
Executive Summary

Introduction/Background

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the Austal USA Floating Dry Dock Project (proposed project) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and is summarized here. The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) is the CEQA Lead Agency for the EIR and, as such, has primary responsibility for evaluating the environmental effects of the proposed project and determining whether to approve the proposed project considering these effects. As required by CEQA, this Draft EIR:

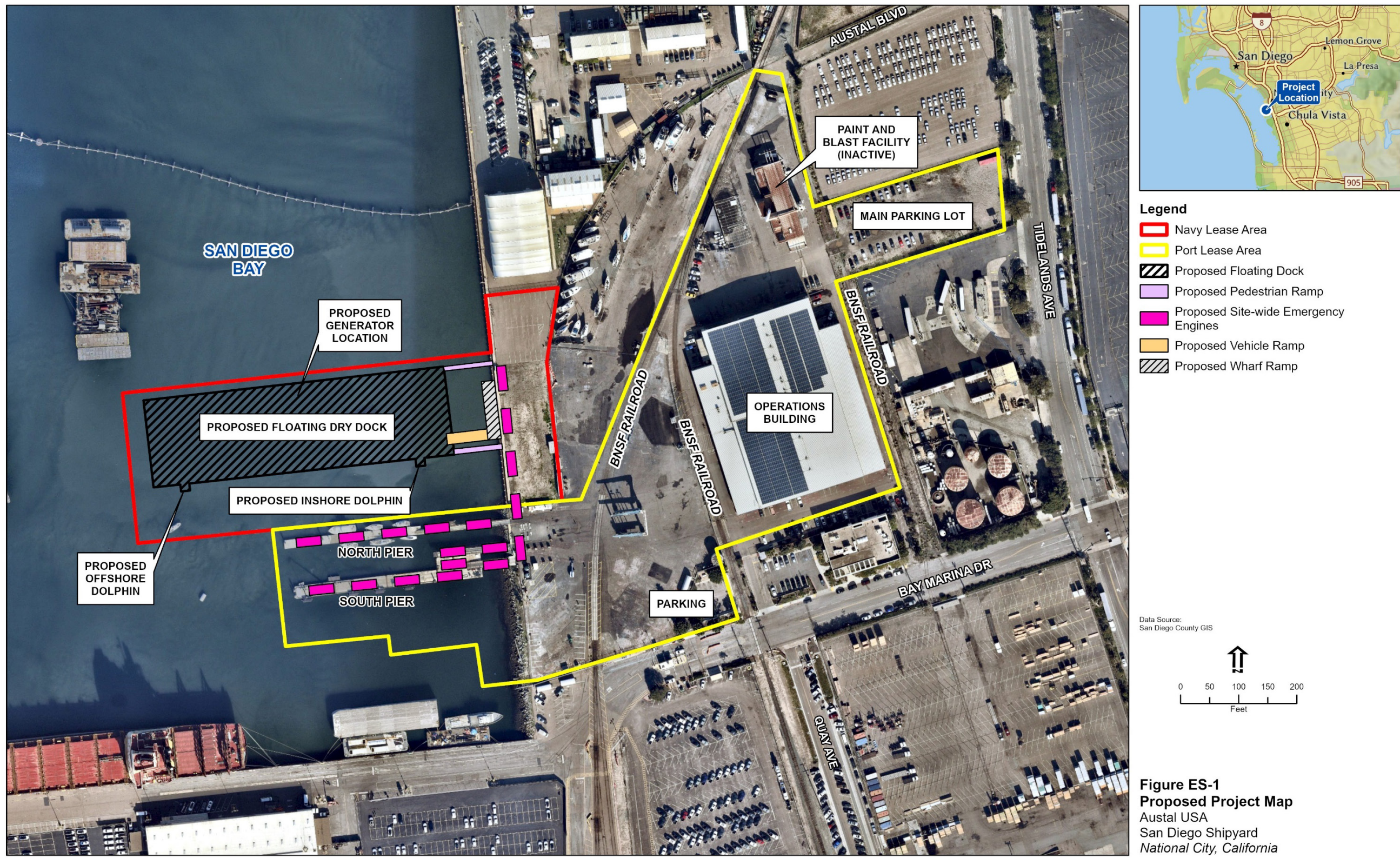
- Describes the proposed project, including its location, objectives, and features
- Describes existing conditions at the project site and environs
- Analyzes the direct, indirect, and cumulative adverse physical effects that would occur under existing conditions if the proposed project were implemented
- Identifies feasible means of avoiding or substantially lessening significant adverse effects of the proposed project
- Provides a determination of significance for each impact after mitigation would be incorporated
- Evaluates a reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the proposed project that would meet basic project objectives and reduce a project-related significant impact

This Draft EIR and its appendices are available for review on the SDAPCD website at <https://www.sdapcd.org/content/sdapcd/planning/ceqa.html>. In addition, a hard copy of this EIR is available for review during SDAPCD business hours at 10124 Old Grove Road, San Diego, CA 92131.

Project Description Summary

The proposed project entails constructing and operating a floating dry dock (FDD) at the Austal USA facility located on San Diego Bay in National City, California (Figure ES-1). The Austal USA facility consists of areas leased from the US Navy (Navy) and from the Port of San Diego (Port), and is located adjacent to areas that are owned and controlled by Naval Base San Diego (NBSD) and the Port. The FDD would be placed within the Navy lease area located in San Diego Bay adjacent to the Austal USA facility. The objective of the proposed project is to help the Navy address a projected shortfall of dry dock space at NBSD by adding a new FDD to support operations at a location adjacent to NBSD. The proposed project would support governmental and commercial vessels in San Diego Bay by providing full docking availabilities for vessels up to 500 feet long.

Figure ES-1. Proposed Project Map



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Operation of the FDD would be in accordance with Department of Defense (DoD) Standard Practice MIL-STD 1625D, *Department of Defense Standard Practice: Safety Certification Program (SCP) for Drydocking Facilities and Shipbuilding Ways for US Navy Ships* (DoD 2009). Standard Practice MIL-STD 1625D is a required safety standard certification for Navy dry-docking facilities.

The FDD was constructed off site and is currently moored but not in use near its proposed operational location adjacent to the Austal USA facility. It is 531.5 feet long by 154.20 feet wide and has an overall depth of 43 feet. The FDD would service up to four vessels annually and includes the following permanent components:

- Two diesel-powered emergency generators
- Control house
- Lavatory
- Two electrically powered cranes
- Fixed lighting
- Stormwater retention system to capture stormwater and deck wash-down water, and prevent runoff
- Two pedestrian bridges and one vehicle bridge; these would be extended landside to provide FDD access
- Built-in static saltwater fire suppression system

Project Construction Activities

Proposed project construction activities would occur over a period of approximately 8 weeks and require up to 20 workers per day. These activities would include:

- Constructing a concrete wharf supported by 33 24-inch octagonal concrete piles in the water, three of which are currently pending installation. The concrete wharf would support the FDD vehicle bridge once it is extended landside.
- Installing two mooring dolphins each consisting of 11 24-inch octagonal concrete piles and an additional 10 steel H piles to serve as a fender system. A total of 12 temporary steel H piles would also be installed to support pile installation, and they would be removed after permanent piles were installed.
- Moving the FDD from its current temporary location to its permanent moored location using two tugboats operating for 3 to 4 hours. The FDD would be held in position using grippers secured to mooring dolphins.

Project Operational Activities

Operation of the proposed project would require up to 130 new workers to be on site during vessel availabilities (that is, when a vessel is in the FDD) and would require up to 12 local haul truck trips per year. The FDD would service up to four vessels per year. Vessel availabilities are expected to be from 1 to 6 months in duration. Operations would occur year-round, with working hours between 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., 6 days a week, consistent with surrounding

Navy and Port operations. Activities would include use of heavy equipment such as electric gantry cranes that are built into the FDD, 60- to 80-foot boom lifts, and various-sized forklifts and trucks. The FDD would be operated using its own built-in electric gantry cranes, stormwater pumps, sewer pump, and ballast pump. The FDD would be connected to existing utilities on the Austal USA facility including electrical, domestic water and fire water lines, and sanitary wastewater. Other than proposed diesel-powered emergency equipment to be operated under air permits issued by SDAPCD, no additional pumps, cranes, or compressors would be required to operate the FDD.

Proposed project operational activities include:

- Vessel repair and maintenance activities in the FDD that may include abrasive blasting, hydro blasting, painting, tank cleaning, removal of bilge and ballast water, sheet metal work, electrical work, mechanical repair, engine repair, hull repair, shaft repair, propeller and rudder repair, repair/replacement of sea valves and fittings below the waterline, and sewage disposal.
- FDD evolutions (that is, raising and lowering the FDD) would occur up to four times per year by pumping seawater into or out of the FDD ballast tanks.
- Routine maintenance of the FDD would consist of touch-up painting, equipment maintenance, tank cleaning, sheet metal work, electrical work, mechanical repair, and repair/replacement of valves and fittings. Additionally, required testing for FDD emergency generators would require up to 52 hours of operation per year.
- Vessel repair and maintenance activities at the Austal USA facility's South Pier (refer to Figure ES-1) for up to four vessels per year. Activities at the South Pier would include welding, coating and solvent usage, adhesive usage, and abrasive blasting.
- Maintaining site-wide emergency engine system consisting of portable diesel-powered emergency engines to provide a redundant firefighting system when Navy ships are at the South Pier for vessel repair and maintenance.

Summary of Project Impacts

Table ES-1 summarizes proposed project impacts.

Table ES-1. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold	Impact	Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
Aesthetics				
1. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	Construction and operation of the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic resources.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. In non-urbanized areas, would the project 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?	The proposed project would be consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations specific to aesthetic resources.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not introduce a new substantial amount of light and glare affecting day- or nighttime views of the area.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Air Quality				
1. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	Construction and operation emissions and impacts would be less than significant, and the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plans.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	Emissions generated during construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria air pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Construction and operations impacts from the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on nearby sensitive receptors and would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
4. Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in other emissions such as those leading to odors that would adversely affect a substantial number of people.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Biological Resources				
1. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any candidate, sensitive, or special-status species.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project 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?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	The proposed project site does not contain any state or federally protected wetlands; therefore, no impact would occur.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A
4. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not substantially interfere with the movement of migratory or resident fish or wildlife species.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A

Table ES-1. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold	Impact	Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
5. Would the project conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources?	The proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan; Natural Communities Conservation Plan; other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan; or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Energy				
1. Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	Construction and operation of the project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Geology/Soils				
1. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?	Project construction and operations would not entail activities that would increase the risk of loss, injury, or death due to seismic shaking.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Potential substantial adverse effects related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse are not anticipated during construction and operation of the proposed project.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	The proposed project would not be subject to potential on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse during construction or operation.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Greenhouse Gas Emissions				
1. Would the project generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	GHG emissions generated by proposed project construction and operation would be less than the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association threshold of 900 MTCO _{2e} per year, indicating GHG impacts would be less than significant.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	The project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Hazards and Hazardous Materials				
1. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	The proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposable materials or through a reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	The proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not impact implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted response plan or emergency evacuation plan.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A

Table ES-1. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold	Impact	Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
Hydrology/Water Quality				
1. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	Proposed project construction and operations would not violate water quality standards or WDRs; nor would it substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	The proposed project would not alter the site's existing drainage patterns, increase impervious surface areas, or alter any existing stream or river. Construction and operation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on drainage patterns, storm drainage facilities, and new sources of polluted runoff.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	Impacts from seiches and tsunamis on a floating facility are expected to be minor, and construction and operation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on potential release of pollutants due to project inundation.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
4. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	The proposed project would not conflict with any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Noise				
1. Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in any substantial temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project result in generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not generate excessive ground-borne vibration or noise.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Population and Housing				
1. Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse effects related to direct or indirect unplanned population growth in the area.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Public Services				
1. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection?	Construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to adversely affect performance objectives or response times for fire protection services, and would not require construction or physical alterations to fire protection facilities or new or expanded governmental facilities.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection?	Construction and operation of the proposed would not affect response times for police protection services or require the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A

Table ES-1. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold	Impact	Level of Significance	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
Transportation/Traffic				
1. Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	Construction and operation of the proposed project would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	The proposed project would not be in conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?	Construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to adversely affect emergency service performance objectives or response times and would not result in inadequate emergency access.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
Tribal Cultural Resources				
1. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision I of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision I(c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the Lead Agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	No tribal cultural resources were identified in the project area, and no tribes contacted regarding cultural resources at the project site have responded. Given the nature of constructed land where the proposed project would occur, no tribal cultural resources are expected to be discovered during project construction. Operation and maintenance activities for the proposed FDD would require no ground disturbance, and no operation-related impacts would occur.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A
Utilities/Service Systems				
1. Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects?	Construction and operation of the proposed project does not include or require construction of any new water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities or any relocation or improvements to existing water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities.	No impact	No mitigation is required	N/A
2. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Current water supply to the Austal USA facility provided by the Sweetwater Authority would be sufficient for construction of the proposed project, and there would be sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
3. Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	Existing wastewater treatment facilities would have adequate capacity to meet construction and operational needs of the proposed project.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
4. Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or Local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	Construction and operation of the project is not anticipated to have a substantial adverse effect on capacity of local waste infrastructure and would not impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A
5. Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	The proposed project would not conflict with or cause a local jurisdiction or service provider to conflict with any federal, state, or local solid waste regulations.	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	N/A

MTCO_{2e} = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent

N/A = not applicable

WDR = waste discharge requirement

Areas of Known Controversy/Issues Raised by Agencies and the Public

CEQA Guidelines Section 15123 requires that an EIR provide a brief summary of areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by agencies or the public during the EIR process, and to identify ways in which these issues have been or are being resolved. A *Notice of Preparation (NOP)*, accompanied by an *Initial Study*, was distributed to the California State Clearinghouse and to other public agencies (Appendix A). The NOP was published on September 11, 2024, and the review period for the *Initial Study* was from September 11, 2024, to October 3, 2024. Areas of known controversy raised during the public review period are summarized below and are addressed in Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis*.

Air Quality

- Consistency with the *Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS)* and *Emissions Reduction Plan: Portside Communities (CERP)*
- Use of zero-emission vehicles and electric equipment
- Use of equipment that complies with US Environmental Protection Agency Tier 4 standards
- Toxic air contaminants from project operations

Biological Resources

- Disturbance of eelgrass (genus *Zostera*) habitat
- Spread of invasive seaweeds in the *Caulerpa* genus
- Impacts on fish and benthic organisms from turbidity caused by sediment disturbance
- Impacts on marine-dependent bird species
- Noise impact on marine species during construction
- Impacts from lighting
- Impact on marine species from FDD ballast tank operations

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

- Increase in energy use
- GHG generated from energy production
- GHG from traffic resulting from increased employment on site

Hydrology

- Turbidity and contaminants in bay water from sediment disturbance
- Discharges of pollutants to water from FDD operations

Transportation

- Traffic resulting from increased employment on site

Issues to Be Resolved

As the CEQA Lead Agency, SDAPCD has primary responsibility to evaluate the project, identify and mitigate significant impacts, and provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the project. As the CEQA Lead Agency, SDAPCD must also determine if a statement of overriding considerations would be required, make findings, and ultimately make the determination on whether to approve the proposed project and adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting plan.