



DATE: March 28, 2025
TO: GRAD2024-00018 File
FROM: Mason Denning, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: **Responses to Comments Received, GRAD2024-00018 MND (ED24-188)**

Memorandum

The environmental review for the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building (County) major grading permit GRAD2024-00018 resulted in the determination to draft and circulate a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15070. Pursuant to SLO County Land Use Ordinance Section 22.52.150.F, a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was mailed to all landowners within 1,000 feet of the project site. Additionally, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073, the County, acting as lead agency, provided a public review period via the State Clearinghouse. On February 9, 2025, the County received public comments during the MND's circulation period. While the County is not obligated to respond to comments received during the public review process, they must be considered prior to the project's approval.

Several concerns related to impact issue areas were addressed by County staff through communication with the commenter by providing additional information and clarification. The scope of these replies included concerns related to biological resources, noise, visual resources, and discrepancies in the setting description. However, two of the primary concerns involved an error related to an incorrect figure (Figure 7, Page 82) that included a neighboring residence within the project area, and hydrological concerns resulting from the project analysis. The applicant provided a technical memorandum addressing these concerns from the applicant's hydrological consultant, GSI Water Solutions, Inc., dated March 12, 2025 (Attachment 1), which included a response to relevant hydrological comments and an amended version of the incorrect figure (Attachment 2).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5, a lead agency is only required to recirculate an MND when the document must be substantially revised after public notice of its availability. Substantial revision is defined as the following:

1. *A new, avoidable significant effect is identified and mitigation measures or project revisions must be added in order to reduce the effect to insignificance, or*
2. *The lead agency determines that the proposed mitigation measures or project revisions will not reduce potential effects to less than significance and new measures or revisions must be required.*

The responses to comments provided from GSI (Attachment 1) note that the wells that were analyzed in the publicly available data included within the MND had a larger impact resulting from drawdown than the subsequent analysis on the well brought to staff's attention via public comment

that had been mistakenly omitted due to the lack of inclusion in the available data sets. Lastly, the technical studies memorandum responded to a concern regarding the difference in drawdown, which is explained through the utilization of separate transmissivity estimates based on separate aquifer test results – resulting in different calculated drawdowns.

Therefore, with the responses to comments received, recirculation of the MND is not required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5.c.4 because the information added to the MND merely clarifies, amplifies, or made insignificant modifications to the negative declaration and no new avoidable significant effects were identified because of the comments received.

Regards,



Mason Denning
Senior Planner

Attachments

1. GSI Response to Comments regarding Hydrogeology in SLO County Grading Permit GRAD2024-00018 (Aquilon South)
2. Figure 2 – Site Map – Hydrogeologic Impact Assessment for Proposed Agricultural Reservoir



TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

GSI Response to Comments regarding Hydrogeology in SLO County Grading Permit GRAD2024-00018 (Aquilon South)

To: C.M. Florence, AICP Oasis Associates, Inc. Agent for Kylix Vineyard California LP
From: Dave O'Rourke, GSI Water Solutions, Inc.
Date: March 12, 2025

GSI has prepared this memo to document our responses to Ms. Deanna Webster's comments regarding hydrogeologic components of Monterey Pacific's grading permit application for their Aquilon South property.

Comment. "Page 82- MY PROPERTY IS INCLUDED WITHIN THE PROPERTY LINES OF THE VINEYARD. REMOVE MY PROPERTY ASAP. The map on page 4 is CORRECT. ALSO, MY WELL IS NOT INCLUDED ON THIS MAP. It is located just south of their WELL #7. Everyone that has been mentioned in this report knows about my well location. Why is it omitted? There are also about 12 wells within a 2 mile radius that are not included on this list."

Response. The Webster property has been removed from the Aquilon property boundary in the referenced figure. Ms. Webster's well has been added to the referenced figure. Wells that are more distant than the ones shown in the figure will have less drawdown impact than reported for the wells shown.

Comment. "My house was built in 1974 and the water has been perfect. Now on occasion I smell sulphur in my house. The Morain's located at 1610 Templeton Road have mentioned to me that they now smell sulphur too. Well #1 is just north of their 2 wells."

Response. GSI did not investigate water quality of groundwater as part of their study.

Comment. "Page 85- The 2 reports with draw down levels are quite different. 20 foot drawdown is pretty substantial."










Response. The 2 reports utilize different transmissivity estimates in their calculations based on aquifer test results at each property. Different transmissivity values and different pumping amounts will result in different calculated drawdowns.

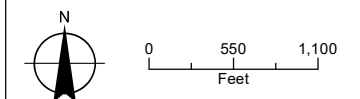
FIGURE 2

Site Map

Hydrogeologic Impact
Assessment for Proposed
Agricultural Reservoir

LEGEND

-  Production Well
-  SLO County EHS Well Location
-  San Marcos Fault
-  Aquilon Vineyard
-  Atascadero Groundwater Subbasin
-  City Boundary
-  Major Road
-  Watercourse
-  Proposed Agricultural Reservoir



Date: March 12, 2025
Data Sources: BLM, ESRI,
USGS, Maxar Imagery (2021)

