001 and R9-2015-0100), as implemented by the JURMP and BMP DM. The SWQMP specifies and describes the implementation process of all BMPs that would address equipment operation and materials management, prevent the erosion process from occurring, and prevent sedimentation in any on-site and downstream drainage swales. The County DPW would ensure that the plan is implemented as proposed. Due to these factors, it has been found that the project would not result in significantly increased erosion or sedimentation potential and would not alter any drainage patterns of the site or area on or off site. For further information on soil erosion refer to Section VII, Geology

and Soils, (b). In addition, because erosion and sedimentation would be controlled within the boundaries of the project, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.

ii.) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The proposed project would not significantly alter established drainage patterns or significantly increase the amount of runoff. Operation of the proposed project would not change from existing uses and would not result in additional sources of polluted runoff. During construction, erosion, and sediment controls identified in the SWPPP, under the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB's) General Construction Stormwater Permit, would substantially reduce the amount of soil disturbance, erosion, and sediment transport into receiving waters and pollutants in site runoff.

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

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would consist of improvements and upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Additionally, as part of potential future project improvements, a segment of an existing maintenance dirt pathway would be paved, creating an impervious surface. However, during the design phase, the County DPW

would follow the latest adopted version of the County's "Best Management Practices Design Manual" (Manual) which provides guidance for land development and public improvement projects to comply with the 2013 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit. With the implementation of any necessary BMPs in accordance with the Manual, the project would not contribute to substantial amounts of runoff. Construction and post-construction activities would be required to adhere to various federal, state, and regional water quality standards. During construction, erosion and sediment controls identified in the SWPPP, under the SWRCB's General Construction Stormwater Permit, would substantially reduce the amount of soil disturbance, erosion and sediment transport into receiving waters, and pollutants in site runoff during construction. Operation of the proposed project would not change from current operations and would not result in additional sources of polluted runoff. Therefore, the proposed project would not create or contribute to water runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. This impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project site is not along the shoreline, a lake or reservoir and therefore, could not be inundated by a seiche. The project site is more than a mile from the coast; therefore, in the event of a tsunami, the site would not be inundated. While portions of the project are within a 100-year flood inundation zone (RBF 2010), the proposed project does not propose development of any structures, does not propose to change the flood zone's base elevation or stormwater conveyance, nor does it propose construction of an onsite drainage system; therefore, the proposed project would not risk release of pollutants or have the potential to cause other impacts due to project inundation in a flood hazard zone. Moreover, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, as detailed above. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As described above, a SWQMP has been prepared, and the project would implement some or all of the following construction best management practices to reduce potential pollutants to the maximum extent practicable from entering storm water runoff: gravel bags, fiber rolls, spill prevention and control, concrete waste management, solid waste management, and sanitary waste management. Furthermore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan for the Live Oak Springs region and, according to the San Diego County Planning and Development Services' Sustainable Groundwater Management page (2021) and the San Diego County Water Authority's Local Water Supplies, Groundwater page (2021), no sustainable groundwater management plan has been prepared for this area. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity, to support the community of Live Oak Springs. The project site and surrounding area can be characterized as developed, rural lands, rural commercial, semi-rural residential land uses, and undeveloped lands. The project does not propose the introduction of new infrastructure, such as major roadways or utilities to the area. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly disrupt or divide the established community. No impact would occur.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The proposed project is subject to the 2011 Mountain Empire Subregional Plan and would not conflict with the Land Use Policies and Recommendations of this subregional plan. The subregional plan emphasizes that any development would preserve the rustic, quiet, slow-paced, low density rural community. It emphasizes that all shops, service providers, and restaurants should be small, locally owned, and well-patronized and would provide good service to residents and tourists alike. The subregional plan elaborates on the lack of water, sewer and other infrastructure, and water quality issues in the Live Oak Springs area. Legitimate and viable efforts to upgrade water services would be supported. The proposed project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Therefore, the proposed project would be supporting the Land Use Policies and Recommendations set forth under the subregional plan. In addition, the project would be consistent with the existing C42 zoning and County General Plan land use designation of Semi-Rural 10 (SR-10), Semi-Rural Residential (SR-4), Semi-Rural Residential (SR-10), and Rural Lands 20 (RL-20) The project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project. No impact would occur.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: According to the California Department of Conservation, Mineral Lands Classification (2021), no known mineral resource of value to the region are known to exist on the project site. The project site and surrounding area can be characterized as developed, semi-rural residential, rural commercial, rural land uses, and undeveloped land, land uses which are incompatible with future extraction of mineral resources on the project site. Existing development within the project vicinity includes the existing potable water system site, various businesses, residences, and Live Oak Springs Resort Park. A future mining operation at the project site would likely create a significant impact to neighboring properties for issues such as noise, air quality, traffic, and possibly other impacts. Therefore, implementation of the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value, since the ability to extract the mineral resource has already been lost due to incompatible land uses. Additionally, the proposed project would include upgrades and improvements of an existing water system that would not result in the loss of availability to a mineral resource. No impact would occur.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project site would not result in the loss of locally important mineral resources because the project site is not known to contain locally-important resources delineated at the General Plan, Specific Plan, or other local land use plan level. The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Existing development within the project vicinity includes the existing potable water system site, various businesses, residences, and Live Oak Springs Resort Park. A future mining operation at the project site would likely create a significant impact to neighboring properties for issues such as noise, air quality, traffic, and other impacts, thereby reducing the feasibility of future mining operations occurring, regardless of the proposed project. Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of locally important mineral resource recovery (extraction) site delineated o at the General Plan, Specific Plan, or other local land use plan level would occur as a result of this project. No impact would occur.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Based on the site visit completed by County staff on April 13, 2020 and County DPW staff Gail Getz and Masha Landau on December 2021, as well as GIS mapping research, the surrounding area supports semi-rural residential, general commercial, and rural lands uses, as well as undeveloped lands. There would be short-term noise associated with construction of the project. Construction noise would be intermittent over the approximately 4-month period for Phase I and approximately 12- to

18-month collective period for potential future phases construction duration of all potential phases. The project would not expose people to potentially significant noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the County of San Diego General Plan, County of San Diego Noise Ordinance, and other applicable standards for the following reasons:

General Plan – Noise Element
The County of San Diego General Plan, Noise Element, Tables N-1 and N-2 addresses noise sensitive areas and requires an acoustical study to be prepared for any use that may expose noise sensitive areas to noise in excess of a Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 60 decibels (dBA) for single residences (including senior housing, convalescent homes), and 65 dBA CNEL for multi-family residences (including mixed-use commercial/residential). Moreover, if the project exceeds 60 dBA CNEL or 65 dBA CNEL, modifications must be made to the project to reduce noise levels. Noise sensitive areas include residences, hospitals, schools, libraries or similar facilities as mentioned within Tables N-1 and N-2. The proposed project would not create any noise sensitive land uses. The proposed project consists of upgrades and improvements to an existing water system and is not anticipated to create sources of noise, other than during the construction phase, nor cause ongoing operational noise-generating activity in addition to or in excess of existing noise levels generated by the current water system.

Noise Ordinance – Section 36.409
The project would not generate construction noise that may exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.409). Construction operations would occur only during permitted hours of operation pursuant to Section 36.409. Below grade level well pump testing would occur once the secondary well has been constructed and consist of up to 72 hours of continuous testing of the well pump's pumping rate capacity. The only noise-generating equipment in use overnight would be a small portable generator feeding power to the submersible pump, which would be placed near the proposed well and use a noise-attenuating equipment shielding. The generator would be situated over approximately 690 feet from the nearest existing sensitive receptor. The well pump would be submerged to a depth of 250 feet below grade and, therefore, no noise would occur at the surface level as a result of the pump operation. No construction vehicles, heavy equipment, or vehicles with backup alarms would be moved between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. at any time during construction, and no noise in excess of an average sound level of 75 dBA would occur between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Finally, the project's conformance to the County of San Diego General Plan Noise Element and County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.410) ensures the project would not create cumulatively considerable noise impacts, because the project would not exceed the local noise standards for noise sensitive areas; and the project would not exceed the applicable noise level limits at the property line or construction noise limits, derived from State regulation to address human health and quality of life concerns. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exposure of people or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local General Plan, Noise Ordinance, and applicable standards of other agencies. Impact would be less than significant.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project does not propose any of the following land uses that can be impacted by groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

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

Also, the project does not propose any major, new, or expanded infrastructure such as mass transit, highways or major roadways or intensive extractive industry that could generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels on-site or in the surrounding area. No impact would occur.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The proposed project is not within an ALUCP for airports or within 2 miles of a private airstrip, public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport to the project site is Jacumba Airport, approximately 10.8 miles to the southeast. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels. No impact would occur.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: No residential development is proposed under the project; therefore, the proposed project would not directly induce population growth in the area by developing new housing or businesses. However, to ensure reliability of potable water for the adjacent residential Live Oak Springs community and to secure additional water availability for fire suppression in the event of wildfires, as part of the potential future project phases, the project proposes an increase in water distribution by 25 percent. While this would increase water distribution, this project component is not anticipated to significantly induce population growth in this area. Additionally, the project does not propose any physical or regulatory change that would remove a restriction to or encourage population growth in the project vicinity. Therefore, the upgrades and improvements to an existing water system are not anticipated to significantly induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, directly or indirectly; accordingly, impact would be less than significant.

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

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

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The proposed project would not displace any existing housing or people since the proposed project would consist of potable water system upgrades and improvements to an existing system for the residents of Live Oak Springs; therefore, no impacts would occur

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response

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

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project would not require new or altered public services or facilities to be constructed to meet acceptable service ratios or response times. The project does not involve the construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities including, but not limited to fire protection facilities, sheriff facilities, schools, or parks to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios or objectives for any public services. The project is intended to better serve the existing population of Live Oak Springs subcommunity through improvements and upgrades to an existing deficient water distribution system. Therefore, the project would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment because the project does not require new or significantly altered services or facilities to be constructed. No impact would occur.

XVI. RECREATION

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project does not propose any residential use, including but not limited to a residential subdivision, mobile home park, or construction of a single-family residence that may increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity. The project includes upgrades and improvements to

an existing deficient water distribution system and would not increase the use of existing recreational facilities. No impact would occur.

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?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The project includes upgrades and improvements to an existing deficient water distribution system and would not increase the use of or necessitate new recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include improvements and upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project would temporarily increase vehicle trips to and from the project site during construction. However, construction would be short-term, temporary, and would not cause an interruption in the circulation system on nearby roads, nor would it conflict with a program or plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system. Project operation would result in few intermittent trips due to maintenance activities on the proposed water system. However, these trips would not be considered substantial and would only occur sporadically. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of the effectiveness of the circulation system and, thus, there would be no impact.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: In December 2018, the California Resources Agency certified and adopted revised CEQA Guidelines, including a new Section 15064.3. Under the new Section 15064.3, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which includes the amount and distance of automobile traffic attributable to a project, is identified as the "most appropriate measure of transportation impacts." As of July 1, 2020, all CEQA lead agencies must analyze a project's transportation impacts using VMT.

The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project would not create a site or a land use routinely used by the public. Construction would be short-term, temporary, and would not cause a notable increase in VMT. Project operation would result in few intermittent trips due to maintenance activities on the proposed water system, but the water system is existing, and this would not be an increase in VMT. The project would not change the traffic patterns or capacity or result in an increase in vehicle miles traveled. Therefore, the project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.3(b). Any impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. No new infrastructure, such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections, are proposed for the project. Therefore, the proposed project would not alter traffic patterns, increase hazards due to design features, place incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) on existing roadways, or create or place curves, slopes or walls, which impedes adequate site distances on a road. No impact would occur.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As discussed in Section IX, the proposed project would not include any characteristics (e.g., permanent road closures or long-term blocking of road access) that would physically impair or otherwise conflict with an Emergency Response Plan, Emergency Evacuation Plan, or emergency access. Periodic and temporary detours of smaller roadways or dirt pathways within the residential portion of Live Oak Springs, on the eastern side of the proposed project, may occur during equipment or materials mobilization; however, only a single or a small number of roadways or pathways would be shut down concurrently, thus leaving alternative available community routes for emergency access. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access and impact would be less than significant.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource, as defined in Public Resources Code §21074 as either a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
   i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of Historical Resources as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(k), or
   ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1, the lead agency would consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on July 13, 2021, requesting a Sacred Lands File

check, to determine whether Sacred Lands are present on site. The NAHC response letter dated August 25, 2021, noted that the Sacred Lands Files search was negative. The NAHC provided and recommended contacting a list of Tribes who might have an interest in the project. Pursuant to AB 52 and Sacred Lands, consultation was initiated with culturally affiliated tribes. County DPW staff sent out consultation letters and emails to the identified Tribal representatives on November 8 and 9, 2021 and followed up via email and telephone call on November 19 and December 7, 2021. Three Tribes requested AB 52 consultation: Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians (Viejas Band), San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians (San Pasqual Band), and Campo Band of Mission Indians (Campo Band); one Tribe requested Sacred Lands consultation, La Posta Band of Diegueño Mission Indians (La Posta Band); and one Tribe requested both AB 52 and Sacred Lands consultation, Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians (Kwaaymii Laguna Band).

County DPW staff consulted with the Viejas Band and concurred with the Tribe's request to have a Kumeyaay Native American cultural monitor on site during the initial ground-disturbing activities and agreed to notify the Tribe in the event of inadvertent discovery of cultural artifacts, cremation sites, or human remains. On December 17 and 23, 2021, the County staff also provided to the Viejas Band copies of the project's cultural reports and a list of proposed mitigation measures for this project, all for review and comments. Final follow-up and consultation conclusion with the Viejas Band occurred on January 11, 2022 and no response has been received to date. The County consulted with the La Posta Band and concurred with the request to have a Native American cultural monitor on site during the initial project ground-disturbing activities. On December 17, 2021, the County staff provided to the La Posta Band a list of proposed mitigation measures for this project for review and comments and offered to provide cultural reports, if requested. Final follow-up and consultation conclusion with the La Posta Band occurred on January 11, 2022 and no response has been received to date. The County consulted with the San Pasqual Band and concurred with the request to engage a Kumeyaay Native American cultural monitor on site during the initial project ground-disturbing activities and vegetation clearing and grubbing at the project site. On December 17 and 23, 2021, the County staff provided to the San Pasqual Band a list of proposed mitigation measures and copies of cultural reports for this project, all for review and comments. Final follow-up and consultation conclusion with the San Pasqual Band occurred on January 11, 2022 and no response has been received to date.

Additionally, the County staff consulted with the Campo Band and concurred with the Tribe's request to have a Kumeyaay Native American cultural monitor on site during the initial ground-disturbing activities and vegetation clearing and grubbing at the project site. The County also agreed to notify the Tribe in the event of inadvertent discovery of cultural artifacts, cremation sites, or human remains. On December 17 and 20, 2021, the County staff provided to the Campo Band a list of proposed mitigation measures for review and comments and offered to provide cultural reports, if requested. Final follow-up and consultation conclusion with the Campo Band occurred on January 11, 2022 and no response has been received to date. The County consulted with the Kwaaymii Laguna Band on November 19, 2021 over the phone and met with the Tribe in-person at the project site on December 6, 2021 to discuss potential project mitigation measures. The

County staff concurred with the Kwaaymii Laguna Band's request to have a Kumeyaay Native American cultural monitor on site during the initial ground-disturbing activities and agreed to notify the Tribe in the event of inadvertent discovery of cultural artifacts, cremation sites, or human remains. The County also agreed to consider using recycled water in place of potable water for construction (Initial Study Project Description, question 8). After consultation with a consultant firm, to avoid contamination of the well by the use of recycled water, a determination was made that minimal use of potable water would be required during construction for dust control. This water would be hauled in from off-site by the contractor and no on-site groundwater would be used for dust control. Finally, the County notified all five tribes that they would be included in the CEQA MND public review distribution list, to let them know when the public review period for this project occurs. Therefore, consultations have been concluded.

At the request of multiple Tribes during consultations and as originally planned, the County would provide a qualified archaeologist and a Kumeyaay Native American monitor during the initial ground-disturbing construction activities and any onsite vegetation clearing and grubbing. Additionally, the County would use ESA fencing during construction to avoid impacts to the CA-SDI-23150 cultural site and would haul water for construction dust control from off-site. Due to the potential for contamination of groundwater during the buildout of the water system's well, it was determined that recycled water cannot be used during construction. No tribal cultural resources were specifically identified during the consultation. Therefore, with the implementation of MIT-CUL-1 through MIT-CUL-5, identified in Section V of this Initial Study and incorporated by reference herein, potentially significant impact to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant.

XVIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The proposed project would not cause an increase in water use or wastewater production beyond the existing levels. Because the Live Oak Springs community is within

a septic sewer system area, the local wastewater treatment facilities would not be adversely impacted, as each septic water system is maintained by individual property owners. Drainage patterns would not be permanently altered as a result of the proposed project. Electric power and natural gas from operation of the proposed project would not be substantial, as the existing potable water distribution system being improved and upgraded by the project would operate passively and similarly to current conditions. The proposed project would not result in substantial adverse impacts to telecommunication services, as it would not require addition or expansion of telecommunication services. In addition, the project would not relocate any utilities. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts caused by the construction or relocation of utilities associated with the project. Specifically, please refer to Sections IV, Biological Resources, and X, Hydrology and Water Quality, for more information. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. For the project site, watering would be minimum necessary to establish and maintain the proposed project BMPs of vegetation reestablishment, as well as for long-term as-needed water system maintenance. For temporary water needs during construction, water would be trucked in from off-site by the contractor. No potable on-site-generated water would be used for project construction. Ultimately, the proposed project's implementation would increase availability and reliability of water supply for the Live Oak Spring residential community, and therefore, the proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the operations of the project, as needed. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the

current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project would produce some wastewater during drilling operations; however, all wastewater would be trapped via a temporary mud tank and taken offsite. In addition, construction would be short-term and temporary, and the production of wastewater would cease once drilling operations are complete. Therefore, the project would not interfere with any wastewater treatment provider's service capacity. Less than significant impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The proposed project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As part of construction of the proposed upgrades and improvements, the project may generate a negligible amount of solid waste or export material. All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County Department of Environmental Health and Quality, Local Enforcement Agency division issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440et seq.). If the export of solid waste or other materials is needed, the project would deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility and thereby would comply with Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Additionally, the project would comply with the 2021 County's Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling Ordinance for proper processing and handling of construction and demolition debris generated by construction. Therefore, the project would not 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. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system, to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As part of construction of the proposed upgrades and improvements, the project may generate a negligible amount of solid waste or export material. All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County Department of Environmental Health and Quality, Local Enforcement Agency division issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440et seq.). If the export of solid waste or other materials is needed, the project would deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility. State regulations include Assembly Bills 939 and 1826, which require at least 50 percent waste diversion from landfills and organic waste recycling. Senate Bill 1374 assists jurisdictions with diverting their construction and demolition waste material with a primary focus on the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery developing and adopting a model construction and demolition diversion ordinance for voluntary use by California jurisdictions. Therefore, the project would comply with all Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Additionally, the project would comply with the 2021 County's Construction & Demolition Debris Recycling Ordinance for proper processing and handling of construction and demolition debris generated by construction. Therefore, the project would not 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. Impact would be less than significant.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As discussed in Section IX (f) and XVII (d), the proposed project would not include any characteristics (e.g., permanent road closures or long-term blocking of road

access) that would physically impair or otherwise conflict with an Emergency Response Plan, Emergency Evacuation Plan, or emergency access. The project would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan because it would not prohibit subsequent plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impact to emergency plans.

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?

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. As discussed in Section IX (g), the project site is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone according to CalFire's Fire Zone Map Viewer. However, the proposed project would involve phased upgrades and improvements to an existing water system and does not propose any buildings or habitable structures. Though slopes do exist on the project site, the project does not require any significant grading activities. The project would comply with the International Fire Code; California Fire Code; regulations set forth in Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code; and Title 14, Division 1.5, of the California Code of Regulations. The project would also comply with County ordinances and the County Consolidated Fire Code. Therefore, the project would not add or increase occupants or exacerbate wildfire risks, thereby exposing occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Impact would be less than significant.

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☐	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☒	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems

standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. The project includes upgrades and improvements to an existing deficient system, thereby increasing the adequacy of water supply in the area to better serve the community in the case of a fire. As such, the project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. No impact would occur.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

NO IMPACT: The project would include upgrades to an existing water system to provide a reliable source of water to the community, bring it up to the current public water systems standards, and increase water system's distribution capacity. Refer to Sections VII, Geology and Soils, and X, Hydrology and Water Quality, for a summary of impacts related to flooding, landslides, runoff, slope instability, and drainage changes. As such, the project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. No impact would occur.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare

or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory were considered in the response to each question in Sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project-specific impacts, this evaluation considered the projects potential for significant cumulative effects. Resources that have been evaluated as significant would be potentially impacted by the project, particularly Biological Resources and Cultural Resources. However, mitigation and avoidance and minimization measures have been included that clearly reduce these effects to a level below significance. This mitigation includes BIO-MIT-1 through BIO-MIT-4, which would include sensitive vegetation community restoration, implementation of a qualified biologist, general nest surveys, and jurisdictional aquatic resources permitting. Additionally, General Avoidance and Minimization Measures and Sensitive Plant Species Impact Avoidance Measures, would also help to keep impacts to a less than significant level through avoidance and minimization of impacts. Cultural Resources has been evaluated, and the project could result in a potentially significant impact and would include mitigation measures CUL-MIT-1 through CUL-MIT-5, which include impact minimization and avoidance measures, the County providing a qualified archaeologist and Kumeyaay Native American monitor during initial vegetation clearing and grubbing and initial ground-disturbing activities to avoid impacts to previously undiscovered Cultural Resources. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after implementation of mitigation, minimization, and avoidance measures, significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

☐	Potentially Significant Impact	☒	Less than Significant Impact
☐	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐	No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Cumulative impacts evaluation includes review and analysis of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions and their impacts on environmental resources in the context of the proposed project. For the purposes of cumulative impacts analysis, a list of past, present and future projects between the northern project boundary and the I-8 and within 0.5 mile of the edge of proposed project’s outermost property lines to the east, west, and south was compiled and evaluated as part of this Initial Study. Factors considered when determining whether to include a project were: location of other projects, their types, and their potential to produce environmental impacts. Thorough this evaluation, it was determined there were no active projects within the project buffer that would coincide with the proposed project or constitute a project under CEQA.

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse cumulative effects were considered in the response to each question in Sections I through XXI of this form. In addition to project-specific impacts, this evaluation considered the projects potential for incremental effects that are cumulatively considerable. Impacts associated with the proposed project would affect a minor quantity of sensitive vegetation communities, potentially impact avian and mammal species, and existing wetland and non-wetland Waters of the U.S. and State and CDFW jurisdictional areas, and potentially impact cultural resources. These impacts would be mitigated to a level less than significant. All other project impacts to environmental resources would be less than significant without mitigation. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are cumulative effects associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in Sections I, Aesthetics; III, Air Quality; VII, Geology and Soils; IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; X, Hydrology and Water Quality; XIII, Noise; XIV, Population and Housing; and XVII, Transportation. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

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

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