Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

Addendum No. 2 to the 2018 Final Environmental Impact Report
SCH #2016081027

prepared by

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1 Introduction

This document is an Addendum to the City of Morro Bay's (City) Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (State Clearinghouse [SCH] No. 2016081027), which was certified in August 2018 (herein referred to as the "Final EIR") for the original Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility project (Original Project).

In accordance with Section 15164 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, a lead agency shall prepare an Addendum to an EIR if minor technical changes or additions are necessary and there are no substantial changes to the project, substantial changes to circumstances, and/or new information that would involve new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects identified in the original EIR. Specifically, the CEQA Guidelines state:

- The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164[a]);
- An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the certified EIR or adopted negative declaration (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164[c]);
- The decision-making body shall consider the addendum with the certified EIR or adopted negative declaration prior to making a decision on the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164[d]); and
- A brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 should be included in an addendum to an EIR, the lead agency's findings on the project, or elsewhere in the record. The explanation must be supported by substantial evidence (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164[e]).

This Addendum has been prepared in accordance with relevant provisions of CEQA (as amended) and the CEQA Guidelines.

This Addendum describes the details of modifications to the proposed layout of project facilities, which have been identified since preparation of the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1. This modified layout is referred to herein as the Modified Project. The analysis compares the environmental impacts of the Modified Project to those identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project and demonstrates 1) the environmental impacts of the Modified Project are within the scope of impacts identified in the Final EIR and 2) the Modified Project would not result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant environmental effects.

2 Background and Project Description

The Final EIR for the Original Project was certified in August 2018 (SCH No. 2016081027) and consists of the responses to public and agency comments received on the Draft EIR and the text of the Final EIR as revised in response to public and agency comments. The Final EIR is accompanied by a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which provides guidance for implementing the mitigation measures developed for the Original Project. In addition, Addendum No. 1 to the Final EIR was prepared in August 2019 and analyzed minor modifications to conveyance pipeline alignments, two new lift stations, new construction laydown areas, and sediment removal from the ocean outfall. The modifications analyzed in Addendum No. 1 are herein considered part of the Original Project, and information and technical analyses from the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 are utilized and/or referenced throughout this Addendum, as necessary.

This section provides an overview of the Original Project and the Modified Project to provide context for evaluating potential changes to the nature of environmental impacts disclosed in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 that may result from the proposed modifications.

2.1 Original Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project

The Original Project site encompassed portions of the City of Morro Bay and unincorporated San Luis Obispo County. The Original Project consists of construction of the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility (WRF),[1] which includes an indirect potable reuse (IPR) recycled water system and decommissioning and demolition of the existing Morro Bay-Cayucos Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). In addition to the WRF, the Original Project includes construction of administration, operations, and maintenance buildings; lift stations and pipelines to convey raw wastewater to the WRF and waste discharges of reverse osmosis concentrate and treated wet weather flows from the WRF to the ocean outfall; and a new distribution system to convey advanced treated recycled water from the WRF to new groundwater injection wells in the Morro Valley Groundwater Basin (Morro Basin). Components of the Original Project are described in further detail in the following sections.

Figure 1 shows the regional location of the Original Project site, and Figure 2 shows the layout of the Original Project as analyzed in the Final EIR. Figure 3 shows the project modifications analyzed in Addendum No. 1.

Decommissioning of the Morro Bay-Cayucos Wastewater Treatment Plant

The existing WWTP is located at 160 Atascadero Road in Morro Bay, on an approximately 5.7-acre site immediately west of State Route 1, east of Embarcadero Road and north of the former Morro Bay Power Plant. Once the WRF is operational, the WWTP will be shut down and demolished, and facilities and infrastructure will be removed from the WWTP site. Materials will be salvaged or disposed of off site.

[1] The WRF is now referred to as the Water Resources Center. However, for consistency with the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1, the term WRF is used in this Addendum.

Figure 1 Regional Location of Original Project

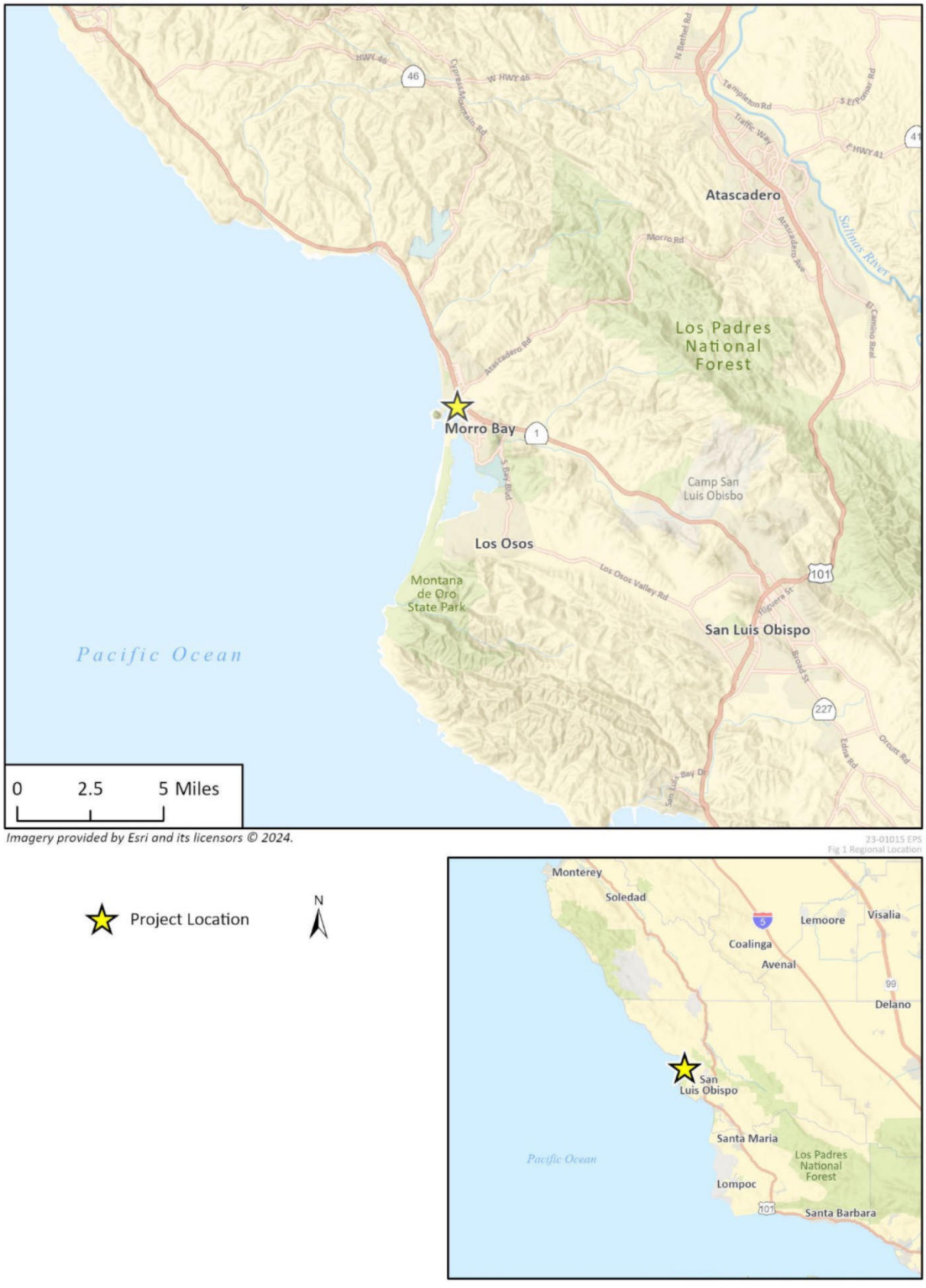
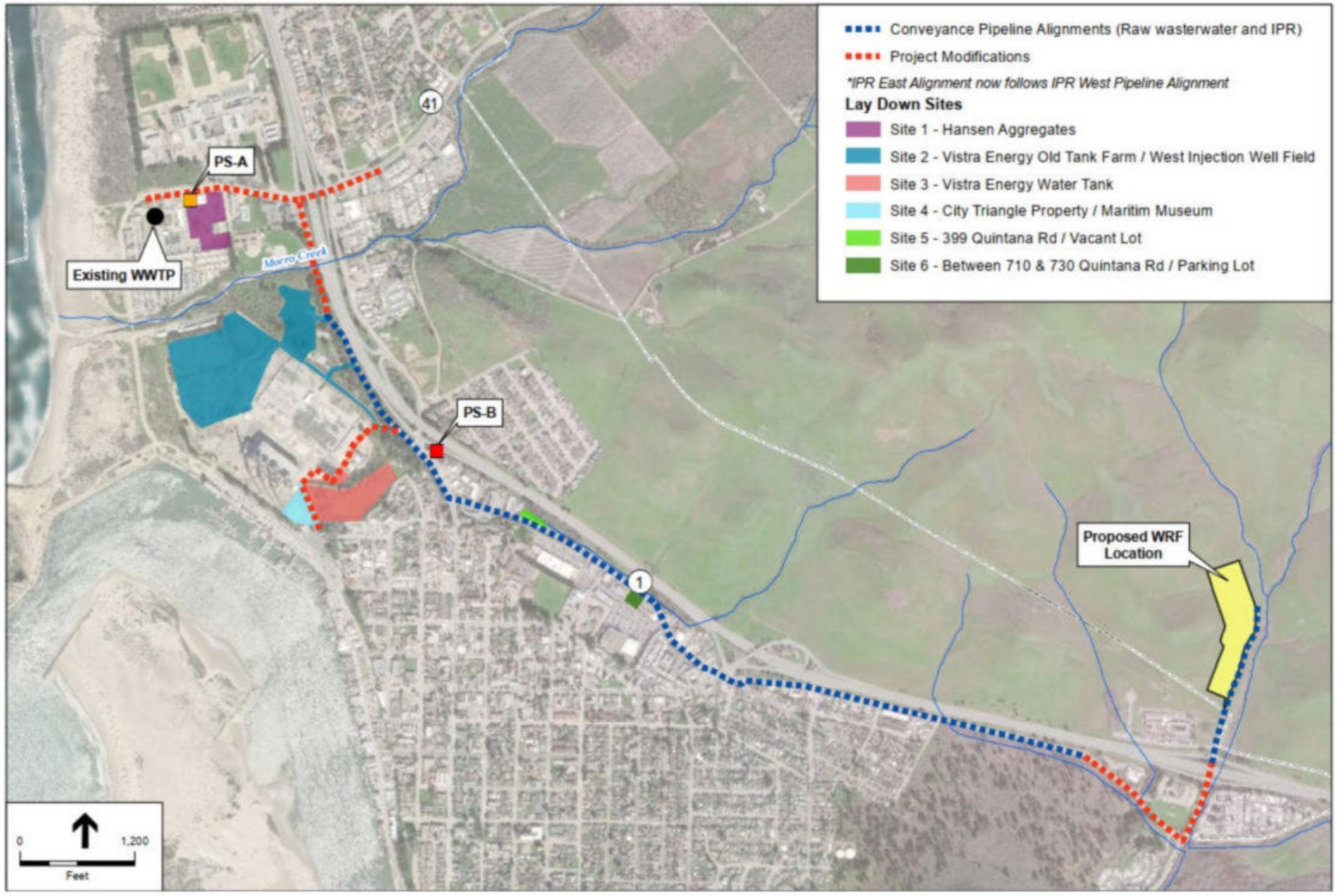


Figure 2 Original Project Facilities Layout (Final EIR)

Source: City of Morro Bay 2018

Figure 3 Original Project Facilities Layout (Addendum No. 1)



Source: City of Morro Bay 2019

After demolition and removal of WWTP facilities, the site will be backfilled, compacted, and graded for other future uses. As of April 2025, the WWTP is no longer in use but has not yet been decommissioned or demolished.

Water Reclamation Facility

The Original Project includes construction of the WRF at 555 South Bay Boulevard, north of State Route 1 (Figure 2). With the exception of the potential solar array, construction of the WRF was completed in 2023 (installation of the potential solar array is not planned at this time). The WRF is comprised of the following components.

Treatment Facility

The Original Project included installation of primary, secondary, tertiary, and advanced treatment systems at the WRF to treat wastewater generated and collected in the City's service area and produce IPR recycled water. The WRF has the capacity to treat a peak dry weather daily flow of 2.74 million gallons per day (MGD) and an annual average dry weather daily flow rate of 0.97 MGD. The primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment systems are currently operating with wastewater effluent being conveyed to the ocean outfall. Biosolids from the treatment process are dewatered and hauled off site for reuse, composting, or disposal.

Advanced Treatment Facility

The Original Project also included construction and operation of an Advanced Water Treatment Facility (AWTF) and associated infrastructure at the WRF site to convey advanced treated recycled water. The AWTF at the WRF is capable of further treating a portion of the treated wastewater to comply with the State Water Resource Control Board's (SWRCB) recycled water quality requirements for a Groundwater Replenishment Reuse Project (GRRP) so that it can be injected into the Morro Basin for IPR. Replenished groundwater will then be extracted by existing City wells and treated at the City's Brackish Water Reverse Osmosis (BWRO) treatment facility. The AWTF includes reverse osmosis and advanced oxidation treatment processes to achieve the required pathogen and chemical contaminant removal and an approximately 200,000-gallon recycled water storage tank to provide additional storage during equipment maintenance or periods of low incoming wastewater flow to the WRF.[2] The AWTF is currently undergoing permitting and only operates periodically to maintain the reverse osmosis membranes and other treatment equipment.

Operations and Maintenance Buildings

The Original Project included construction and operation of several on-site support facilities at the WRF, including an Operations Building, Maintenance Building, vehicle storage, and a potential on-site solar array. The Operations Building is an approximately 7,000-square-foot, single-story building and includes employee offices, a reception area, a conference room, restrooms, a server room, controls room, and electrical room. The Maintenance Building is a single-story, approximately 5,600-square-foot building that houses a lab and an electronics workshop. The vehicle storage area provides storage space for equipment, City maintenance vehicles, a wash area, and a general materials laydown area. The 800-kilowatt solar array, which the Final EIR indicated may be installed at the WRF site, has not been constructed, and there are currently no plans to install it.

[2] The Original EIR anticipated a maximum recycled water storage tank capacity of 500,000 gallons; however, only a 200,000-gallon storage tank was installed.

Collection System

The Original Project included installation of two new lift stations and a series of conveyance pipelines for 1) transporting raw wastewater influent from the City's collection system to the WRF and 2) transporting treated wastewater/reverse osmosis concentrate/wet weather effluent discharges from the WRF to the ocean outfall. Construction of the conveyance pipelines was completed in 2023. Treated wet weather flows and reverse osmosis concentrate discharges from the WRF will be discharged through the existing ocean outfall.

Recycled Water Distribution System and Injection Wells

The Original Project included groundwater replenishment in the Morro Basin via injection of advanced purified recycled water into a series of injection wells and associated facilities including conveyance pipelines, a pump station, and monitoring wells. The Final EIR anticipated the injection wells would be located on vacant lands owned by the City or within public rights-of way either east of the city near State Route 41 (IPR-East injection well area, as shown in Figure 2) or in an area west of State Route 1 near the Morro Bay Power Plant site (IPR-West injection well area, as shown in Figure 2). Injection wells would be sited to avoid environmentally sensitive habitat and riparian/wetland areas. The injection well casing would be belowground, with some aboveground components to connect the wells to the recycled water distribution system. Each injection well would have valves, a flow meter, and a control panel and would be housed in a shed or weatherproof enclosure. Each injection well would have up to two monitoring wells to monitor water quality. While the Final EIR identified general areas in which injection wells would be located, the exact number or locations of injection wells were not identified for the Original Project at the time of the Final EIR. One injection well (IW-1) was installed in the IPR-West injection well area in 2023 as a pilot injection well and has been used for hydrogeologic testing of subsurface conditions.

In addition, the Original Project includes construction of an IPR pipeline to connect the WRF to the potential injection well locations. Two potential alignments for this pipeline were identified in the Final EIR – IPR-East and IPR-West - as shown in Figure 2. The City ultimately constructed the IPR-West pipeline, which was completed in 2023.

Because the recycled water distribution system and injection wells are the subject of this Addendum, additional information on the construction and operational characteristics of these project components is provided below.

Construction

The Final EIR anticipated construction of the conveyance pipelines would occur over approximately 12 months and construction of the injection wells would occur over approximately two to four months. Construction would occur on weekdays, consistent with the City's Noise Ordinance and municipal code, except for drilling activities associated with injection wells, which would require one month of 24-hour drilling per well to avoid collapsing of the walls of the borehole during installation. Table 1 summarizes construction details for the Original Project, as anticipated in the Final EIR.

Table 1 Anticipated Construction Details for Conveyance Pipelines and Injection Wells under Original Project

Project Component	Construction Equipment	Estimated Duration	Estimated Earthwork (cubic yards)
Conveyance Pipelines	Backhoes, compactor, dump truck, paver, paving equipment, pickup truck, shoring equipment, water truck, excavators, crane, front end loader, roller, flatbed delivery trucks, concrete trucks, trenchless construction equipment (horizontal directional drilling rig, pilot tube guided boring machine, auger bore and jack equipment, etc.), compressors, jackhammer	12 months	Export: 12,274
Injection Wells	Auger rig, backhoe, crane, drill rig, forklift, pickup truck, dump trucks, flatbed delivery trucks	2 to 4 months	None

The Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 anticipated construction of proposed conveyance pipelines would involve trenching using a conventional cut and cover technique or trenchless technique where necessary, such as under State Route 1 and to avoid sensitive drainages (e.g., Morro Creek) and roadway intersections if utilities at a particular location under a street right-of-way are congested. Pipelines would be installed within existing roadway rights-of-way to the extent feasible. The trenching technique would include saw cutting of the pavement, trench excavation, pipe installation, backfill operations, and re-surfacing to the original condition. Trenchless installation could include either suspension of pipelines on existing bridges or directional drilling or jack and bore methods. Directional drilling or jack and bore methods would require an approximately 50-foot by 100-foot temporary construction area on each side of the crossing for installation shafts (pits), materials, and equipment. Trenchless crossings would be designed to avoid physical impacts to the flood control levee. Construction laydown for materials and equipment would occur at the six identified potential laydown areas shown in Figure 3, all of which are located on disturbed lots or previously paved lots. Typically, 15 to 20 workers would be required for pipeline installations. Excavated suitable soils would be reused as backfill or disposed off-site. Approximately 2,570 truck trips would be required during pipeline construction for soil removal and deliveries of pavement, structural fill, concrete, and pipelines.

The Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 anticipated construction of injection wells would include site preparation, mobilization of equipment to the well site, well drilling, water quality testing, installation of the well casing, gravel packing and finishing with a cement seal. Water discharged during well drilling would be conveyed to on-site temporary settling basins and discharged to the storm drain after drilling is complete under a permit from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Approximately four to eight workers would be required during construction of each well. Temporary overhead nighttime lighting would be installed during the well drilling period.

Operation

Once construction is complete and the WRF is commissioned and operational, minimal operations and maintenance activities would be required for the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. For the Original Project as a whole, up to 160 monthly maintenance vehicle trips were anticipated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1.

As discussed previously, the end use for recycled water under the Original Project would be IPR. Recycled water would be injected into the ground via the groundwater injection wells, and existing City water wells would then extract water to be treated at the City's existing BWRO treatment

facility, then distributed for potable use via the City's existing storage, distribution, pumping, turnout, and delivery facilities.

2.2 Modified Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project

Since preparation of the Final EIR, the City has identified modified locations for the recycled water distribution lines and injection wells envisioned as part of the Original Project. These proposed modifications are discussed in further detail below. Under the Modified Project, all other components of the Original Project would remain the same as those described in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1.

Recycled Water Distribution Pipelines and Injection Wells

Under the Modified Project, the nature and components of the injection wells would remain generally the same. However, in addition to the existing IW-1, the City has identified seven potential injection well locations (IW-2 through IW-8), shown in Figure 4.[3] Three of these injection well locations (IW-2 through IW-4) are within the IPR-West injection well area identified in the Final EIR (see Figure 2), and the remaining four are located to the west and northwest of the IPR-West injection well area.

The City has also identified several potential recycled water distribution pipeline alignments to convey advanced treated recycled water from the existing IPR-West pipeline to the selected injection well locations for groundwater replenishment. The nine potential recycled water pipeline segments (Segments 1 through 7A and 10),[4] are shown in Figure 4. Of note, Segments 3A and 7A would either be fed through the existing, abandoned, 12-inch desalination pipeline or installed via trenchless methods to avoid disturbance of riparian habitat and jurisdictional waters associated with Morro Creek. Segment 5A may also be installed via trenchless methods to avoid disturbance of riparian habitat. The recycled water distribution pipelines would range in size from approximately six inches to 12 inches in diameter and would made of high-density polyethylene or polyvinyl chloride, which is similar to what was anticipated under the Original Project.

Under the Modified Project, the City would select a combination of the potential pipeline segments and injection wells to make up the ultimate recycled water distribution pipeline network and injection well locations. As depicted on Figure 5 through Figure 8, the potential recycled water distribution pipeline alignments consist of the following:

- **Vistra IPR Easement Alignment (Figure 5):** This alignment consists of Segment 4 and would connect IW-1, IW-2, and IW-3 to the IPR-West pipeline.
- **Willow Camp Creek Alignment (Figure 6).** This alignment consists of Segments 4, 5A, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation.
- **Marine Mammal Center Alignment (Figure 7).** This alignment consists of Segments 2A, 3A, 4, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation.

[3] Due to ongoing siting efforts, the location of IW-7 is shown more generally as the southern portion of the Morro Dunes RV Park. The permanent footprint of IW-7 would occupy approximately 6,050 square feet of this area.
[4] There is no Segment 8 or Segment 9 included in the Modified Project because these pipeline segments were found to be infeasible due to design considerations and were eliminated from further consideration.

- **Surf Street Alignment (Figure 8).** This alignment consists of Segments 1, 3A, 4, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation.

In addition to the conveyance pipeline alignments described above, minor pipelines would be installed to connect the injection wells to the recycled water distribution pipelines. Because well siting and final design is still ongoing, all potential injection well locations and recycled water pipeline segments under the Modified Project are evaluated in this Addendum. The final locations would be selected based on cost, environmental and socioeconomic considerations, permitting requirements, land acquisition/easements, and other factors.

Under the Modified Project, a portion of the advanced treated recycled water produced at the AWTF may be delivered for non-potable irrigation use at Lila Keiser Park and Morro Bay High School. In this event, short pipelines would be installed between Segment 10 of the recycled water distribution network and these end users. The delivery of advanced treated recycled water to these users could be implemented if the Willow Camp Creek, Marine Mammal Center, or Surf Street alignments are selected. The Modified Project may also include installation of a recycled water fill station, either at the WRF or Lila Keiser Park, which would make non-potable recycled water available for agricultural, construction, and municipal purposes and would replace the existing non-potable water fill station at the Flippos Well at Lila Keiser Park. The potential fill station would consist of minor aboveground piping that would be accessible only by approved users.

Under the Modified Project, groundwater extracted from the Morro Basin would be conveyed to the potable water distribution system and may undergo treatment at the BWRO treatment facility, be blended with other water supply sources, or be provided directly to the potable water distribution system. In any scenario, groundwater extracted and conveyed to the potable water distribution system would be required to meet all applicable drinking water quality standards outlined in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and the California Safe Drinking Water Act as well as the City's public water system permit issued by the SWRCB Division of Drinking Water.

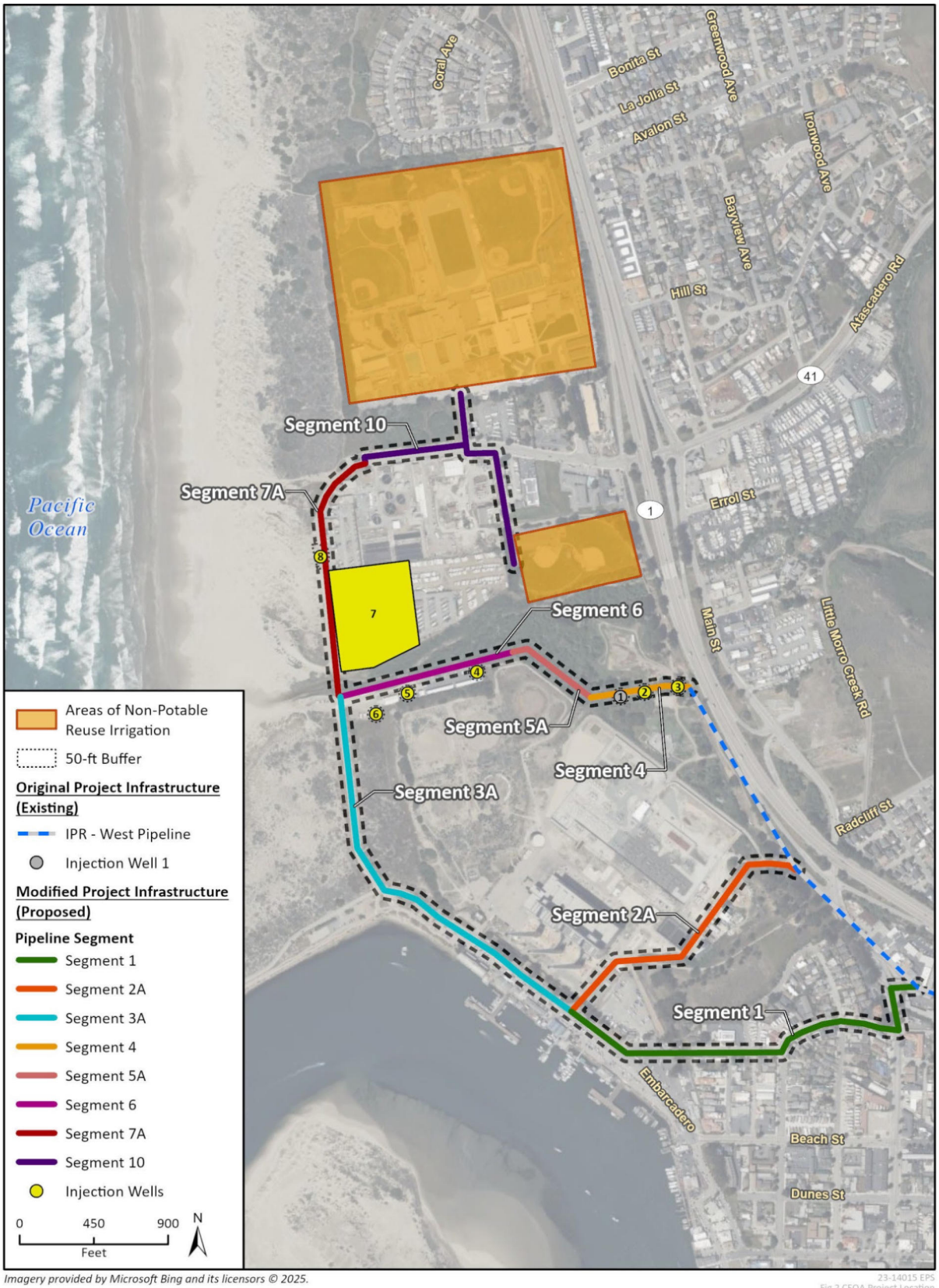
Construction

The duration, equipment, activities, techniques, and staging/laydown areas for Modified Project construction would remain substantially similar as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. The potential recycled water fill station would be installed as part of construction of the conveyance pipelines and would not require substantially more time or additional construction equipment. Construction of the recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells would occur in phases with at least two additional injection wells, the associated pipelines, and the non-potable recycled water connections to Lila Keiser Park and Morro Bay High School installed in the first phase and additional wells and pipelines installed in future phases as wastewater flows increase and the City needs additional recycled water to meet its water supply reliability and resiliency goals.

Operation and Maintenance

Under the Modified Project, operation and maintenance characteristics would remain the same as those described in the Final EIR.

Figure 4 Modified Project Overview



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23-14015 EPS
Fig 2 CEQA Project Location

Figure 5 Vistra IPR Easement Alignment

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Fig 3 Vistra IPR Easement Alignment

Figure 6 Willow Camp Creek Alignment

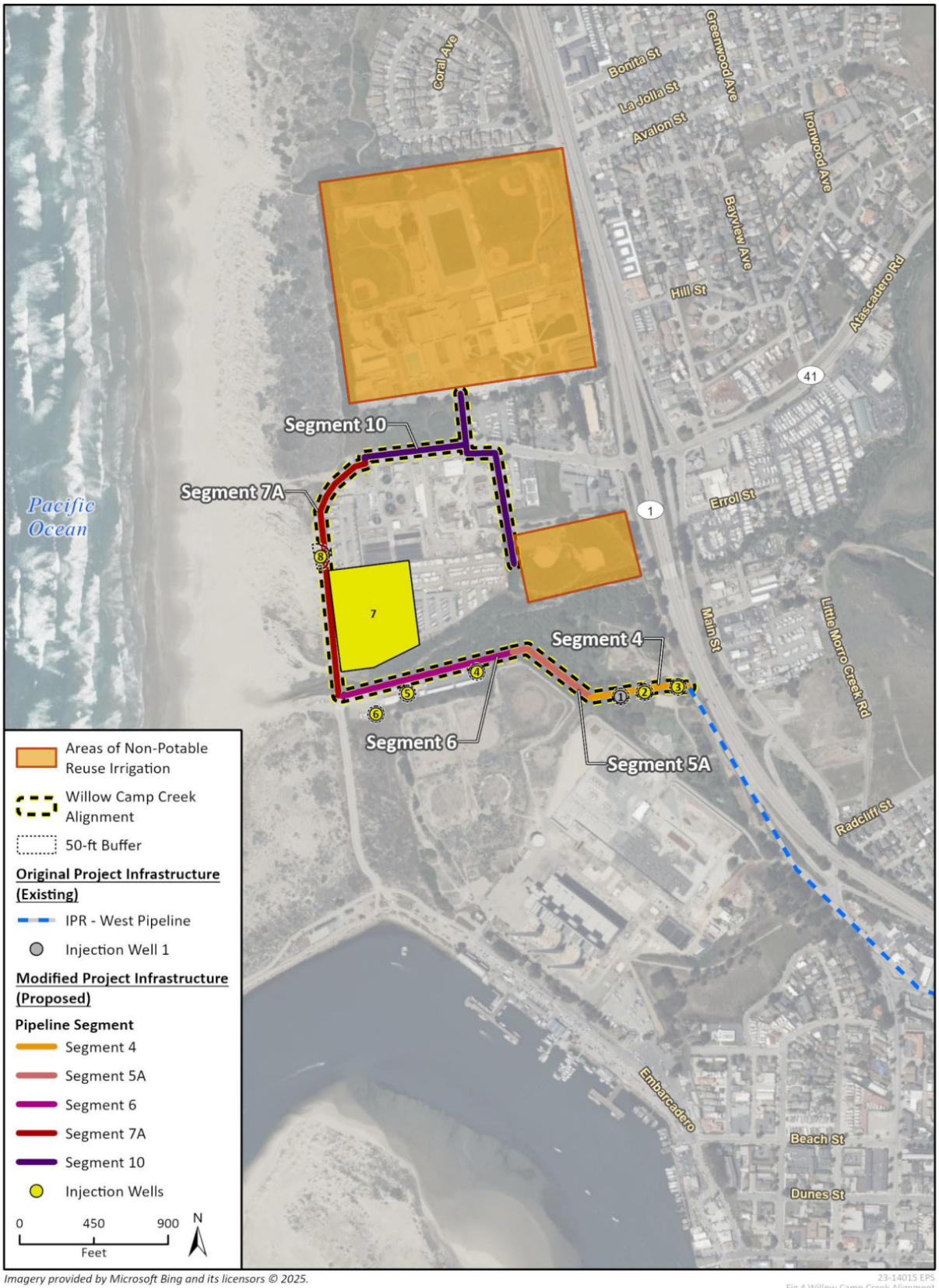

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Fig 4 Willow Camp Creek Alignment

Figure 7 Marine Mammal Center Alignment

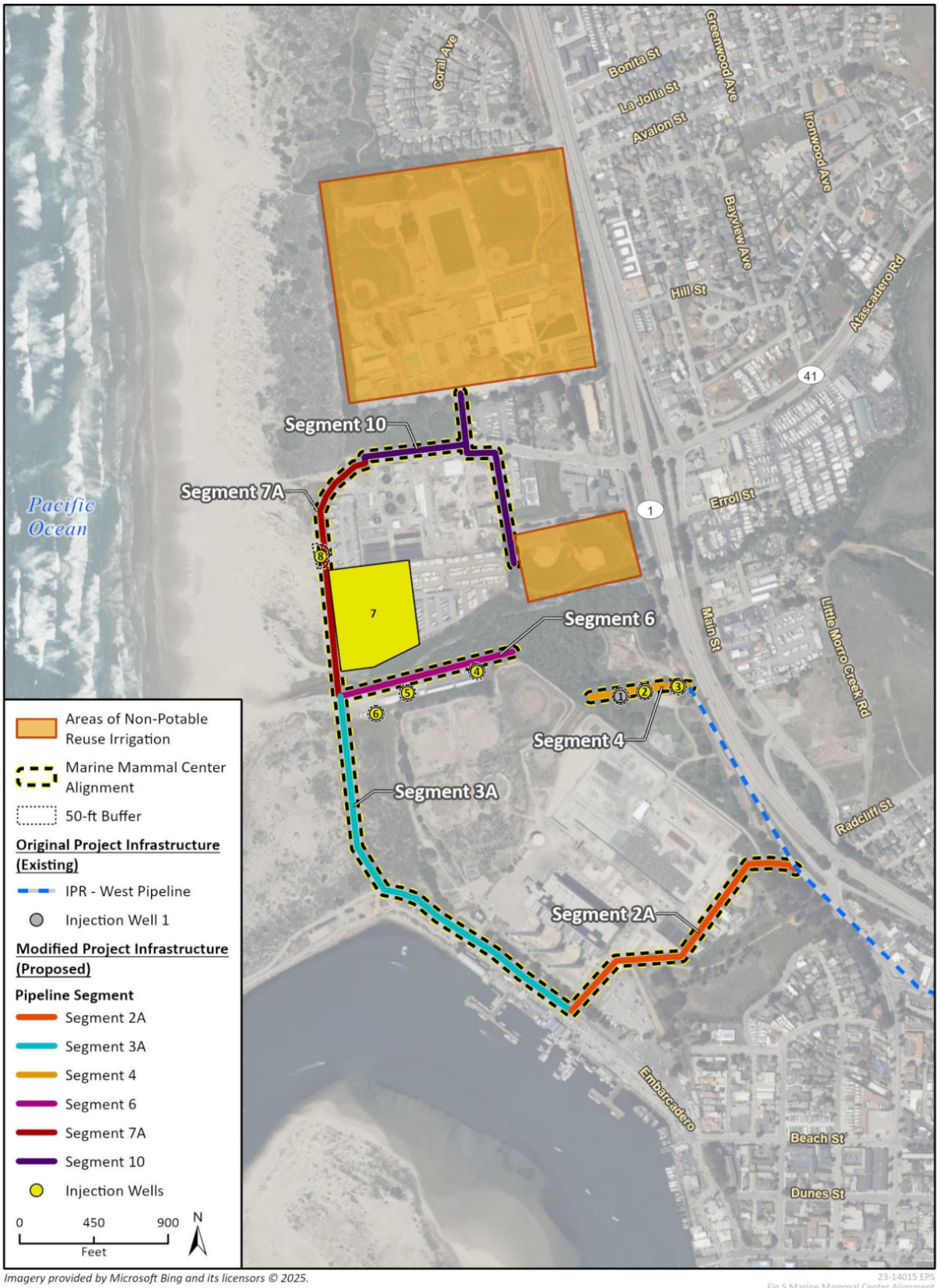

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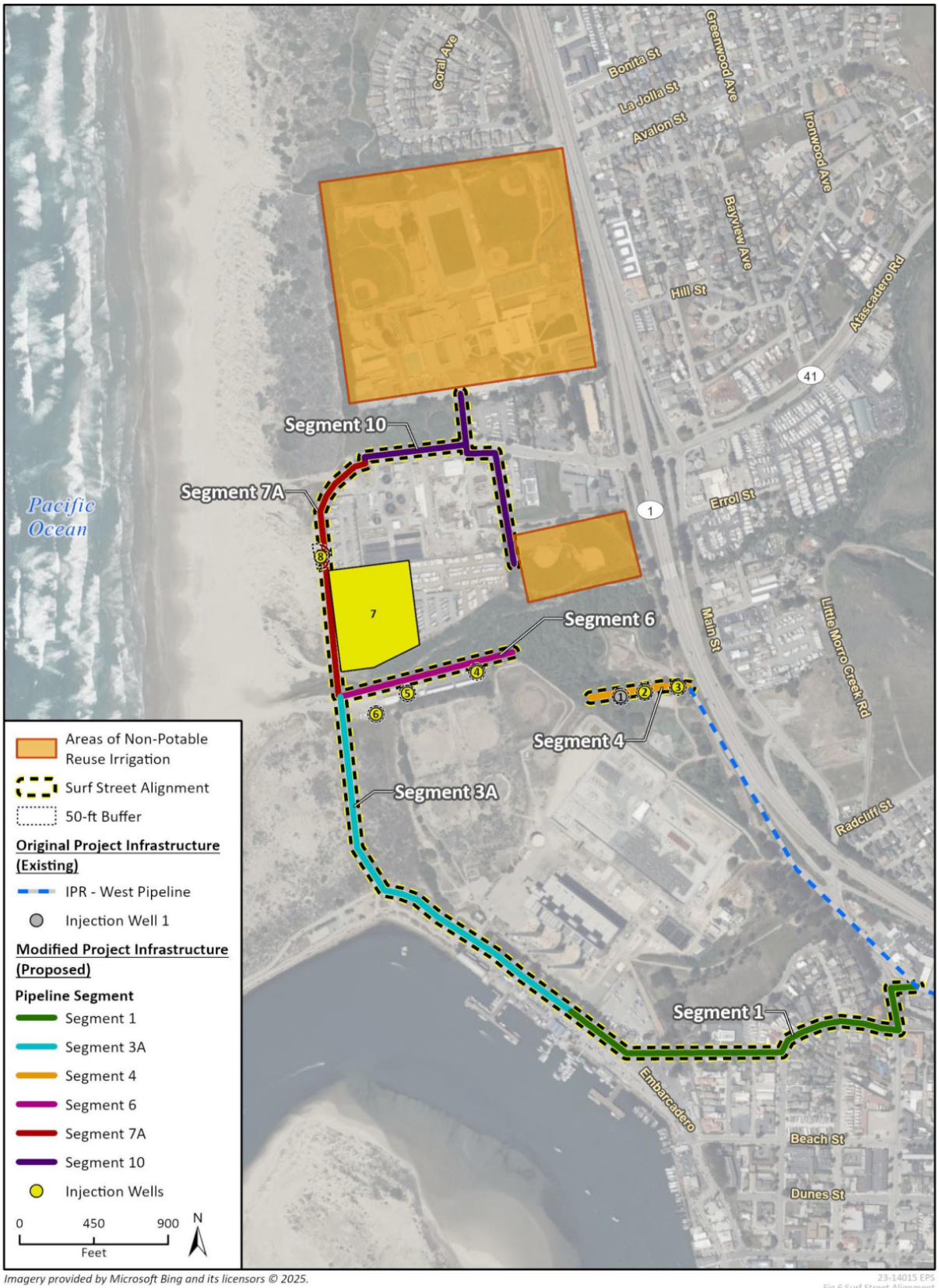
Fig 5 Marine Mammal Center Alignment

Figure 8 Surf Street Alignment



3 Basis for the Addendum

CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 set forth the criteria for determining the appropriate additional environmental documentation, if any, to be completed when a project has a previously certified EIR.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 states a lead agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary, but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a Subsequent EIR have occurred. CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a) states no Subsequent or Supplemental EIR shall be prepared for a project with a certified EIR unless the lead agency determines, based on substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

1. Substantial changes are proposed in the project that will require major revisions of the previous EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
2. Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
3. New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete, shows any of the following:
    A. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR.
    B. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR.
    C. Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.
    D. Mitigation measures or alternatives that are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

The analysis pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 demonstrates whether the lead agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the existing certified EIR, that an addendum to the existing EIR would be appropriate, and no new environmental document, such as a new EIR, would be required. The addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the Final EIR, and the decision-making body shall consider the addendum with the Final EIR prior to deciding on the project.

The City has prepared this EIR Addendum, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164, to evaluate whether the Modified Project's environmental impacts are covered by and within the scope of the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the Original Project. This Addendum details any changes in the project (i.e., the proposed modifications), changes in circumstances under which the

project is undertaken, and/or “new information of substantial importance” that may cause one or more effects to environmental resources.

The responses herein 1) substantiate and support the City’s determination that the proposed modifications are within the scope of the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 certified/adopted for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project and do not require subsequent action under CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 and 2) in conjunction with the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project, adequately analyze potential environmental impacts of the Modified Project.

The Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project were used in preparation of this Addendum and is incorporated herein by reference, consistent with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines.

4 Addendum Evaluation Methodology

4.1 Context of the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility EIR

The Final EIR and its Addendum No. 1 evaluated the environmental impacts of the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project. The 2018 Final EIR analyzed the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project as originally proposed. Addendum No. 1 was prepared in 2019 and analyzed minor modifications to the project, including revisions to recycled water distribution pipeline alignments, addition of a new lift station, rehabilitation of the existing ocean outfall, and identification of potential construction laydown locations. For purposes of this Addendum No. 2, the Original Project consists of the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project as described in the Final EIR and modified by Addendum No. 1. The Original Project consists of decommissioning and demolition of the existing Morro Bay-Cayucos WWTP and construction of the Morro Bay WRF, two lift stations and a series of wastewater conveyance pipelines, a recycled water distribution system, and injection wells. Chapter 3, *Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures*, of the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to cultural resources because the Original Project would potentially result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of archaeological resources and the disturbance of human remains. In addition, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to the following environmental resources with implementation of the identified mitigation measures:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources - Paleontological Resources
- Geology, Soils and Seismicity
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Transportation and Traffic

The Final EIR determined all other environmental impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.2 Addendum Analysis and Format

The Final EIR evaluated the environmental impacts of construction and operation of the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility. The impacts analysis contained in Section 4, *Impacts Analysis*, of this Addendum follow the order of the Final EIR. For each environmental resource, the analysis 1) summarizes the impacts identified in the Final EIR; 2) discusses potential impacts, including cumulative impacts, associated with the Modified Project; and 3) presents a conclusion regarding potential impacts associated with the Modified Project and how they compare to impacts identified in the Final EIR.

The Final EIR for the Original Project, which was certified in March 2018, assessed the environmental topic areas that were identified in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist at the time of preparation of that document. Since certification of the Final EIR in March 2018, the CEQA Guidelines were updated, and modifications to the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were subsequently adopted. The following is an overview of the most substantial revisions to the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist that were adopted in 2018 for resource areas addressed in this Addendum:

- **Aesthetics** – One of the significance criteria was revised to consider substantial degradation of existing visual character or quality of public views only if the project site is in a non-urbanized area. For projects in urbanized areas, the significance criterion instead evaluates whether the project conflicts with applicable zoning and regulations governing scenic quality.
- **Air Quality** – The significance criterion evaluating whether a project would result in a violation of air quality standards was removed. In addition, the significance criterion associated with objectionable odors was broadened to evaluate other air pollutant emissions, such as those leading to odors, that could adversely affect a substantial number of people.
- **Biological Resources** – The definition of a wetland under CEQA has been expanded, such that now the extent of wetland areas should be considered at both the state and federal level, with impact analyses conducted for the more conservative area.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality** – Significance criteria associated with the placement of housing or structures within a flood zone and otherwise exposing people or project features to flooding, tsunami, mudflow, etc. have been removed and replaced with a criterion evaluating whether the project would risk the release of pollutants in the event of inundation due to flooding, tsunami, or seiche. In addition, revised significance criteria require an expanded evaluation of project impacts related to alterations of the existing drainage pattern of the project site and surrounding area and an analysis of potential conflicts with sustainable groundwater management plans and water quality control plans.
- **Noise** – Six significance criteria were consolidated into three, while still focusing on temporary and permanent noise, vibration, and airport/airstrip noise impacts.
- **Population and Housing** – One significance criterion was clarified to evaluate specifically unplanned population growth, and two significance criteria related to displacement of existing people or housing were consolidated into one.
- **Transportation** – Significance criteria were revised to consider transportation impacts in terms of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rather than level of service/congestion impacts. In addition, the significance criterion evaluating impacts to air traffic patterns was removed.
- **Utilities and Service Systems** – Seven significance criteria were consolidated into five and revised while still focusing on whether a project would necessitate the relocation or construction of new or expanded utility systems and whether sufficient water supplies would be available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development.
- **Energy and Wildfire** – These topics were added to the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist as environmental issue areas. The Energy section evaluates impacts related to wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary energy consumption and conflicts with state or local renewable energy and energy efficiency plans. The Wildfire section addresses factors that could expose people or structures to fire or post-fire flooding or landslides, risk or impair emergency response, or require installation of features that could exacerbate fire risk (e.g., power lines) or result in ongoing impacts to the environment (e.g., fuel modification zones).

5 Impact Analysis

The following sections summarize the findings of the Final EIR and evaluate the impacts of the Modified Project by topic. All mitigation measures referenced herein are outlined in Appendix A.

5.1 Aesthetics

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project on aesthetics are discussed in Section 3.1, *Aesthetics*, of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project's impacts to aesthetics would be less than significant with mitigation. Scenic resources in Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo County include Morro Rock, Morro Creek, and undeveloped hillsides. In addition, the segment of State Route 1 that traverses Morro Bay is an officially designated state scenic highway. The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would have less-than-significant impacts to scenic resources because it would not result in a substantial adverse effect to views of Morro Rock and Morro Creek. In addition, while the WRF would be constructed in an undeveloped hillside area and would be intermittently visible to motorists on State Route 1, the Final EIR concluded impacts to scenic vistas and state scenic highways would be less than significant because the architecture of the WRF would resemble ranch buildings and would blend into the scenic character of the hillside areas along the State Route 1 corridor (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined demolition and construction activities would result in temporary, short-term impacts to the visual character of the project area but would not permanently affect the existing visual character of the surrounding area. In addition, the Final EIR determined the Original Project would not result in long-term substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because project components would either be located belowground, screened by fences or vegetation, or designed to be visually consistent with existing hillside development. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to visual character would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined construction of the Original Project would generally not require lighting and would not generate new sources of light or glare. However, installation of the injection wells would require daily 24-hour drilling for up to approximately one month and would require nighttime lighting during such activities. The Final EIR included Mitigation Measure AES-1 (Nighttime Construction Lighting), which requires lighting used during nighttime construction to be shielded and pointed away from surrounding light-sensitive land uses. Operation of the Original Project would introduce new sources of exterior lighting, which would be required to comply with exterior lighting ordinances contained in the County of San Luis Obispo Local Coastal Plan and Morro Bay Municipal Code. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, the Final EIR concluded impacts to light and glare would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to aesthetics associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be

potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- Substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings;
- The creation of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

Impact Analysis

Similar to the Original Project, the proposed modifications would not result in substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas, scenic resources within a state scenic highway, the visual character of the project area, or light or glare. The proposed modifications include similar project components (e.g., injection wells and recycled water distribution pipelines) and construction activities (e.g., 24-hour drilling for the injection wells) to those anticipated in the Final EIR, and as such, the proposed modifications would not result in greater impacts to aesthetics than those anticipated in the Final EIR for the Original Project. The potential recycled water fill station, which would be constructed at either the WRF or Lila Keiser Park, would consist of minor aboveground piping and would not result in significant impacts to scenic vistas, scenic resources within a state scenic highway, existing visual character, or light and glare. Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to aesthetics as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would continue to apply to the Modified Project, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to aesthetics or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to agriculture and forestry resources are discussed in Section 3.2, *Agriculture and Forestry Resources,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR identified that the IPR-East injection well area (see Figure 2 in Section 2, *Background and Project Description*) contains approximately 1.26 acres of Prime Farmland. Because the locations of the injection wells were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the Final EIR conservatively assumed the injection wells would impact all 1.26 acres of Prime Farmland. Appendix B of the Final EIR included a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment prepared in accordance with the California Department of Conservation Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model Instruction Manual. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment takes into account soil quality, project site size, water availability, and surrounding resource lands and assigns a numeric score reflecting the agricultural land's significance. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment prepared for the Original Project concluded the potential conversion of Prime Farmland within the Original Project site to non-agricultural use would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR concluded none of the Original Project components would be located on lands enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. The Final EIR also determined the WRF and conveyance pipeline components of the Original Project would be located on lands designated as Agriculture under the County of San Luis Obispo's General Plan. Pursuant to the County's General Plan and Land Use Ordinance, public utility facilities, such as the infrastructure proposed by the Original Project, are permitted within lands zoned for agricultural uses with required permits and approval of a Development Plan. Other Original Project components would not be located in areas designated as Agriculture under the County of San Luis Obispo's General Plan. Accordingly, the Final EIR concluded impacts related to conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use would be less than significant with acquisition of applicable permits and preparation of a Development Plan (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined the Original Project would not be located within forest land or timberland and would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The Final EIR concluded no impacts to forest land or timberland would occur (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to agriculture and forestry resources associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- A conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- A conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104[g]);
- The loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- Other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Impact Analysis

The proposed modifications would be located in an area designated as Urban and Built-Up Land (California Department of Conservation 2021) and accordingly would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. Additionally, the proposed modifications are not located in an area enrolled in a Williamson Act contract (California Department of Conservation 2022) or an area zoned for agricultural use. Therefore, as with the Original Project, the Modified Project would have less-than-significant impacts to agricultural resources. The proposed modifications would be located in a previously developed area, which does not contain forest land or timberland resources. Therefore, similar to the Original project, the Modified Project would have no impacts to forestry resources.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to agriculture and forestry resources or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.3 Air Quality

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to air quality are discussed in Section 3.3, *Air Quality,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would be consistent with the San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District's (SLOAPCD) 2001 Clean Air Plan, and impacts related to conflict with an applicable air quality plan would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Table 3.3-4, Table 3.3-5, and Table 3.3-6 of the Final EIR present estimated air pollutant emissions associated with construction and operation of the Original Project. The Final EIR found that construction of the Original Project would generate temporary increases in localized emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) in excess of SLOAPCD thresholds, which could lead to a violation of an air quality standard. Emissions of ROG, NO_x, and DPM would primarily be associated with construction equipment exhaust and mobile sources, such as construction worker vehicles. In addition, SLOAPCD requires projects that involve grading of more than four acres to implement fugitive dust control measures. The Final EIR included Mitigation Measures AQ-1a (Fugitive Dust Control Measures), AQ-1b (Standard Control Measures for Construction Equipment), AQ-1c (Best Available Control Technology for Construction Equipment), and AQ-1d (Architectural Coatings), which require implementation of SLOAPCD-recommended dust control measures and the reduction of emissions of ROG, NO_x, and DPM to below SLOAPCD thresholds. The Final EIR concluded construction impacts related to the violation of an air quality standard would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined operation of the Original Project would generate emissions of ROG, NO_x, and particulate matter, but emissions would not exceed applicable SLOAPCD thresholds. The Final EIR concluded operational impacts related to the violation of an air quality standard would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018). The Final EIR stated a project that does not exceed applicable SLOAPCD significance thresholds and is consistent with the 2001 Clean Air Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in air pollutant emissions. Because the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not exceed applicable SLOAPCD significance thresholds and would not conflict with the 2001 Clean Air Plan, the Final EIR determined the Original Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment. Impacts were found to be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a through AQ-1d (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR also determined construction and operation of the Original Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations that would lead to adverse health risks, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined operation of the Original Project would generate odors, but the Original Project includes odor control facilities to capture and treat air produced during the wastewater treatment process. The Final EIR concluded a substantial number of people would not be affected by objectionable odors, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to air quality associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- A conflict with or obstruction of implementation of the applicable air quality plan;
- A violation of any air quality standard or a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation;
- A cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard;
- The exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- The creation of objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

In addition, the following CEQA significance thresholds from Section III, *Air Quality*, of the 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were used to evaluate the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- Other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

Impact Analysis

As shown in Appendix C of the Final EIR, the estimated air pollutant emissions associated with the Original Project included emissions associated with construction and operation of the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. The proposed modifications involve revised locations for conveyance pipelines and injection wells and do not include new types of project components. The duration, equipment, activities, and techniques for Modified Project construction would remain the same as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. As discussed further in Section 5.14, *Transportation and Traffic,* the potential recycled water fill station installed at the WRF or Lila Keiser Park is not expected to result in an increase in VMT because it would serve as a replacement for an existing non-potable water fill station at the Flippos Well. Therefore, the potential recycled water fill station would not result in an increase in air pollutant emissions as compared to baseline conditions. Accordingly, the air pollutant emissions and potential air quality impacts associated with the Modified Project would be the same as those identified for the Original Project in the Final EIR. As with the Original Project, impacts related to air quality standard violations and cumulatively considerable net increases of criteria pollutants would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a through AQ-1d. All other air quality impacts under the Modified Project would be less than significant, similar to the Original Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to air quality or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.4 Biological Resources

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to biological resources are discussed in Section 3.4, *Biological Resources,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined ground disturbing activities associated with construction of the Original Project could result in impacts to special status plant and wildlife species, including Morro shoulderband snail (*Helminthoglypta walkeriana)*, American badger (*Taxidea taxus)*, nesting birds, and San Luis Obispo owl's clover (*Castilleja densiflora* ssp. *obispoensis)*. At the time of preparation of the Final EIR in 2018, Morro shoulderband snail was listed as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act and American badger was listed as a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Species of Special Concern. In addition, San Luis Obispo owl's clover had a California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Rank of 1B.2, indicating it was moderately rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR included Mitigation Measures BIO-1 (Construction Worker Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program) BIO-2 (Avoidance and Protection of Biological Resources), BIO-3 (Morro Shoulderband Snail), BIO-4 (American Badger) and BIO-5 (Nesting Birds), which require implementation of measures to avoid and minimize impacts to special status plant and animal species with potential to occur. The Final EIR concluded impacts to special status species would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined construction of the conveyance pipelines included in the Original Project, depending on their ultimate location, could result in impacts to riparian habitat and wetlands associated with Morro Creek and Little Morro Creek but noted the conveyance pipelines would be installed via trenchless pipeline installation, which would reduce potential impacts to riparian habitat and wetlands. In addition, the Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 as well as BIO-6 (Riparian Habitat Avoidance), BIO-7 (Trenching Buffer for Jurisdictional Features), BIO-8 (Construction Best Management Practices to Protect Jurisdictional Features and Aquatic Habitat), and BIO-9 (Preparation of a Frac-Out Contingency Plan), which include limiting ground disturbance near Morro Creek, Little Morro Creek, and other potentially jurisdictional features and implementation of best management practices to minimize potential impacts to wetlands during construction. The Final EIR concluded impacts to riparian habitat, other sensitive natural communities, and wetlands would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR concluded construction of the Original Project could affect southern steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*) habitat in Morro Creek. At the time of preparation of the Final EIR, southern steelhead was listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act and as a CDFW Species of Special Concern. In addition, the Final EIR concluded construction of the Original Project could affect wildlife nursery sites in Morro Bay. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-9 to reduce potential construction impacts to steelhead habitat in Morro Creek to a less-than-significant level. The Final EIR also determined that preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit would reduce potential impacts to wildlife nursery sites in Morro Bay to a less-than-significant level. The Final EIR concluded impacts to critical habitat and wildlife nursery sites would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined construction of the Original Project could affect streams, which are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA). The Final EIR also indicated construction could impact protected trees within Morro Bay city limits, although no trees are expected to be removed. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-6 through BIO-9 to reduce impacts to ESHAs and Mitigation Measure BIO-10 (Tree Protection), which requires minimizing impacts to protected trees near construction activities. The Final EIR concluded that impacts to ESHAs and protected trees would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to biological resources associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- 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 CDFW or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- A substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by CDFW or USFWS;
- A substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- The substantial interference with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or the impediment of the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
- A conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- A conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

In addition, the following CEQA significance thresholds from Section IV, *Biological Resources*, of the 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were used to evaluate the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- 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.

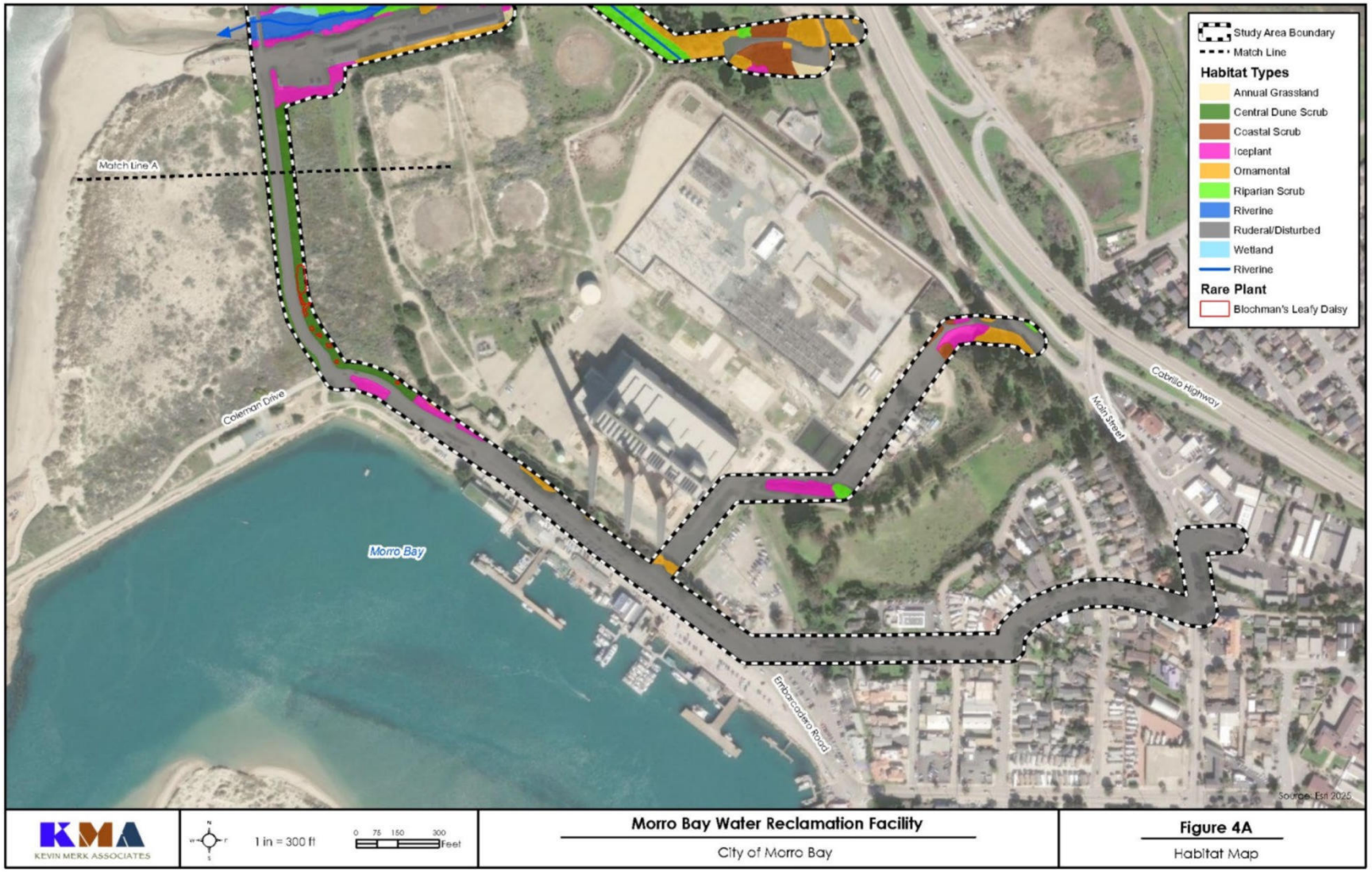
Impact Analysis

A Supplemental Biological Resources Report was prepared for the proposed modifications and is included as Appendix B.[5] This report is a supplement to the 2017, 2018, and 2019 biological resources reports prepared for the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1, which analyzed the Original Project. For the purposes of this analysis, the Biological Study Area refers to the sites of the proposed modifications plus a 50-foot buffer on each side of the pipeline alignments and surrounding each injection well location. In general, the Supplemental Biological Resources Report concluded current site conditions of the Biological Study Area are generally the same as conditions documented in previous biological resources reports prepared for the Original Project. Biologists have regularly conducted surveys during construction of the initial phases of the Original Project, and to date, no federal or state listed species have been observed in the Original Project site, including in the Biological Study Area. The 2024 surveys conducted for the Biological Study Area identified primarily ruderal and disturbed land uses within the impact footprints where recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells would be installed. However, the Supplemental Biological Resources Report identified a small area of Central Dune Scrub habitat in the dune lands along the road margins where pipeline Segment 3A is proposed. Habitat maps prepared for the Biological Study Area are presented in Figure 9 and Figure 10. Central Dune Scrub habitat is a special status plant community not previously considered in the Final EIR or Addendum No. 1 and has a CNPS Rare Plant Rank of G2/S2.2, indicating it is rare or endangered in California and elsewhere, and could provide habitat for several special status species. In the vicinity of the proposed modifications, this habitat type is relatively common and was observed to be disturbed from roadway development, human activities, and the presence of numerous non-native plants. In addition, the Supplemental Biological Resources Report identified the occurrence of one special status plant - Blochman's leafy daisy (*Erigeron blochmaniae)* - not previously considered in the Final EIR or Addendum No. 1, located in proximity to where pipeline Segment 3A is proposed. Blochman's leafy daisy has a CNPS Rare Plant Rank of 1B.2, indicating it is fairly endangered in California and rare or endangered elsewhere (Appendix B).

Several patches of Blochman's leafy daisy growing in Central Dune Scrub habitat were observed along the margins of Embarcadero Road, primarily along the east side south of Morro Creek, near Segment 3A. Several Blochman's leafy daisy individuals were also observed adjacent to the power plant property, growing in iceplant mats. These areas are highly disturbed, and the road margins are well-maintained in this area, which reduces the potential for Central Dune Scrub and Blochman's leafy daisy to encroach on the roadway. These occurrences of Blochman's leafy daisy and Central Dune Scrub habitat would be avoided through project design because the recycled water distribution pipelines would be installed in the disturbed roadway (Appendix B). Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to special status plant species or sensitive plant communities as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to special status plant species. Similar to the Original Project, impacts to special status plant species and sensitive plant communities under the Modified Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

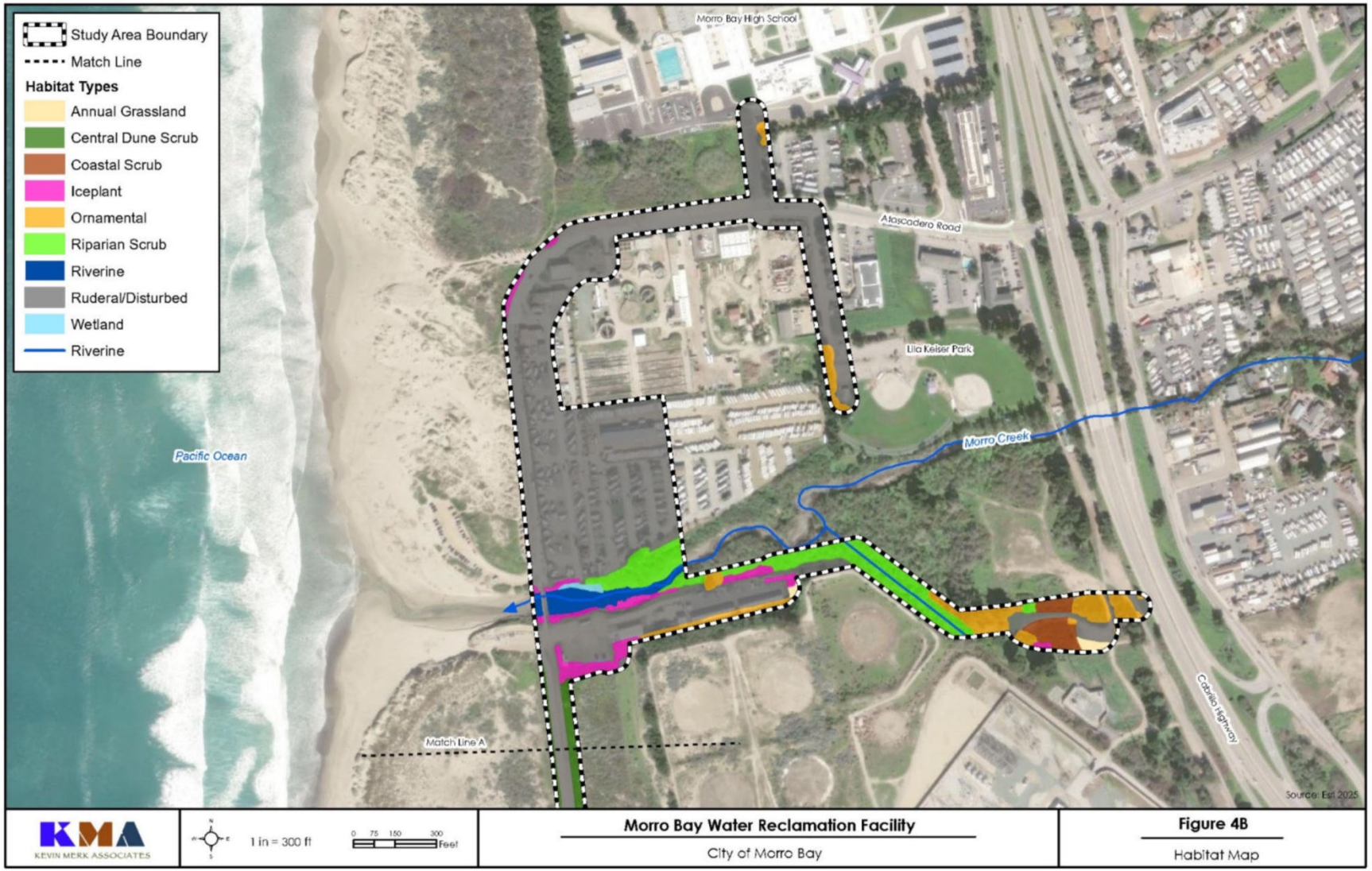
[5] The potential recycled water fill station included in the Modified Project would be located either at the WRF, which was previously evaluated for impacts to biological resources in the Final EIR, or at Lila-Kaiser Park within the disturbance footprint evaluated for pipeline Segment 10 in the Supplemental Biological Resources Report (Appendix B).

Figure 9 Habitat Map of Biological Study Area for Proposed Modifications – Southern Extent



Source: Kevin Merk Associates, LLC 2025

Figure 10 Habitat Map of Biological Study Area for Proposed Modifications – Northern Extent



Source: Kevin Merk Associates, LLC 2025

Special Status Wildlife Species

One new special status invertebrate, Morro Bay June beetle (*Polyphylla morroensis*; a species of concern with no formal state or federal listing status), was identified in the California Natural Diversity Database review that was not previously analyzed in earlier studies. This species is known to occur in dune scrub and maritime chaparral habitats on Baywood fine sands in the Los Osos area and has not been recorded within the Biological Study Area. It has no formal federal or state listing status and is not expected to occur in the Biological Study Area due to its restricted range and lack of suitable habitat on site. All other special status wildlife identified in the literature review for the Supplemental Biological Resources Report were previously analyzed in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 (Appendix B).

While the proposed modifications are sited closer to the immediate coastline and the Morro Bay estuary, no suitable special status wildlife habitats are present in the disturbance footprint associated with the proposed modifications. The proposed modifications include work on Embarcadero Road, which is in close proximity to habitat for special status wildlife species such as the western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*; federal threatened), California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*; state threatened), and California Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*; federal and state endangered). However, the proposed modifications would be constructed in disturbed, urban areas devoid of suitable habitat and would not affect these species' foraging or nesting habitats.[6] In addition, marine mammals such as the southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*; federal threatened) are present in Morro Bay and Estero Bay and would not be affected by the proposed modifications.[7] The majority of species evaluated in the Supplemental Biological Resources Report have highly restricted habitats that are not present within the Biological Study Area. The Central Dune Scrub habitat adjacent to Segment 3A contains extensive mats of iceplant and native shrubs that could potentially support special status wildlife species found in coastal dune scrub habitats on sandy dune soils, including globose dune beetle (*Coelus globosus*; CDFW Special Animal), Morro Bay blue butterfly (*Plebejus = Icaricia icarioides moroensis*; CDFW Special Animal), Morro shoulderband snail (*Helminthoglypta walkeriana*; federal threatened), Northern California legless lizard (*Aniella pulchra*; CDFW Species of Special Concern), and coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvilli*; CDFW Species of Special Concern).[8] However, the Biological Study Area is highly disturbed, and the road margins are regularly maintained, thereby reducing the potential for these species to occur in this area of Central Dune Scrub habitat (Appendix B). Therefore, impacts to these species would be less than significant.

Two species with potential to occur in the vicinity of the Biological Study Area are undergoing review to determine if they warrant protection under federal Endangered Species Act. Southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys pallida*) is proposed to be listed as threatened, and the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is a candidate species. Impacts to these two species were evaluated in the Final EIR because southwestern pond turtle was designated a CDFW Species of Special Concern and monarch butterfly was designated a CDFW Special Animal at the time.[9] No recorded occurrences of pond turtles were identified within the Biological Study Area, and the species has not been observed in the lower reach of Morro Creek during numerous surveys by biologists during the course of the Original Project. They are primarily known to occur in perennial

[6] These species were included in the special status species evaluation in the Final EIR.
[7] This species was included in the special status species evaluation in the Final EIR.
[8] These species were included in the special status species evaluation in the Final EIR.
[9] Southern Pacific (western) pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), which was evaluated in the Final EIR, is the same species as southwestern pond turtle.

drainages in the Estero Bay area, which has prolonged pools and slow-moving water. While seasonal aquatic habitat is present throughout the reach of Morro Creek downstream of SR 1, the lower lagoon within the Biological Study Area has higher salinity due to proximity to the Pacific Ocean, which reduces the habitat quality for these freshwater turtles and thereby reduces the potential for this species to occur within the locations of the proposed modifications. The proposed modifications are designed to avoid potentially suitable habitat for this species; therefore, impacts to southwestern pond turtle and potentially suitable breeding habitat would be less than significant. The monarch butterfly is known to roost colonially during the fall and winter in the Morro Bay area. It utilizes protected groves of blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Monterey pine (Pinus radiata) and Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) in close proximity to the Pacific Ocean for temperature regulation. The groves provide indirect sunlight, source of moisture, and protection against freezing temperatures and strong winter winds. The coastal locations have a milder climate compared to inland areas. “Autumnal sites” are temporary sites used for roosting that do not persist through the winter and may not be used every year. Several overwintering sites are located in the Estero Bay area, and an autumnal site was observed on a tree-covered hillside on the Morro Bay Power Plant property (west of Main Street and north of Scott Street) outside of the Biological Study Area during construction activities completed for the Original Project. The Biological Study Area does not support suitable groves of trees to be used as an aggregation site. In addition, no milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.) plants that are used for monarch reproduction were observed in the proposed disturbance zones of the study area. Monarch butterflies could fly through the Biological Study Area, but no aggregation sites are present at the locations of the proposed modifications. Therefore, impacts to monarch butterfly would be less than significant. Implementation of the biological resources mitigation measures from the Final EIR (Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9) would further reduce the already less-than-significant impacts to these species. As such, these two species’ new proposed/candidate listing statuses do not constitute new information of substantial importance requiring preparation of a Subsequent EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 because the proposed modifications would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe significant impacts to these species as compared to the Original Project. Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to special status wildlife species as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to special status wildlife species. Similar to the Original Project, impacts to special status wildlife species under the Modified Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Although the exact locations of conveyance pipelines and injection wells were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the Final EIR evaluated potential impacts to riparian habitat and wetlands associated with Morro Creek and Little Morro Creek. As anticipated in the Final EIR, the proposed recycled water distribution pipelines would either be fed through the existing, abandoned, 12-inch desalination pipeline or installed via trenchless methods to avoid disturbance of riparian habitat and jurisdictional waters associated with Morro Creek. Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-6 through BIO-9 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to riparian habitat and wetlands. Similar to the Original Project, impacts to riparian habitat and wetlands under the Modified Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

The Modified Project does not include new types of project components or construction activities that would have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to

wildlife movement, wildlife nursery sites, or local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources beyond those anticipated for the Original Project. Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-6 through BIO-10 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to these resources. Similar to the Original Project, impacts to wildlife movement, wildlife nursery sites, and local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources under the Modified Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

As with the Original Project site, the Modified Project site is not located within the boundaries of a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, no impacts to habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans would occur under the Modified Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to biological resources or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.5 Cultural Resources

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project on cultural resources are discussed in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource, constituting a significant and unavoidable impact. A total of six archaeological resources (including those qualifying as historic resources) listed or eligible for listing the California Register of Historical Resources were identified within or within 100 feet of the Original Project site, and construction of the conveyance pipelines and injection/monitoring wells would have the potential to disturb these resources. In addition, construction activities at the WRF, lift stations, and existing WWTP would have the potential to disturb unknown archaeological resources that could qualify as historical or unique archaeological resources under CEQA. As a result, the Final EIR required implementation of the following mitigation measures, which require retention of a qualified archaeologist, and implementation of cultural resources surveys, avoidance and preservation measures, construction worker training, archaeological and Native American monitoring, protocols for inadvertent discoveries, and a data recovery plan:

- CUL-1 (Retention of a Qualified Archaeologist)
- CUL-2 (Pre-Construction Phase I Cultural Resources Survey)
- CUL-3 (Avoidance and Preservation in Place of Archaeological Resources)
- CUL-4 (Development of an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan)
- CUL-5 (Development of a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Program)
- CUL-6 (Construction Worker Cultural Resources Sensitivity Training)
- CUL-7 (Archaeological Resources Monitoring)
- CUL-8 (Native American Monitoring)
- CUL-9 (Inadvertent Discovery)

With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-5 through CUL-9, the Final EIR determined ground disturbance associated with construction of the WRF and lift stations would result in less-than-significant impacts to historic and archaeological resources. In addition, the Final EIR determined potential ground disturbance associated with operation of the Original Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to historical and archaeological resources with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-6 through CUL-9. However, the Final EIR determined ground disturbance associated with the conveyance pipelines and injection/monitoring wells would be significant and unavoidable impacts even with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 due to the presence of known historical and archaeological resources within and adjacent to the locations of these project components (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined excavation associated with construction and operation of the Original Project could impact unique paleontological resources. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-10 (Retention of a Qualified Paleontologist), CUL-11 (Paleontological Resources Sensitivity Training), CUL-12 (Paleontological Resources Monitoring), and CUL-13 (Inadvertent Discovery of Fossils), which include retention of a paleontologist to direct mitigation measures related to paleontological resources and implementation of paleontological resources monitoring and inadvertent discovery protocols. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the Final EIR concluded impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR identified that the sites of several Original Project components, including the WRF, lift stations, conveyance pipelines, injection/monitoring wells, and the existing WWTP, overlap with known locations of human remains and that ground disturbance could disturb such remains. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 as well as Mitigation Measure CUL-14 (Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains), which includes proper protocols for the handling and treatment of discoveries of human remains. However, even with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 and CUL-14, the Final EIR concluded impacts to human remains would be significant and unavoidable (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to cultural resources associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5;
- A substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5;
- Direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or
- Disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

The 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist includes the checklist question for paleontological resources and unique geological features in Section VII, *Geology and Soils.* For consistency with the Final EIR, paleontological resources are discussed in this section.

Impact Analysis

The proposed modifications are located in the same general area as the Original Project site. As with the Original Project, no historic architectural resources eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources are located within the sites of the proposed modifications. An Archaeological Testing Report (Kaijankoski and Bales 2024) was prepared to evaluate the potential for the proposed modifications to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to archaeological resources (including those qualifying as historic resources) and human remains as compared to the Original Project.[10] As outlined in the Archaeological Testing Report, there are three known archaeological resources (including those qualifying as historic resources) (CA-SLO-16, CA-SLO-29, and CA-SLO-239) within or adjacent to the portions of the recycled water distribution pipeline alignments included in the proposed modifications (Kaijankoski and Bales 2024). Subsurface testing was conducted in support of the Archaeological Testing Report in areas where ground disturbance is anticipated for construction of the proposed modifications, focusing in locations where the proposed modifications would be sited in areas previously identified to contain historic resources or with high archaeological sensitivity. Seven deep and 66 shallow cores were drilled, and seven hand auger units were excavated in June 2024, and the results were synthesized with those of prior subsurface testing conducted in 2020 and 2021.

The findings of subsurface testing conducted in 2020, 2021, and 2024 were negative for cultural materials at all proposed injection well locations and recycled water conveyance pipeline alignments with the exception of two hand auger excavations conducted in 2021 along pipeline Segment 2A, which identified shell middens associated with CA-SLO-239 (a remnant of a once-extensive village including an aboriginal cemetery and isolated burials as well as at least one house floor). Although these two excavations in 2021 exposed cultural deposits associated with site CA-SLO-239 in a secondary context, these disturbed deposits were considered to not contain the character-defining traits of this resource due to the lack of integrity with State Historic Preservation Officer concurrence. The proposed location for IW-7 overlaps with the recorded boundary of CA-SLO-29, which the Final EIR determined was outside the impact area of the Original Project. This site was recorded in 1948 and described as a shell mound near the ocean, and the site record has not been updated since the initial recordation. The recorded boundaries are based on a very large-scale hand-drawn map, and the exact location of this site is unknown. The subsurface testing conducted in 2024 included several cores within the recorded boundaries of CA-SLO-29 ranging from five to 20 feet below ground surface, all of which were negative. In addition, two deep sonic borings were drilled immediately east of the site boundaries, which also produced negative results. (The Archaeological Testing Report indicates it is possible the shell mound recorded as CA-SLO-29 may be the northern extension of site CA-SLO-16 [recorded further to the east] because that portion of the site is a dense shell midden.) Therefore, installation of IW-7 within the recorded boundaries of CA-SLO-29 would

[10] The Archaeological Testing Report included subsurface testing at 12 proposed injection well locations. Following completion of the subsurface testing, the City reduced the number of proposed injection well locations to the seven evaluated in this Addendum, which correspond to Injection Wells 2, 3A, 4, 5, 6B, 7B, and 8B in the Archaeological Testing Report. In addition, the location of IW-8 (shown as 8B in the Archaeological Testing Report) was modified slightly following the completion of subsurface testing but falls within the area evaluated in the Archaeological Testing Report for pipeline Segment 7A. Lastly, the potential recycled water fill station would be located either at the WRF, which was previously evaluated for impacts to cultural resources in the Final EIR, or at Lila-Kaiser Park within the disturbance footprint evaluated for the recycled water distribution pipeline alignment in the Archaeological Testing Report (Kaijankoski and Bales 2024).

not result in significant impacts to this archaeological resource. Due to the lack of archaeological resources in the sites of the proposed modifications, the Archaeological Testing Report concluded construction of the proposed modifications would not result in adverse effects to archaeological resources (including those qualifying as historic resources). Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to historic and archaeological resources as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to historic and archaeological resources. Although construction of the proposed modifications would not result in adverse effects to historic or archaeological resources, impacts to historic and archaeological resources under the overall Modified Project would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the Original Project, due to the presence of known historic and archaeological resources within and adjacent to the locations of the conveyance pipelines and injection/monitoring wells.

The proposed modifications are located in the same general area as the Original Project site and overlap with known locations of human remains that the Final EIR indicated could be impacted by the Original Project (e.g., CA-SLO-239). As such, although ground disturbance associated with the proposed modifications could disturb such remains, the proposed modifications would not result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to human remains as compared to the Original Project. Due to its proximity to CA-SLO-239, the Archaeological Testing Report recommends implementation of monitoring for human remains during construction of the proposed modifications if Segment 2A is selected (Kaijankoski and Bales 2024). As with the Original Project, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 as well as Mitigation Measure CUL-14 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to human remains. (If the City does not select Segment 2A, the potential impacts associated with this segment would be avoided. However, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 as well as Mitigation Measure CUL-14 would remain applicable.) Similar to the Original Project, impacts to human remains under the Modified Project would remain significant and unavoidable due to the presence of known locations of human remains within and adjacent to the locations of project components. Mitigation Measures CUL-7 and CUL-8, which require archaeological resources and Native American monitoring, would specifically satisfy the recommendation of the Archaeological Testing Report for construction monitoring for Segment 2A.

Although the exact locations of recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the Final EIR considered the paleontological sensitivity of the area in which these components would be located. As shown in Figure 3.5-1 in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources,* of the Final EIR, the proposed modifications would be located in an area underlain by beach and dune sands (Qs) and alluvial gravel (Qa), which have low paleontological sensitivity at the surface and may be underlain by higher sensitivity older sediments at depth. The Final EIR indicated the Original Project would result in impacts to these same geologic units during construction of the injection and monitoring wells and conveyance pipelines (City of Morro Bay 2018). Therefore, the proposed modifications would not have the potential to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts to paleontological resources as compared to the Original Project. Mitigation Measures CUL-10 through CUL-13 would continue to apply to the Modified Project to address impacts to paleontological resources, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to cultural resources or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.6 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to geology, soils, and seismicity are discussed in Section 3.6, *Geology, Soils, and Seismicity,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project components would be located on geologic units susceptible to seismically-induced ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslides, which could damage Original Project structures or result in injury to employees at manned facilities. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 (Geotechnical Investigation), which requires Original Project components involving substantial ground disturbance or excavation to undergo a final geotechnical investigation and requires incorporation of all geotechnical recommendations into the final design of the Original Project. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to seismically-induced ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslides would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined construction and operation of the Original Project would involve ground disturbance that could expose soils and result in soil erosion. The Final EIR indicated the City would be required to comply with SLOAPCD standard fugitive dust control measures and to implement a SWPPP pursuant to the NPDES Construction General Permit. The Final EIR also required implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-2 (Post-Construction Site Restoration), which would require restoration of disturbed areas to control erosion. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to soil erosion would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined the geologic conditions at the project site have the potential for liquefaction, landslides, lateral spreading, and collapsible soils. The Final EIR determined impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 and compliance with building codes adopted by the County of San Luis Obispo. The Final EIR concluded geologic instability would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined the Original Project would be located on expansive soils, which could create risks to life or structures, but that impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1. The Final EIR also concluded no impacts related to the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater systems would occur because the Original Project would not require the use of such facilities (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- Exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault
  - Strong seismic ground shaking
  - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction
  - Landslides
- Substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;
- A geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence (i.e., settlement), liquefaction, or collapse;
- Expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), that creates substantial risks to life or property; or
- 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.

Impact Analysis

Potential geologic risks and susceptibility to seismic activity are site-specific and related to the proximity of the project area to faults and seismic hazards. The proposed modifications would be located within the Original Project site. Therefore, the proximity to known earthquake faults and the potential for fault rupture, seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, and expansive soils for the Modified Project would be the same as that described for the Original Project in the Final EIR. In addition, the Final EIR evaluated potential impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity associated with conveyance pipelines and injection wells, although their exact locations were not known at the time of the Final EIR. Accordingly, the Modified Project would not increase the number of people or introduce different types of infrastructure that could be exposed to seismic risks as compared to the Original Project. As with the Original Project, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would be required for the Modified Project and would reduce potential impacts pertaining to seismic hazards and expansive soils to a less-than-significant level. Similarly, because the proposed modifications do not involve different types of infrastructure or construction techniques and would involve work within similar land use types (e.g., paved roadways, disturbed and sparsely vegetated areas), potential impacts related to soil erosion would be the same as those described for the Original Project in the Final EIR. As with the Original Project, Mitigation Measure GEO-2 would be required for the Modified Project to reduce potential impacts pertaining to soil erosion to a less-than-significant level. Similar to the Original Project, the proposed modifications also do not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems, and no impact would occur.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy are discussed in Section 3.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would generate GHG emissions during construction and operation, but that such emissions would not have a significant impact on the environment. Table 3.7-5 and Table 3.7-6 of the Final EIR present estimated GHG emissions associated with construction and operation of the Original Project and indicate the Original Project would result in the emission of approximately 858 metric tons (MT) of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO_2e) per year, which would not exceed the SLOAPCD significance threshold of 10,000 MT of CO_2e per year for stationary-source projects. Because the Original Project would result in GHG emissions below this threshold, the Final EIR concluded that the GHG emissions impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR analyzed the Original Project for consistency with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs or increasing energy efficiency or the use of renewable energy. Plans, policies, and regulations considered in this analysis included state laws and regulations for energy, water, solid waste, mobile sources, and other sources of GHG emissions as well as local plans such as the City's Climate Action Plan. The consistency analysis is included in Table 3.7-7 of the Final EIR. The Final EIR concludes the Original Project would not conflict with applicable GHG emission reduction plans, policies, or regulations, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Table 3.7-8 and Table 3.7-9 of the Final EIR present estimated energy consumption associated with construction (i.e., fuels used for construction equipment) and operation of the Original Project. The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not lead to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy or wasteful use of energy resources, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to GHG emissions and energy associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The generation of GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment;
- A conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs;
- A potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- A conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

The 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist includes checklist questions for energy in Section VI, *Energy.* For consistency with the Final EIR, energy impacts are discussed in this section.

Impact Analysis

As shown in Appendix C of the Final EIR, the estimated GHG emissions and energy consumption associated with the Original Project included emissions and energy consumption associated with construction and operation of the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. The proposed modifications involve revised locations for conveyance pipelines and injection wells and do not include new types of project components. The duration, equipment, activities, and techniques for Modified Project construction would remain the same as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the conveyance pipelines and injection wells, and operation and maintenance characteristics would remain the same as those described for the Original Project in the Final EIR. As discussed further in Section 5.14, *Transportation and Traffic,* the potential recycled water fill station installed at the WRF or Lila Keiser Park is not expected to result in an increase in VMT because it would serve as a replacement for an existing non-potable water fill station at the Flippos Well. Therefore, the potential recycled water fill station would not result in an increase in GHG emissions as compared to baseline conditions. Accordingly, the GHG emissions and energy consumption associated with the Modified Project and their corresponding impacts would be the same as those identified for the Original Project in the Final EIR. In addition, the Modified Project would similarly be consistent with the applicable plans, policies, and regulations related to GHG emissions, energy efficiency, and renewable energy considered in the Final EIR. Since preparation of the Final EIR, the City of Morro Bay adopted its 2022 Goals and Short Term Actions, which are intended to facilitate the provision of public services and infrastructure while incorporating climate action goals. The Climate Action goals and short-term actions from this document include supporting regional climate planning efforts, reducing reliance on carbon-producing energy sources, and increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in the community (City of Morro Bay 2022). Construction and operation of the proposed modifications and Modified Project would not conflict with implementation of these actions. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, the impacts of the Modified Project related to GHG emissions and energy would be less than significant.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to GHG emissions and energy or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to hazards and hazardous materials are discussed in Section 3.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials,* of the Final EIR. Although construction and operation of the Original Project would include the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, the Final EIR concluded impacts related to such activities would be less than significant due to compliance with applicable federal, state, and local hazardous materials regulations. The Final EIR also determined potential impacts due to hazardous emissions and the handling of hazardous materials in proximity to Morro Bay High School would be less than significant due to compliance with applicable regulations.

The Final EIR determined the Original Project site was not included on a list of hazardous materials sites such that impacts would be less than significant. The Final EIR also indicated the Original Project site is not within the boundaries of an airport land use plan and is not near a private airstrip; therefore, no related to airport safety hazards impacts would occur (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR concluded construction of the Original Project would involve work within public rights-of-way, which could result in partial or full lane closures that may interfere with an emergency response or evacuation plan. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 (Traffic Control Plan), which requires the construction contractor to prepare a traffic control plan for construction activities that occur on local roadways. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to interference with emergency response or evacuation plans would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined the Original Project would not be located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and that Original Project components would be designed to comply with all applicable fire codes and fire protection requirements. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to wildland fires would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to hazards and hazardous materials associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of, hazardous materials or through foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;
- Emission of hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Location on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, the creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment;
- Location within an area covered by 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, and as a result, the creation of a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;
- Location in the vicinity of a private airstrip and as a result, creation of a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;
- Impairment or physical interference with implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
- Exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

In addition, the following CEQA significance thresholds from Section XX, *Wildfire,* of the 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were used to evaluate the proposed modifications to the Original

Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with the following, if located in or near State Responsibility Areas or lands classified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones:

- Substantial impairment of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- Exacerbation of wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, and exposure of project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;
- 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; or
- Exposure of 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.

Impact Analysis

The duration, equipment, activities, techniques, and staging/laydown areas for Modified Project construction would remain the same as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1. As such, similar to the Original Project, impacts related to the routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant under the Modified Project with compliance with applicable federal, state, and local hazardous materials regulations.

The Modified Project could involve conveyance of recycled water adjacent to Morro Bay High School if the Willow Camp Creek, Marine Mammal Center, or Surf Street alignments are selected as well as the potential use of non-potable recycled water at Morro Bay High School. However, such activities would not generate hazardous emissions and would not require the handling of hazardous materials in proximity to Morro Bay High School. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts due to hazardous emissions and the handling of hazardous materials in proximity to Morro Bay High School would be less than significant under the Modified Project with compliance with applicable regulations.

A search of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database, the State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker database, and the California Environmental Protection Agency Cortese List was conducted in September 2024. According to these databases, one listed site is within 0.25 mile of the proposed modifications - the Morro Bay Amphibious Training Site, which is a military site that has been designated as “Needs Evaluation” since 2005 (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2024; State Water Resources Control Board 2024; California Environmental Protection Agency 2024a and 2024b). This site is not within the Original Project site or the Modified Project site, and the Modified Project would not involve ground disturbance within the Morro Bay Amphibious Training Site. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts related to sites included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 would be less than significant under the Modified Project.

Similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project site is not within the boundaries of an airport land use plan and is not near a private airstrip, and no impacts related to airport safety hazards would occur under the Modified Project.

As with the Original Project, the Modified Project would involve construction work within public rights-of-way, which could result in partial or full lane closures and interfere with an emergency

response or evacuation plan. Similar to the Original Project, implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 would be required for the Modified Project to reduce impacts related to interference with emergency response or evacuation plans to a less-than-significant level.

Portions of the Modified Project site, specifically the WRF and the eastern ends of the IPR-East and IPR-West pipelines, are within a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a State Responsibility Area. Other portions of the Modified Project site are not within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Small areas of Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are located north of the intersection of State Route 1 and South Bay Boulevard, approximately 500 feet south of the WRF, and east of the intersection of Quintana Road and South Bay Boulevard, approximately 1,500 feet south of the WRF. The nearest large area designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone to the project site is approximately 0.6 mile southeast of the WRF and approximately 2.6 miles southeast of the proposed modifications (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2024). The proposed injection wells and recycled water distribution pipelines would not be located in or near a Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and the locations of these components are separated from the nearest Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by intervening development. Accordingly, the injection wells and recycled water distribution pipelines would not increase the risk of wildfire. The potential recycled water fill station may be constructed at the WRF within a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone; however, construction and operation of the fill station would involve similar activities to those already conducted at the WRF (e.g., trucking) and would not increase risk of a wildfire. Accordingly, as with the Original Project, impacts related to wildland fires/wildfires would be less than significant under the Modified Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.9 Hydrology and Water Quality

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to hydrology and water quality are discussed in Section 3.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would have no impacts related to housing in a flood zone or failure of a levee or dam because the Original Project would not involve construction of housing and would not be located near a levee or dam. These impacts are not discussed further in the Final EIR (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR stated that, as a groundwater recharge and reuse project, the Original Project would involve treatment and recharge of recycled water, which would not result in the violation of water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade groundwater quality. The Final EIR included groundwater recharge modeling, which demonstrated that injected recycled water would meet the two-month minimum subsurface recycled water response retention time required by Title 22 recycled water quality control requirements (City of Morro Bay 2018). The Final EIR determined the Original Project could degrade surface water or groundwater quality in the event of a pipeline rupture or accidental spill. However, the Final EIR concluded impacts related to surface and groundwater quality would be less than significant with compliance with regulatory requirements, which would include a SWPPP during construction, well permitting requirements for injection and monitoring wells, the SWRCB Low-Threat General Waste Discharge Requirements for

discharge of groundwater dewatered during construction, NPDES and Ocean Plan effluent discharge requirements for discharges through the existing ocean outfall, the NPDES General Industrial Permit for WWTPs and the City's NPDES MS4 Permit and Stormwater Management Program for stormwater runoff during WRF operation, the City's Sewer System Management Plan, a leak detection system for the raw wastewater and waste discharge conveyance pipelines, and Title 22 recycled water quality control requirements (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR concluded that due to the nature of the project, the Original Project would not result in a net deficit in aquifer volume or result in lowering of the local groundwater table, and impacts related to groundwater supplies and groundwater recharge would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined installation of the Original Project components would alter the topography and drainage patterns at the site of each component, but that compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Plan and other NPDES regulatory requirements would minimize potential impacts related to erosion, siltation, and flooding. For potential impacts associated specifically with the conveyance pipelines, the Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-2 (Post-Construction Site Restoration), which requires restoration of areas disturbed for installation of the pipelines and determined this mitigation measure would reduce impacts related to drainage pattern alteration to a less-than-significant level (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined installation of Original Project components would introduce new impervious surfaces, which would increase stormwater runoff as compared to existing conditions. The Final EIR concluded that compliance with the City's Stormwater Management Plan, Stormwater Ordinance, and other NPDES regulatory requirements would minimize impacts related to stormwater runoff and the capacity of the existing storm drain system, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR indicated both lift stations and potential injection/monitoring well locations would be located within a 100-year flood hazard area. The Final EIR concluded the footprints of the lift stations and wells would be relatively small, add a negligible amount of impervious surfaces to the area, and would not impede or redirect flood flows. The Final EIR therefore determined impacts related to structures within a 100-year flood hazard area would be less than significant. The Final EIR also concluded decommissioning of the WWTP would involve removing structures within a 100-year flood hazard area, and accordingly, the Original Project would have a net beneficial impact to floodplains. The Final EIR also determined the lift stations would be within a tsunami hazard zone but would include floodproof design features such that impacts related to tsunami inundation would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to hydrology and water quality associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements;
- The substantial depletion of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table;
- The substantial alteration of the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
- The substantial alteration of the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or a substantial increase in the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;
- The creation or contribution of runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or the provision of substantial additional sources of polluted runoff;
- The substantial degradation of water quality;
- The placement of housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map;
- Structures within a 100-year flood hazard area which would impede or redirect flood flows;
- The exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam; or
- Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

The 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist includes revised checklist questions for hydrology and water quality in Section X, *Hydrology and Water Quality.* The 2024 hydrology and water quality Appendix G Checklist questions incorporate the elements of the significance threshold criteria listed above and include the following two additional threshold criteria. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones; or
- A conflict with or the obstruction of implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Impact Analysis

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin is the water quality control plan applicable to the Modified Project site. This plan defines beneficial uses, sets forth water quality objectives, and establishes programs to manage the quality of surface water and groundwater and achieve those water quality objectives for protection of beneficial uses (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 2019). Most of the City's water supply comes from the State Water Project, and a small portion of the City's water is provided by two local groundwater basins, the Morro and Chorro Basins. These basins are designated as low priority under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, and no groundwater sustainability plan has been prepared for them (California Department of Water Resources 2024). The proposed modifications involve revised locations for recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells and do not include new types of project components. Therefore, the Modified Project would result in similar impacts as the

Original Project pertaining to water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, groundwater, and the degradation of surface and groundwater quality for these components.

Under the Modified Project, groundwater extracted from the Morro Basin would be conveyed to the potable water distribution system and may undergo treatment at the BWRO treatment facility and/or be blended with other water supply sources prior to conveyance to the potable water distribution. In any scenario, groundwater extracted and conveyed to the potable water distribution system would be required to meet all applicable drinking water quality standards outlined in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and the California Safe Drinking Water Act as well as the City's public water system permit issued by the SWRCB Division of Drinking Water. As with the Original Project, impacts pertaining to water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, and the degradation of surface and groundwater quality would be less than significant under the Modified Project.

The Modified Project would have the same nature as the Original Project as a Groundwater Replenishment Reuse Project and would therefore not result in a net deficit in aquifer volume or result in lowering of the local groundwater table. Similar to the Original Project, impacts to groundwater supplies and groundwater recharge would be less than significant under the Modified Project.

The proposed modifications involve revised locations for recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells and do not include new types of project components. As a result, the Modified Project would result in similar drainage pattern alterations as the Original Project, and similar to the Original Project, Mitigation Measure GEO-2 would be required for the Modified Project to reduce impacts related to erosion, siltation and flooding due to the drainage pattern alteration to a less-than-significant level. As with the Original Project, impacts related to the generation of additional stormwater runoff due to drainage pattern alteration would be less than significant under the Modified Project. Portions of recycled water distribution pipeline Segment 1 and all of Segment 4 are within a 100-year flood hazard area, and all of Segments 2A, 3A, 5A, 6, 7A, and 10 traverse 100-year and 500-year flood hazard areas. In addition, all of the injection wells would be located within a 100-year flood hazard area, with the exception of Injection Well 7, which may be sited in a 500-year flood hazard area (Federal Emergency Management Agency 2017). As discussed in the Final EIR for the Original Project, the aboveground footprints of the injection wells would be relatively small, add a negligible amount of impervious surfaces to the area, and would not impede or redirect flood flows under the Modified Project. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project would have less-than-significant impacts related to structures within a 100-year flood hazard area.

Similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project site is located within a tsunami hazard zone (California Department of Conservation 2023), and floodproof design features were incorporated into the design for the proposed lift stations, which have been constructed. The proposed modifications do not include new types of project components; therefore, impacts of the Modified Project related to tsunami hazards would be less than significant, similar to the Original Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to hydrology and water quality or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.10 Land Use and Land Use Planning

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to land use and land use planning are discussed in Section 3.10, *Land Use and Land Use Planning,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would have no impact related to the division of an established community because the Original Project components would not be located in areas with established residential communities and would not disconnect established communities. The Final EIR also determined the Original Project would have no impacts related to a conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, including the City's General Plan and Local Coastal Program, the County's General Plan and Local Coastal Plan, the County's Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, and City's Zoning Ordinance (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to land use and land use planning associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The physical division of an established community;
- A conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- A conflict with any habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

Impact Analysis

The proposed modifications involve the same types of pipelines and injection wells as those analyzed for the Original Project in the Final EIR, which do not have the potential to physically divide an established community due to their primarily belowground nature and their relatively small aboveground footprints. Accordingly, as with the Original Project, the Modified Project would not result in the physical division of an established community.

In addition, although their exact locations were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the construction of conveyance pipelines and injection wells were considered in the Final EIR and its analysis of the Original Project's consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. If needed, the City would obtain appropriate approvals from the California Coastal Commission to ensure coverage of the proposed modifications under the Coastal Development Permit issued for the Original Project (Permit No. 3-19-0463). Furthermore, similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project is not located in or adjacent to an area subject to a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project would not result in a conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect or a conflict with any habitat conservation plan or natural

community conservation plan, and impacts under the Modified Project would be less than significant, as with the Original Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to land use and land use planning or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.11 Noise

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to noise are discussed in Section 3.11, *Noise,* of the Final EIR. While most construction activities under the Original Project would occur during the daytime and within the noise level limits established in the Morro Bay Municipal Code, construction of the injection wells would require continuous drilling for 24-hour periods within 50 feet of sensitive receptors at noise levels in excess of standards established in the Morro Bay Municipal Code. Table 3.11-7 in Section 3.11, *Noise,* of the Final EIR presents estimated construction equipment noise levels. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 (Construction Noise Reduction Measures), which requires the development and implementation of a construction noise reduction plan. The Final EIR also identified that operation of the proposed injection wells within 50 feet of sensitive receptors could generate noise in excess of Morro Bay Municipal Code standards. Table 3.11-8 in Section 3.11, *Noise,* of the Final EIR presents estimated operational noise for stationary noise sources. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-2 (Operational Noise Reduction Measures), which requires development of an operational noise reduction plan that demonstrates the injection wells would not expose the nearest sensitive receptor to noise levels exceeding City standards. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to the generation of noise in excess of local standards and temporary increases in ambient noise levels would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

While construction of the Original Project would generate groundborne vibration, the Final EIR determined vibration levels at the nearest sensitive receptors during construction, which could be as close to 50 feet from the conveyance pipelines and injection/monitoring wells, would not exceed vibration thresholds for human annoyance and building damage. The Final EIR also determined operation of the Original Project would not generate vibration. As a result, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not expose people to excessive groundborne vibration, and impacts would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined operation of the injection wells in proximity to sensitive receptors could result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels. The Final EIR concluded that with implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-2, impacts related to permanent increases in ambient noise levels would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Because the Original Project would not be located within an airport land use area or in the vicinity of a private airstrip, the Final EIR concluded there would be no impacts related to excessive airport/airstrip noise levels (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to noise associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;
- The exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels;
- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the proposed project vicinity above levels existing without the proposed project;
- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the proposed project vicinity above levels existing without the proposed project;
- The exposure of people to excessive noise levels, for projects located within an airport land use plan area or projects located within two miles of an airport; or
- The exposure of people to excessive noise levels for projects located in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

Impact Analysis

The Final EIR determined the nearest sensitive receiver to the Original Project site was the Morro Dunes RV Park. Because the exact locations of injection wells were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the Final EIR assumed they would be located within 50 feet of the nearest noise-sensitive receivers. Under the Modified Project, Injection Well 7 would be located in the Morro Dunes RV Park, and Injection Well 8 would be located within or just west of the Morro Dunes RV Park. However, a temporary buffer of at least 50 feet would be established around the drill rig equipment used for well installation for safety and constructability purposes such that no recreational vehicles would be parked closer than 50 feet from Injection Wells 7 and 8. As such, the distance between the proposed injection well locations and the nearest noise-sensitive receivers remains 50 feet in this analysis..

The proposed modifications involve revised locations for recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells. The duration, equipment, activities, and techniques for Modified Project construction would remain the same as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells. Accordingly, noise levels generated by construction of the Modified Project would be the same as those estimated for construction of the Original Project. Specifically, as discussed in the Final EIR, construction of the injection wells would require continuous drilling for 24-hour periods generating noise levels in excess of Morro Bay Municipal Code noise standards. As with the Original Project, Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would be required for the Modified Project to reduce impacts associated with injection well construction. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts under the Modified Project related to the generation of noise levels in excess of applicable standards and substantial temporary increases in ambient noise levels would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

As discussed above, the duration, equipment, activities, and techniques for Modified Project construction and the distance to the nearest noise-sensitive receivers would remain the same as those evaluated in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 for the conveyance pipelines and injection wells. Accordingly, vibration levels generated by construction of the Modified Project would be the same as those estimated for construction of the Original Project. Similar to the Original Project, construction of the Modified Project would generate groundborne vibration at nearby sensitive receivers, but not at levels exceeding vibration thresholds for human annoyance and building damage. Operation of the Modified Project would also not generate vibration. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts associated with vibration under the Modified Project would be less than significant during construction with no impacts during operation.

Similar to the Original Project, the operation of injection wells under the Modified Project could result in substantial permanent increases in ambient noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receivers (i.e., users of the Morro Dunes RV Park, approximately 50 feet from Injection Wells 7 and 8). As a result, as with the Original Project, implementation of Mitigation Measure NOISE-2 would be required for the Modified Project to address noise associated with injection well operation. The potential recycled water fill station would not include stationary sources of operational noise. Similar to the Original Project, impacts related to permanent increases in ambient noise levels under the Modified Project would be less than significant.

As with the Original Project site, the Modified Project site is not located within an airport land use area or in the vicinity of a private airstrip, and no impacts related to airport/airstrip noise levels would occur.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to noise or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.12 Environmental Justice

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project pertaining to environmental justice are discussed in Section 3.12, *Environmental Justice,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR established that an area is considered to have a significantly greater minority population if the affected census tract(s) have a minority population at least 10 percent greater, on average, than the overall city. The Final EIR also established that an area is considered to be significantly lower income if the affected census tract(s) have an average median household income at least $10,000 below that of the overall city. The Final EIR analyzed the minority population and income of United States Census tracts 105.03, 106.02, and 106.03 and determined these do not have substantial low-income or minority populations. Table 2 presents the minority population and income data from 2018 from the Final EIR. Based on this data, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not be located near communities that are disproportionately comprised of low income or minority populations, and impacts related to environmental justice would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Table 2 Minority Population and Median Household Income by City/County and Census Tract

City/Census Tract	2018 Minority Population (percent)	2018 Median Household Income (dollars)
City of Morro Bay	35.2%	$51,338
County of San Luis Obispo	30.2%	$60,691
Tract 105.03	18.1%	$48,625
Tract 106.02	25.6%	$53,299
Tract 106.03	26.4%	$51,406

Source: Tables 3.12-3 and 3.12-4 from the Final EIR (City of Morro Bay 2018)

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The CEQA Guidelines do not include significance thresholds pertaining to environmental justice. However, this analysis is included to satisfy SWRCB's CEQA-Plus requirements, as discussed further in Section 5.19, *CEQA-Plus Considerations*. For consistency with the Final EIR, impacts related to environmental justice would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with disproportionately affecting the health or environment of minority or low-income populations.

Impact Analysis

Consistent with the analysis of the Final EIR, the minority population and median household income of the census tracts identified in the Final EIR were analyzed to determine environmental justice impacts. Table 3 below reflects current (2022) minority population and median household income data for the census tracts near the Modified Project site.

Table 3 Minority Population and Median Household Income by City/County and Census Tract

City/Census Tract	2022 Minority Population (percent)	2022 Median Household Income (dollars)
City of Morro Bay	21.4%	$88,547
County of San Luis Obispo	30.7%	$90,216
Tract 105.03	18.1%	$83,145
Tract 106.02	18.7%	$85,345
Tract 106.03	16.0%	$71,136

Source: United States Census 2022a, 2022b, and 2022c

As shown in Table 3, none of the census tracts near the Modified Project site have a minority population that is 10 percent greater than the city or county. However, one of the census tracts, Tract 106.03, has a median household income that is more than $10,000 below the city's and county's median household income, and by the Final EIR's definition, is considered low-income. Under the proposed modifications, recycled water distribution pipeline Segments 1, 2A, 3A, 4, 5A, and 6 and Injection Wells 1 through 6 would be located within Tract 106.03, and the Modified

Project would involve construction and operational activities in this census tract. Construction activities would include trenching and installation of the pipelines and drilling for the injection wells, and operational activities would involve noise generated by the injection wells. While these components would be located in a low-income area, the Modified Project would not result in disproportionate impacts to the population of Tract 106.03. Within Tract 106.03, the nearest permanent residences to the proposed modifications are located approximately 500 feet east of Segment 2A, across State Route 1. No construction activities associated with the proposed modifications would occur immediately adjacent to these residences, and noise associated with construction and operation of the injection wells would not exceed applicable thresholds with implementation of mitigation measures (see Section 5.11, *Noise*). In addition, the Modified Project would introduce new wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities in areas where such facilities already exist. Although construction of the Modified Project has the potential for short-term effects, the proposed modifications would have the long-term benefit of increasing groundwater replenishment and supply for the whole region and would benefit all Morro Bay residents regardless of race, ethnicity, or income level. Therefore, the Modified Project would not result in disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income populations, and impacts would be less than significant.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to environmental justice or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.13 Public Services

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to public services are discussed in Section 3.13, *Public Services,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would not induce population growth or include components requiring increased fire or police protection services. Accordingly, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not affect response ratios, service ratios, or other performance objectives for fire and police protection or induce increased demand on schools, parks, and other public facilities (e.g., libraries, hospitals/urgent care facilities). Therefore, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to fire and police protection services and no impacts to schools, parks, or other public facilities (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criterion from the Final EIR was used to evaluate impacts to public services associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain

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

- Fire and police protection services;
- Schools; and
- Parks or other public facilities.

In addition, the following CEQA significance thresholds from Section XVI, *Recreation*, of the 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were used to evaluate the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- An increase in use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- The construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Impact Analysis

The Modified Project would not introduce new types of infrastructure, increase the treatment capacity of the WRF, or increase the number of new employees anticipated for the Original Project in the Final EIR. The potential recycled water fill station, which would be constructed at either the WRF or Lila Keiser Park, would consist of minor aboveground piping and truck trips by approved users to and from the fill station to obtain water for agricultural, municipal, and construction purposes. If constructed at Lila Keiser Park, the fill station would not reduce the amount of available recreation space and would not conflict with the recreational use of the park because truck trips would be limited to a small number of users. Accordingly, similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project would not induce population growth and would not affect response ratios, service ratios, or other performance objectives for fire and police protection or require the construction of new schools, parks, or other public facilities. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts to fire and police protection services would be less than significant under the Modified Project, and no impacts to schools, parks, or other public facilities would occur under the Modified Project.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to public services or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.14 Transportation and Traffic

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to transportation and traffic are discussed in Section 3.14, *Transportation and Traffic,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined construction of the Original Project would involve partial lane closures, which could impact the operations of local and regional circulation systems. The Final EIR includes an analysis of estimated trips and the Level of Service (LOS) at local intersections and State Route 1 ramps, which demonstrated the Original Project would not cause a significant increase in traffic volumes or delay times during construction and operation. Nevertheless, to alleviate traffic delay associated with partial lane closures, the Final EIR required

implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 (Traffic Control Plan), which requires the construction contractor to prepare and implement a traffic control plan for construction activities that may disrupt travel on local roadways. The Final EIR also determined the Original Project would not conflict with the applicable congestion management program because impacts related to LOS would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures TRAF-1. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to the local and regional circulation systems would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined there are no public or private airports within Morro Bay, and the Original Project would thus have no impact to air traffic patterns (City of Morro Bay 2018). Due to the partial lane closures required for the Original Project, the Final EIR concluded the Original Project could result in impacts related to hazardous design features, emergency access, and public transportation/pedestrian facilities. The Final EIR required implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 to reduce the effects of partial lane closures related to hazardous design features, emergency access, and public transportation such that impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to transportation and traffic associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- A conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit;
- A conflict with an applicable congestion management program including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways;
- A change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks;
- An increase in hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment);
- Inadequate emergency access; or
- A conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

Furthermore, since the certification of the Final EIR, Senate Bill (SB) 743 has been adopted. SB 743 requires transportation impacts to be evaluated under CEQA in terms of VMT instead of LOS. VMT quantifies the number and length of trips generated by a proposed project and does not measure traffic or congestion associated with a project. Changes in regulations after approval of the Final EIR do not constitute new information triggering a Supplemental or Subsequent EIR (*Concerned Dublin Citizens v. City of Dublin* [2013] 214 Cal.App.4th 1301, 1320) nor does they require a previously-

analyzed topic, such as the change from the LOS standard to the VMT standard for transportation analysis, to be reassessed under the new requirements (*Olen Properties Corp. v. City of Newport Beach* [2023] 93 Cal.App.5th 270, 280–281).

In conformance with this standard, the following analysis is presented in terms of LOS and the significance threshold criteria of the Final EIR to demonstrate consistency with the Final EIR. A brief VMT analysis is included for informational purposes only to further support compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15164.

Impact Analysis

As with the Original Project, construction of the Modified Project would involve partial lane closures, which could impact the operations of local and regional circulation systems. Although the exact locations of recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells were not known at the time of Final EIR preparation, the Final EIR considered construction and operation of conveyance pipelines and injection wells in its vehicle trip estimates. In addition, the potential recycled water fill station included in the Modified Project would result in limited trips because the fill station would be accessible only by approved agricultural, municipal, and construction users. The potential recycled water fill station would be a replacement for the existing non-potable water fill station at the Flippos Well and would primarily be utilized by the same entities who currently use the fill station at the Flippos Well. In addition, agricultural users of the potential recycled water fill station have historically had to truck in water from places further away than Morro Bay to sustain agricultural production during drought conditions. The presence of a more proximate source of water would reduce the trip lengths of these users. Therefore, the installation of the potential recycled water fill station would not result in an increase in VMT. As such, the proposed modifications would not result in a change to traffic volumes, congestion, or VMT beyond what was anticipated in the Final EIR for the Original Project. Therefore, the Modified Project would have less-than-significant impacts related to VMT. Similar to the Original Project, Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 would apply to the Modified Project and would require the construction contractor to prepare and implement a traffic control plan for construction activities that may disrupt travel on local roadways. Therefore, as with the Original Project, impacts related to the local and regional circulation system, the congestion management program, hazardous design features, emergency access, and public transportation/pedestrian facilities under the Modified Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

There are no public or private airports within Morro Bay, and implementation of the Modified Project would have no impact to air traffic. Additionally, the Modified Project would not introduce new hazards associated with design features or incompatible uses, and impacts would be less than significant.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to transportation and traffic or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.15 Tribal Cultural Resources

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to tribal cultural resources are discussed in Section 3.15, *Tribal Cultural Resources,* of the Final EIR. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 52, the City contacted Native American groups identified by the Native American Heritage Commission to be potentially affiliated with the project area. These groups included:

- Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
- Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Northern Chumash Tribal Council
- Salinan Nation
- Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties
- Salinan-Chumash Nation
- San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council
- Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians
- Xolon/Salinan Tribe
- yak tityu tityu - Northern Chumash Tribe

The City consulted with the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties and the Northern Chumash Tribal Council. The Final EIR indicated no tribal cultural resources were identified within the Original Project area, and tribal consultation completed pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 did not identify tribal cultural resources within the Original Project area. The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not result in a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource or the significance of a tribal cultural resource, and no impact would occur (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to tribal cultural resources associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
  - Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k), or
  - A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c). In applying the criteria set forth in PRC Section 5024.1(c), the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Summary of Additional Tribal Engagement for Proposed Modifications

A Native American monitor was present for all fieldwork conducted in support of the Archaeological Testing Report prepared for the proposed modifications from June 11 to June 21. The Northern Chumash Tribal Council; Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties; Xolon-Salinan Tribe; and yak tityu tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe provided monitors that rotated on a daily basis (Kaijankoski and Bales 2024). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) provided the Archaeological Testing Report prepared for the proposed modifications via email to the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians; Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation; Northern Chumash Tribal Council; Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties; Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians; Xolon-Salinan Tribe; and yak tityu tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe on November 25, 2024 and via regular mail to the Chumash Council of Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council on December 10, 2024. USEPA received the following responses (Lang 2025):

- **Xolon Salinan Tribe.** The Xolon Salinan Tribe responded on December 2, 2024 acknowledging receipt and requesting confirmation that there was future construction work to be completed, which USEPA confirmed in response. The Xolon Salinan Tribe responded on February 7, 2025 requesting the schedule for construction of the proposed modifications and requested a monitor from the Tribe be present during ground-disturbing activities. USEPA responded confirming rotational Tribal monitoring from locally-affiliated tribes would be implemented during construction of the proposed modifications and providing the anticipated construction schedule.
- **Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties**. The Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties responded on January 4, 2025 requesting that the Tribe be utilized for monitoring during ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed modifications, and USEPA responded confirming rotational Tribal monitoring from locally-affiliated tribes would be implemented during construction of the proposed modifications.

No other responses were received.

Impact Analysis

The proposed modifications would be located within the Original Project area. Therefore, as with the Original Project, the Modified Project would not result in a substantial adverse change to tribal cultural resources, and no impact would occur.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to tribal cultural resources or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.16 Utilities and Service Systems

Final EIR Findings

The impacts of the Original Project to utilities and service systems are discussed in Section 3.16, *Utilities and Service Systems,* of the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would provide tertiary treatment and advanced treatment of wastewater, which would exceed the

secondary treatment requirements of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would result in beneficial impacts related to wastewater treatment requirements (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR indicated the Original Project itself includes the construction and operation of a new wastewater treatment facility, the impacts of which are analyzed throughout the Final EIR. The Final EIR determined there would be no additional impacts associated with the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities, and impacts related to the construction or expansion of existing facilities would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not generate excessive stormwater runoff and would not require new or expanded stormwater drainage facilities and that impacts to stormwater drainage facilities would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined operation of the Original Project would facilitate the indirect potable reuse of 650 to 825 acre-feet of water per year, thereby enhancing water supplies and water supply reliability and resulting in a beneficial impact to water supplies. The Final EIR also concluded the Original Project would be designed to accommodate the City's projected wastewater treatment capacity needs and the Original Project would have a beneficial impact to wastewater treatment capacity (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR indicated the Original Project would generate solid waste, which would require disposal at a landfill, including debris from construction and biosolids from operation. The Final EIR determined existing landfills have sufficient remaining capacity to accommodate construction-related solid waste and biosolids would be reused rather than disposed of at a landfill. The Final EIR also determined the Original Project would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. The Final EIR concluded impacts related to solid waste would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

Significance Threshold Criteria

The following CEQA significance threshold criteria from the Final EIR were used to evaluate impacts to utilities and service systems associated with the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- An exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board;
- The construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;
- The construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;
- Insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or the need for new or expanded entitlements;
- A determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;

- Insufficient landfill capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs; or
- Non-compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

In addition, the following CEQA significance thresholds from Section XIX, *Utilities and Service Systems*, of the 2024 CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist were used to evaluate the proposed modifications to the Original Project. Impacts would be potentially significant if the proposed modifications would introduce new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified significant impacts associated with:

- The relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- Insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

Impact Analysis

The proposed modifications involve revised locations for recycled water distribution pipelines and injection wells and do not include new types of project components or changes to the nature of the Original Project. Therefore, impacts of the Modified Project to utilities and service systems would be the same as those described for the Original Project in the Final EIR, which would be less-than-significant impacts pertaining to construction of wastewater treatment and stormwater facilities as well as landfill capacity and solid waste regulations and beneficial impacts pertaining to wastewater treatment requirements, water supplies, and wastewater treatment capacity. In addition, the Modified Project would not involve the relocation or construction of new electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities; therefore, no impacts related to such facilities would occur.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts to utilities and service systems or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.17 Cumulative Impacts

Final EIR Findings

Chapter 4, *Cumulative Impacts*, of the Final EIR discusses cumulative environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Original Project. The Final EIR included a list of 27 planned and approved development projects in the vicinity of the Original Project in Morro Bay and unincorporated San Luis Obispo County, which were considered in the Final EIR to determine potential cumulative impacts associated with the Original Project. Generally, the Final EIR found that construction activities associated with the Original Project in conjunction with the cumulative projects would result in temporary impacts, but overall cumulative impacts would be less than significant for most environmental topic areas. The Final EIR concluded the Original Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative impacts (less than significant impacts) to aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; air quality; biological resources; geology, soils, and seismicity; greenhouse gas emissions and energy; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and land use planning; noise; public services; transportation

and traffic; and utilities and service systems. The Final EIR also determined no cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources would occur. No additional mitigation measures were required to address the contribution of the Original Project to these cumulative impacts beyond those already identified in Chapter 3, *Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures*, of the Final EIR (City of Morro Bay 2018).

The Final EIR determined concurrent construction and operation of the Original Project and related cumulative projects could result in cumulative, long-term impacts to cultural resources. The Final EIR found the Original Project's incremental contribution to impacts to cultural resources would be cumulatively considerable when considered in combination with the impacts of other cumulative projects. Even with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-14, the Final EIR concluded the contribution of the Original Project to significant cumulative impacts to cultural resources would be significant and unavoidable (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

As discussed in this Addendum, the Modified Project would not result in greater environmental impacts than those identified for the Original Project in the Final EIR. As a result, the Modified Project would result in similar contributions to cumulative impacts. Similar to the Original Project, the contribution of the Modified Project to cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable (less than significant) for aesthetics; agriculture and forestry resources; air quality; biological resources; geology, soils, and seismicity; greenhouse gas emissions and energy; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and land use planning; noise; public services; transportation and traffic; and utilities and service systems, and no cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources would occur. In addition, as with the Original Project, the Modified Project would also result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative impacts to cultural resources, even with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-14, and this contribution would be significant and unavoidable.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant cumulative impacts or a new, cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact. In addition, the Modified Project would not substantially increase the severity of significant cumulative impacts or the severity of the contributions to significant cumulative impacts already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.18 Growth Inducement

Final EIR Findings

Chapter 5, *Growth Inducement*, of the Final EIR discusses the potential for the Original Project to result in growth inducement. The Final EIR included an analysis of the potential for the Original Project to directly or indirectly induce growth in Morro Bay. The Final EIR determined the Original Project would not directly induce population growth because 1) it would not include construction of housing and 2) construction workers and future WRF employees would be drawn from the local and regional workforce. The Final EIR also determined the WRF would have a slightly reduced wastewater treatment capacity compared to the existing WWTP because the WWTP served both Cayucos Sanitary District and the city of Morro Bay and the WRF would only serve the city of Morro Bay. In addition, the Final EIR concluded the recycled groundwater produced by the Original Project

would not generate additional water supply beyond the City's planned water supply in its 2015 Urban Water Management Plan. The Original Project would accommodate wastewater and enhance groundwater supplies for the City's existing population and previously planned growth in the City's General Plan and would not remove obstacles to growth. The Final EIR concluded growth inducement impacts under the Original Project would be less than significant (City of Morro Bay 2018).

Modified Project Analysis

The Modified Project would not result in increased treatment capacity at the WRF and would not require additional construction workers or WRF employees as compared to the Original Project. Accordingly, as with the Original Project, the Modified Project would not directly or indirectly induce growth and would not remove obstacles to growth. Similar to the Original Project, impacts related to growth inducement under the Modified Project would be less than significant.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new significant impacts related to growth inducement or substantially increase the severity of significant impacts related to growth inducement already identified in the Final EIR for the Original Project.

5.19 CEQA-Plus Considerations

Chapter 7, *CEQA-Plus Considerations*, of the Final EIR discusses the CEQA-Plus consideration for the Original Project. Similar to the Original Project, the Modified Project may receive funding from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which is administered by the SWRCB on behalf of USEPA. Therefore, to assist in compliance with the federal environmental requirements for the funding program, this Addendum includes analysis pertinent to several federal cross-cutting regulations (also referred to as federal cross-cutters or CEQA-Plus).

This section describes the status of compliance with relevant federal laws, executive orders, and policies, and the consultation that has occurred to date or will occur in the future. The topics are based in part on the SWRCB's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program Federal Cross-cutting Environmental Regulations Evaluation Form for Environmental Review and Federal Coordination.

5.19.1 Federal Regulations

Clean Air Act

The United States Congress adopted general conformity requirements as part of the federal Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990, and USEPA implemented those requirements in 1993 (Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act [42 United States Code Section 7506] and 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 93, Subpart B). General conformity requires that all federal actions "conform" with the State Implementation Plan as approved or promulgated by USEPA. The purpose of the general conformity program is to ensure actions taken by the federal government do not undermine State or local efforts to achieve and maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Before a federal action is taken, it must be evaluated for conformity with the State Implementation Plan. All "reasonably foreseeable" emissions predicted to result from the action are taken into consideration. These include direct and indirect emissions and must be identified as to location and quantity. If it is found that the action would create emissions above *de minimis* threshold levels specified in USEPA

regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations Section 93.153[b]), or if the activity is considered "regionally significant" because its emissions exceed 10 percent of an area's total emissions, the action cannot proceed unless mitigation measures are specified that would bring the proposed project into conformance.

The Modified Project area, which is the same as the Original Project area, lies in the western portion of San Luis Obispo County, which is designated attainment for all NAAQS (California Air Resources Board 2024). Therefore, under the General Conformity Rule, there are no applicable *de minimis* levels for the Modified Project. As such, because the Modified Project would not exceed an applicable *de minimis threshold,* general conformity requirements do not apply, and the Modified Project is exempt from a conformity determination. Accordingly, the lead agency would be in compliance with the federal Clean Air Act.

Coastal Barriers Resources Act

The Coastal Barriers Resources Act, passed by Congress in 1982 and administered by USFWS, encourages the conservation of storm-prone coastal barriers by limiting the availability of federal funding within areas included in the Coastal Barrier Resource Systems. The Coastal Barrier Resource System includes approximately 3.5 million acres of coastline along the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes, United States Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

There are no Coastal Barrier Resource System units located along the Pacific Ocean (USFWS 2024). Accordingly, the lead agency would be in compliance with the Coastal Barriers Resources Act.

Coastal Zone Management Act

The Coastal Zone Management Act, passed by Congress in 1972 and managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, is designed to balance competing land and water issues in coastal zones. It also aims to "preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone." Within California, the Coastal Zone Management Act is administered by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the California Coastal Conservancy, and the California Coastal Commission.

Several components of the Original Project as well as the proposed modifications are located within the Coastal Zone. The City obtained a Coastal Development Permit for the Original Project in 2019 (Permit No. 3-19-0463), which included provisions and special conditions for the installation of conveyance pipelines and injection wells. If needed, the City would obtain appropriate approvals from the California Coastal Commission to ensure coverage of the proposed modifications under the Coastal Development Permit for the Original Project. Accordingly, the lead agency would be in compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, to ensure their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species. Under Section 7, a project that could result in incidental take of a listed threatened or endangered species must consult with the USFWS to obtain a Biological Opinion. If the Biological Opinion finds the project could jeopardize the existence of a listed species ("jeopardy

opinion"), the agency cannot authorize the project until it is modified to obtain a "nonjeopardy" opinion.

The USEPA engaged in formal consultation with USFWS pursuant to Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act from October 2019 until February 2020. During that time, USFWS issued a Biological Opinion (BO) assessing the impact on the federally threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) and its critical habitat. The BO also concluded that the Original Project "may affect, but not likely to adversely affect" the federally endangered Tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*) and the federally endangered Morro Shoulderband snail. Furthermore, the USEPA confirmed nine other federally endangered species and six other federally threatened species would not be affected by the Original Project. As part of the BO, the City (as the project applicant) must implement several conservation measures, including erosion and sedimentation control measures, spill control measures and dust abatement, and a frac-out contingency plan to minimize potential effects to tidewater goby; biological surveys and construction site control measures to minimize potential effects to Morro Shoulderband snail; and biological surveys, monitoring, environmental awareness training, and spill control measures to minimize potential effects to California red-legged frog. Several of the conservation measures include elements of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-9, which mitigate potential impacts to biological resources, including federally listed species, resulting from the Original Project. The City would work with USEPA and other involved federal agencies to determine whether the proposed modifications require updates to the BO issued for the Original Project and to complete those updates prior to the initiation of construction for the proposed modifications. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, with implementation of the conservation measures outlined in the BO and Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO 6 through BIO-9 from the Final EIR, the lead agency would be in compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act for the Modified Project.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order (EO) 12898, known as the federal environmental justice policy, requires federal agencies to address to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law the disproportionately high adverse human health and environmental impacts of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations in the United States. EO 12898 also directs each agency to develop its own strategy to implement environmental justice.

As discussed in Section 5.12, *Environmental Justice*, of this Addendum, US Census Tract 106.03 is identified as an environmental justice community. However, the Modified Project would introduce new wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities in areas where such facilities already exist. Although construction of the Modified Project has the potential for short-term effects, the Modified Project would have the long-term benefit of increasing groundwater replenishment and supply for the whole region and would benefit all Morro Bay residents regardless of race, ethnicity, or income level. Therefore, the Modified Project would not result in disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income populations, and the lead agency would be in compliance with EO 12898.

Farmland Protection Policy Act

The Farmland Protection Policy Act requires a federal agency to consider the effects of its actions and programs on the nation's farmlands. The Farmland Protection Policy Act is intended to minimize the impact of federal programs with respect to the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that, to the extent possible, federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local, and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

As described in Section 5.2, *Agriculture and Forestry Resources,* of this Addendum, the Modified Project would not result in new or increased impacts to agricultural resources and Farmland as compared to the Original Project. Therefore, the lead agency would be in compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) of 1976, as amended (16 United States Code Section 1801 et seq.), is the primary act governing federal management of fisheries in federal waters, from the three-nautical-mile state territorial sea limit to the outer limit of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone. It establishes exclusive United States management authority over all fishing within the Exclusive Economic Zone, all anadromous fish throughout their migratory range except when in a foreign nation's waters, and all fish on the continental shelf. The act also requires federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on actions that could damage Essential Fish Habitat, as defined in the 1996 Sustainable Fisheries Act (Public Law 104-297). Essential Fish Habitat includes those habitats that support the different life stages of each managed species. A single species may use many different habitats throughout its life to support breeding, spawning, nursery, feeding, and protection functions. Essential Fish Habitat can consist of both the water column and the underlying surface (e.g., streambed) of a particular area.

The Modified Project would not involve new or substantially altered activities (e.g., ocean outfall and discharges) compared to the Original Project. Therefore, the lead agency would be in compliance with this act.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibit the take of migratory birds (or any part, nest, or eggs of any such bird) and the take and commerce of eagles. EO 13168 requires that any project with federal involvement address impacts of federal actions on migratory birds.

As described in Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, of this Addendum, the Modified Project would have a less-than-significant impact on nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-5 if construction cannot be avoided during nesting season. Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-5, the lead agency would be in compliance with this EO.

National Historic Preservation Act

The purpose of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is to protect, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore significant historical, archaeological, and cultural resources. Section 106 requires federal agencies to take into account effects on historic properties. Section 106 review involves a step-by-step procedure described in detail in the implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800).

In November 2019, the USEPA and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) signed a Final Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the Original Project as a result of federal consultations regarding archeological resources. The PA includes the Archaeological Survey, Research Design, and Treatment Plan for the WRF Project prepared in 2018. It outlines a step-by-step approach to identifying archaeological resources, provides a framework for making eligibility recommendations

in the field, and explains the process for evaluating potential adverse effects on the identified resources. The PA also includes requirements for construction monitoring, treatment and disposition of archaeological resources, and procedures for handling late discoveries and unanticipated effects. The City would work with USEPA and other involved federal agencies to determine whether the proposed modifications require updates to the PA issued for the Original Project prior to the initiation of construction for the proposed modifications. Therefore, similar to the Original Project, with implementation of the requirements outlined in the PA and Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 and CUL-14 from the Final EIR, the lead agency would be in compliance with Section 106 of NHPA for the Modified Project.

Safe Drinking Water Act

Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act established the USEPA's Sole Source Aquifer Program. This program protects communities from groundwater contamination from federally funded projects.

Within USEPA's Region 9, which includes California, there are nine sole source aquifers. None of these sole source aquifers are located within or near the Modified Project area (USEPA 2024). Therefore, the Sole Source Aquifer Program does not apply to the Modified Project, and the lead agency would be in compliance with Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed in 1968 to preserve and protect designated rivers for their natural, cultural, and recreational value.

There are no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within the Modified Project area, and no designated rivers would be adversely affected by the Modified Project (National Wild and Scenic Rivers System 2024). As a result, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to the Modified Project.

5.19.2 Executive Orders

Floodplain Management, Executive Order No. 11988

EO 11988 requires federal agencies to recognize the values of floodplains and to consider the public benefits from restoring and preserving floodplains.

As discussed in Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality,* of this Addendum, portions of recycled water distribution pipeline Segment 1 and all of Segment 4 are within a 100-year flood hazard area, and all of Segments 2A, 3A, 5A, 6, 7A, and 10 traverse 100-year and 500-year flood hazard areas. In addition, all of the injection wells included in the proposed modifications would be located within a 100-year flood hazard area, with the exception of Injection Well 7, which may be sited in a 500-year flood hazard area. As discussed in Section 3.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality,* of the Final EIR, the aboveground footprints of the injection wells would be relatively small, add a negligible amount of impervious surfaces to the area, and would not impede or redirect flood flows). Therefore, these project components would have a negligible impact on the floodplain. As such, the lead agency would be in compliance with this EO.

Protection of Wetlands, Executive Order No. 11990, as amended by Executive Order No. 12608

Under EO 11990, federal agencies must avoid affecting wetlands unless it is determined that no practicable alternative is available.

As described in Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*, of this Addendum and the Supplemental Biological Resources Report included as Appendix B, the proposed modifications would not affect federally protected wetlands. Therefore, the lead agency would be in compliance with EO 11990.

6 Conclusion

As discussed in detail in the preceding sections, potential impacts associated with the Modified Project are consistent with potential impacts characterized and mitigated for in the certified Final EIR for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project. Substantive revisions to the Final EIR are not necessary because no new significant impacts or significant impacts of substantially greater severity than previously described would occur as a result of the Modified Project. Therefore, the following determinations have been found to be applicable:

- No further evaluation of environmental impacts is required for the Modified Project;
- No Subsequent EIR is necessary pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162; and
- This Addendum is the appropriate level of environmental analysis and documentation for the Modified Project in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15164.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164(c), this Addendum will be included in the public record for the Modified Project. Documents related to this Addendum will be available at Morro Bay City Hall at 595 Harbor Street in Morro Bay, California 93442.

7 References

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7.2 List of Preparers

Rincon Consultants, Inc. prepared this Addendum under contract to the City. Persons involved in data gathering analysis, project management, and quality control are listed below.

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Appendix A

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Final Environmental Impact Report

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

In accordance with Section 15091(d) and Section 15097 of the CEQA Guidelines, which require a public agency to adopt a program for reporting on or monitoring required changes or conditions of approval to substantially lessen significant environmental effects, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is hereby adopted for this project.

This MMRP summarizes the mitigation commitments identified in the Morro Bay WRF Final EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2016081027). Mitigation measures are presented in the same order as they occur in the Final EIR. The columns in the MMRP table provide the following information:

- **Mitigation Measure(s):** The action(s) that will be taken to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.
- **Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action:** The appropriate steps to implement and document compliance with the mitigation measures.
- **Responsibility:** The agency or private entity responsible for ensuring implementation of the mitigation measure. However, until the mitigation measures are completed, the City of Morro Bay, as the CEQA Lead Agency, remains responsible for ensuring implementation of the mitigation measures occur in accordance with the program (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15097(a)).
- **Monitoring Schedule:** The general schedule for conducting each monitoring task, either prior to construction, during construction, and/or after construction.

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Aesthetics					
AES-1: Nighttime Construction Lighting. Lighting used during nighttime construction, including any associated 24-hour well drilling, shall be shielded and pointed away from surrounding light-sensitive land uses	• Include mitigation measure in project design specifications. • Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	
Air Quality					
AQ-1a: Fugitive Dust Control Measures. Construction projects shall implement the following dust control measures so as to reduce PM10 emissions in accordance with SLOAPCD requirements. • Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible; • Use of water trucks or sprinklers in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD's limit of 20 percent opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Increased watering frequency shall be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water shall be used whenever possible and in order to conserve water used for dust control, the contractor or builder shall consider the use of an APCD-approved dust suppressant where feasible. Potential dust	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
suppressants to select from to mitigate dust emissions can be found at the link below: http://www.valleyair.org/busind/comply/PM10/Products%20Available%20for%20Controlling%20PM10%20Emissions.htm • All dirt stock pile areas shall be sprayed daily and covered with tarps or other dust barriers as needed; • "Track-Out" is defined as sand or soil that adheres to and/or agglomerates on the exterior surfaces of motor vehicles and/or equipment (including tires) that may then fall onto any highway or street as described in the California Vehicle Code Section 23113 and California Water Code. To prevent 'track out', designate access points and require all employees, subcontractors, and others to use them. The Project shall install and operate a 'track-out prevention device' where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto paved streets. The 'track out prevention device' can be a device or combination of devices that are effective at preventing track out, located at the point of intersection of an unpaved area and a paved road. Rumble strips or steel plate devices need periodic cleaning to be effective. If paved roads accumulate track out soils, the track out prevention device may need to be modified' • Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project revegetation and landscape plans shall be implemented as soon as possible following completion of any soil disturbing activities; • Exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading shall be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
vegetation is established; • All disturbed soil areas not subject to revegetation shall be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by SLOAPCD; • All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used; • Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site; • All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or shall maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) in accordance with California Vehicle Code section 23114; • Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site; • Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water shall be used where feasible; • All of these fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans; and • The construction contractor shall designate a person or persons to monitor the fugitive dust emissions and enhance the implementation of the measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints, reduce visible emissions below 20 percent opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period, and to prevent transport of dust					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to SLOAPCD Compliance Division prior to the start of any grading, earthwork or demolition.					
AQ-1b: Standard Control Measures for Construction Equipment. Standard mitigation measures for reducing NOx, ROG, and DPM emissions from construction equipment are listed below: • Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications; • Fuel all off-road and portable diesel powered equipment with ARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road); • Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation; • Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation; • Construction or trucking companies with fleets that that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NOx exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance; • All on- and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5-minute idling limit;	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City; contractors	X	City; contractors	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted; • Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors; • Electrify equipment when feasible; • Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and, • Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.					
AQ-1c: BACT for Construction Equipment. The following BACT for diesel-fueled construction equipment shall be implemented during construction activities at the project site, where feasible: • Further reducing emissions by expanding use of Tier 3 and Tier 4 off-road and 2010 on-road compliant engines where feasible; • Prior to commencement of construction activities, the applicant shall submit a list of equipment to be used on the project to the APCD. The list would include details of each piece of equipment, including: equipment serial number, engine model year, engine emission tier, and emission family for each. If the list contains other than Tier 4 equipment, a revised CalEEMod run for annual mitigated construction emissions, using the list of specific equipment proposed for the project and demonstrating quarterly emissions below the APCD thresholds of significance shall then be submitted. • Repowering equipment with the cleanest engines available; and	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Installing California Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies, such as level 2 diesel particulate filters. These strategies are listed at: http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/vt/cvt.htm					
AQ-1d: Architectural Coatings. To reduce ROG and NOx emissions during the architectural coating phase, low or no VOC emission paints and finishes shall be used with levels of 50 g/L or less.	• Include mitigation measure in design specifications • Include measure in construction contractor specifications	City	X		
Biological Resources					
BIO-1: Construction Worker Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program. Prior to the commencement, and for the duration of proposed construction activities, all construction workers shall attend an Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program, developed and presented by the Lead Biologist. The Training and Education shall include: • The program shall include information on San Luis Obispo owl's clover and the life history of steelhead, CRLF, MSS, and other raptors; nesting birds; as well as other wildlife and plant species that may be encountered during construction activities. The program will also include descriptions of sensitive habitats (drainages, riparian habitat, and wetlands) and The program shall also discuss the legal protection status of each species and sensitive habitat, the definition of "take" under the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, measures the project proponent is implementing to protect each species and sensitive habitat, reporting requirements, specific measures that each worker shall employ to avoid take of wildlife species and sensitive habitats, and penalties for violation of the	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified biologist to develop and implement an Environmental Awareness, Training and Education Program. • Maintain copies of acknowledgment forms signed by each worker in the project file.	City; contractors	X	City; contractors	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act. • An acknowledgement form signed by each worker indicating that Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program has been completed would be kept on record; • A sticker shall be placed on hard hats indicating that the worker has completed the Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program. Construction workers shall not be permitted to operate equipment within the construction areas unless they have attended the Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program and are wearing hard hats with the required sticker; • A copy of the training transcript, training video or informational binder for specific procedures shall be kept available for all personnel to review and be familiar with as necessary. • The construction crews and contractor(s) shall be responsible for unauthorized impacts from construction activities to sensitive biological resources that are outside the areas defined as subject to impacts by project permits.					
BIO-2: Avoidance and Protection of Biological Resources. During proposed construction, operations and maintenance, and decommissioning the City and/or contractor shall implement the following general avoidance and protective measures: • All proposed impact areas, including staging areas, access routes, and disposal or temporary placement of spoils, shall be delineated with stakes and/or flagging prior to construction to avoid natural resources where possible. Construction-related activities outside of the impact zone shall be	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified biologist to delineate limits to areas of disturbance during construction as described. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
avoided. • The project proponent shall limit the areas of disturbance to the maximum extent that is practicable. Parking areas, new roads, staging, storage, excavation, and disposal site locations shall be confined to the smallest areas possible. These areas shall be flagged and disturbance activities, vehicles, and equipment shall be confined to these flagged areas. • Riparian habitat, drainages, and wetlands will be flagged and signed to restrict project access into these areas. • Spoils shall be stockpiled in disturbed areas that lack native vegetation. Best Management Practices shall be employed to prevent erosion in accordance with the project's approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP; as described in Chapter 3.9). • To prevent inadvertent entrapment of American badgers or other wildlife during construction, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches shall be covered with plywood or similar materials at the close of each working day, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks. If trapped animals are observed, the appropriate agency shall be consulted and escape ramps or structures shall be installed immediately to allow escape. If a listed species is trapped, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife shall be contacted immediately. • Vehicular traffic to and from the project site shall use existing routes of travel. Cross country vehicle and equipment use outside designated work areas shall be prohibited.	• All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.				

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Workers shall be prohibited from bringing pets and firearms to the project site and from feeding wildlife. • Intentional killing or collection of any plant or wildlife species shall be prohibited.					
BIO-3: Morro Shoulderband Snail. The following mitigation measures shall be implemented to avoid or minimize impacts to Morro shoulderband snail (MSS): • During project design, if project components would be located in areas determined to have soils and vegetation that could support MSS (e.g., see Final EIR Figure 3.4-7), then a qualified biologist shall conduct a survey to delineate the extent of potential habitat. The survey information shall be incorporated into the project design such that facilities are located to avoid potential MSS habitat. The following project components have either been mapped as Baywood fine sands or dunes, or are in areas adjacent to known populations (see Figure 3.4.7): o Option 5A lift station adjacent to Atascadero Road; o the western pipeline alignment adjacent to the southeast corner of the WWTP; o a portion of the eastern pipeline alignment at Drainage 1A; and o the northwest corner of the IPR-West wellfield. • For pipeline alignments or other project components that are sited in areas adjacent to vegetated areas that have capacity to support MSS, silt fencing shall be installed, under the direction of a qualified biologist, to restrict project activities into these areas and to deter MSS movement into the project area.	• Include mitigation measure in design contract specifications • Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified biologist to conduct surveys to delineate the extent of potential MSS habitat and MSS presence/absence, as applicable; delineate potential MSS habitat to avoid during construction, as applicable; and to conduct environmental training for construction crews, as applicable. • Maintain copies of environmental training acknowledgment forms signed by each worker in the project file. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City	X	City	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• If avoidance of MSS habitat is not feasible, then protocol levels surveys for MSS shall be conducted to determine presence/absence and distribution of MSS. Surveys shall be conducted by a biologist in possession of a valid recovery permit for the species. If the survey results are negative, the City shall request a concurrence determination for the project based on absence of the species. Coordination with USFWS during project design may facilitate receipt of a concurrence determination. • If survey results are negative and a concurrence authorization is granted, then vegetation shall be removed under supervision of the permitted biologist, and the site(s) shall be graded/grubbed down to bare mineral soil, and bordered with silt fence to preclude MSS from subsequently entering the area(s). • If live MSS are found within areas proposed for impact, then consultation with USFWS will be necessary and the issuance of a Biological Opinion (B.O.) may be required to allow individuals to be moved out of project areas prior to construction. A permitted biologist must be retained to move MSS per the B.O. requirements, and to monitor vegetation clearing activities occurring within the MSS habitat area(s). • If equipment use, materials stockpiling, lift station construction, or any other uses are proposed on the north side of Atascadero Road opposite the existing WWTP, then all such areas shall be delineated by installation of silt fencing to create a barrier between potential MSS habitat and project activities. If fenced areas are utilized during or immediately following rain events or dense fog conditions, then a permitted biologist will survey					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
and clear the work areas each morning prior to start of work to ensure that no MSS have entered the site. • Work crews will undergo an environmental training session conducted by a qualified biologist prior to start of construction activities in or adjacent to MSS habitat areas. Environmental training would inform project personnel of the constraints associated with working within and adjacent to MSS habitat, and the appropriate protocol should MSS be encountered during construction activities.					
BIO-4: American Badger. A pre-construction survey for active badger dens will be conducted within the proposed construction impact footprint and surrounding accessible areas of the mapped annual grassland portions of the eastern pipeline alignment (between the WRF and Downing Street on the west; see Figures 3.4-3 through 3.4-5) and the WRF site at least two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activities. The survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist. In order to avoid potential direct impacts to adults and nursing young, no grading should occur within 50 feet of an active badger den as determined by the project biologist. Construction activities between July 1 and February 28 shall comply with the following measures to avoid direct take of adult and weaned juvenile badgers through the forced abandonment of dens: • A qualified biologist will conduct a focused survey at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of construction; • If a potential den is located that is too long to see the end, then a fiber optic scope (or other acceptable method such as using tracking medium for a three-night period) will be used to determine if the den is being actively used by a badger;	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified biologist to conduct surveys for American Badger dens near the Project, and to be present during initial clearing and grading activity. • Maintain copies of survey report and inspection notes during construction in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Inactive dens will be excavated by hand with a shovel or using a small excavator to prevent badgers from re-using them during construction. • Badgers will be discouraged from using currently active dens prior to the grading of the site by partially blocking the entrance of the den with sticks, debris and soil for three to five days. Access to the den shall be incrementally blocked to a greater degree over this period. This should cause the badger to abandon the den and move elsewhere. After badgers have stopped using any den(s) within the project boundary, the den(s) will be hand-excavated with a shovel or carefully excavated with the use of an excavator to prevent re-use. • The qualified biologist will be present during the initial clearing and grading activity. If additional badger dens are found, all work within the area will cease until the biologist can complete measures described above for inactive and active dens. Once the badger dens have been excavated, work in the area may resume.					
BIO-5: Nesting Birds. The following mitigation measures are recommended to avoid or minimize impacts to nesting bird species, including special-status species and species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. • Any removal of trees and disturbance of annual grassland habitat will be limited to the time period between September 1 and February 14 if feasible. If tree removal and grassland impacts cannot be conducted during this time period, a qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for active bird nests within the limits of the project. • If active nest sites of bird species protected under	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • Retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction survey if necessary, and to establish buffer if necessary. • Conduct periodic monitoring of mitigation commitments during construction. • Retain copies of survey report, construction monitoring report, and any letter reports submitted to	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or FGC section 3503 are observed within or adjacent to the study area, then the project shall be modified and/or delayed as necessary to avoid direct take of the identified nests, eggs, and/or young. Potential project modifications may include establishing appropriate "no activity" buffers around the nest site. The buffer will be 500 feet for raptors and 250 feet for other bird species, or as otherwise determined and documented by a qualified biologist. Construction activities shall not occur in the buffer until the project biologist has determined that the nesting activity has ceased. Active nests shall be documented and monitored by the project biologist, and a letter report will be submitted to the USFWS and CDFW, documenting project compliance with the MBTA and applicable project mitigation measures.	USFWS or CDFW in project file.				
BIO-6: Riparian Habitat Avoidance. During proposed project design, a qualified biologist shall identify the project boundaries adjacent to Morro Creek and the allowable limits of construction activities to avoid direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat. Those limits shall be used during proposed project design to identify a pipeline alignment that avoids impacts to riparian habitat as well as areas to be avoided for siting injection and monitoring wells. During construction, the riparian boundaries and limits shall be clearly flagged or fenced so that contractors are aware of the limits of allowable site access and disturbance. Areas to be preserved should be clearly flagged as off-limits to avoid unnecessary damage and potential erosion.	• Include mitigation measure in design contract specifications • Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified biologist to identify allowable limits of construction as indicated in the measure • Include limits of construction in project design specifications. • Include limits of construction in construction contractor specifications. • Retain copies of design and contractor specifications in project files. • Perform site inspections to verify contractor compliance.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
	• Retain inspection records in the project file.				
BIO-7: Trenching Buffer for Jurisdictional Features. During construction of proposed project pipelines, trenching shall stop at least 50 feet away from jurisdictional features, such as the top of stream banks, riparian habitat and wetlands, and the remaining distance shall be installed using trenchless construction methods, such as horizontal directional drilling.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Retain copies of contractor specifications in project files. • Perform construction site inspections to ensure any measures decided upon are implemented properly. • Retain copies of construction site inspection logs in the project file.	City; contractors		X	
BIO-8: Construction BMPs to Protect Jurisdictional Features and Aquatic Habitat. The following mitigation measures should be implemented prior to and during construction near Morro Creek and Little Morro Creek, as well as Drainages 1, 1A, 1B, 2, 2A, 2B, 3, 3A, and 3B, and wetlands: 1. Prior to start of construction activities, the applicant should retain a qualified biological monitor to ensure compliance with all permit requirements and avoidance and minimization measures (i.e.: pre-construction surveys, worker environmental training, and construction monitoring) during work within and adjacent to drainage features. 2. The qualified biological monitor will conduct pre-construction surveys to identify any new wetland areas and the expansion of existing wetland to determine their limits. The results will be used in the implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-7.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Perform construction site inspections to ensure any measures decided upon are implemented properly. • Retain construction monitoring reports in project file. • Retain copies of Erosion Control Plan and Spill Prevention Plan in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
3. Prior to issuance of construction permits, an Erosion Control Plan incorporating up to date Best Management Practices should be prepared by the project engineer to minimize impacts to jurisdictional features and aquatic habitats. The plan should address installation and maintenance of both temporary and permanent measures to control erosion and dust, contain spills, protect stockpiles, and generally maintain good housekeeping practices within the worksite. All project plans should show that erosion, sediment, and dust control measures must be installed prior to start of any ground disturbing work.					
4. All applicable plans should clearly show project stockpile and materials staging areas. These areas would be at least 50 feet from drainage features, wetlands, and active storm drain inlets, and must conform to BMPs applicable for storm drain protection.					
5. Prior to start of work, the contractor should prepare and implement a Spill Prevention Plan to ensure prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur. All project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site should be cleaned up immediately. Spill prevention and cleanup materials should be on-site at all times during the course of the project.					
6. All refueling, maintenance, and washing of equipment and vehicles should occur on paved areas in a location where a spill would not travel onto bare ground or to a storm drain inlet. This fueling/staging area will conform to BMPs applicable to attaining zero discharge of stormwater runoff. At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
must be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills. Washing of equipment should occur only in a location where polluted water and materials can be contained for subsequent removal from the site. 7. A designated concrete washout location should be established onsite, in an area at least 50 feet from any drainage or storm drain inlet. The washout should be maintained and inspected weekly, and will be covered prior to and during any rain event. Concrete debris should be removed whenever the washout container reaches the 1/2 full mark. 8. BMP's for dust abatement shall be a component of the project's construction documents. Dust control requirements should be carefully implemented to prevent water used for dust abatement from transporting pollutants to storm drains leading to the creek channel. 9. During project activities, all trash that may attract predators shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris shall be removed from work areas.					
BIO-9: Preparation of a Frac-Out Contingency Plan. A Frac-Out Contingency Plan shall be prepared prior to initiation of construction activities that involve horizontal direction drilling activities. The Frac-Out Plan shall be implemented during HDD construction activities. At a minimum, the Frac-Out Plan will include the following: 1. Minimize the potential for a frac-out associated with horizontal directional drilling activities 2. Provide for the timely detection of frac-outs 3. Protect areas that are considered environmentally	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain copy of the Frac-Out Plan in project files. • Perform construction site inspections to verify contractor compliance with requirements of Frac-Out Plan as applicable • Retain copies of inspection records in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
sensitive (streams, wetlands, other biological resources, cultural resources) 4. Ensure an organized, timely, and "minimum-impact" response in the event a frac-out and release of drilling mud occurs 14. Ensure that all appropriate notifications are made to the appropriate environmental specialists immediately (e.g., qualified biological monitor), and to appropriate regulatory agencies in 24 hours and that documentation is completed.					
BIO-10: Tree Protection. For public trees, protection will be established at a minimum distance of 1.5 times the dripline (*i.e.*, the distance from the trunk to the outermost limits of leaves and branches). During development, orange construction fencing or sufficient staking to identify the protection area will surround each tree or clusters of trees.	• Include mitigation measure in design specification • Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications • Establish protection areas around public trees as necessary prior to initiation of construction activities • Perform construction site inspections to verify contractor compliance with protection areas • Retain copies of inspection records in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	
Cultural Resources					
CUL-1: Retention of a Qualified Archaeologist. Within 30 days after the City's approval of the final design plans and prior to start of any ground-disturbing activities (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil), the City shall retain a Qualified Archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for archaeology	• City to retain a Qualified Archaeologist to carry out all mitigation related to archaeological resources.	City	X	City	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
(U.S. Department of the Interior, 1983) to carry out all mitigation related to archaeological resources.					
CUL-2: Pre-Construction Phase I Cultural Resources Survey. Within 30 days after the City's approval of the final design plans and prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activity (i.e., demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil), the Qualified Archaeologist shall conduct pre-construction Phase I Cultural Resources Survey of all areas that have not been previously surveyed within the last 5 years. The survey shall document resources potentially qualifying as historical resources or unique archaeological under CEQA. The Qualified Archaeologist shall document the results of the survey in a Phase I Cultural Resources Survey Report that follows *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format* (OHP, 1990). The Qualified Archaeologist shall also prepare Department of Parks and Recreation 523 forms for resources encountered during the survey, which shall be appended to the report. If historic architectural resources are encountered that could potentially be impacted by the project, the Qualified Archaeologist shall consult with a Qualified Architectural Historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for architectural history (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1983). The Qualified Archaeologist shall submit the draft Phase I Cultural Resources Survey Report to the City within 30 days after completion of the survey. The final Phase I Cultural Resources Survey Report shall be submitted to the City within 10 days after receipt of City's comments. The Qualified Archaeologist shall also submit the final Phase I Cultural Resources Survey Report to the Central Coast Information Center.	• Retain a Qualified Archaeologist to prepare the required reports and City forms as required by the mitigation measure. • Retain copies of the required reports and forms in the project file.	City	X	City	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
In the event resources potentially qualifying as historical resources or unique archaeological resources under CEQA are identified during the survey, avoidance and preservation in place shall be the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to the resources in accordance with **CUL-3**. If avoidance of the identified resources is determined by the City to be infeasible in light of factors such as the nature of the find, proposed project design, costs, and other considerations, then the portion of the resource within the Area of Direct Impact (ADI) shall be subject to presence/absence testing and if potentially significant deposits are identified, the resource shall be evaluated for significance under all four National Register/California Register Criteria (A/1-D/4). If a resource is found to be significant (i.e., meets the definition for historical resource in *CEQA Guidelines* subdivision 15064.5(a) or unique archaeological resource in PRC subdivision 21083.2(g)), then is shall be incorporated into the Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan outlined in **CUL-4**.					
CUL-3: Avoidance and Preservation in Place of Archaeological Resources. The City shall avoid and preserve in place resources CA-SLO-16, -43, -165, -239, -2222, and -2345, and any other resources that are identified as potentially qualifying as historical resources or unique archaeological resources under CEQA, through proposed project re-design. Avoidance and preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to archaeological resources. Preservation in place maintains the important relationship between artifacts and their archaeological context and also serves to avoid conflict with traditional and religious values of groups who may ascribe meaning to the resource. Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to, avoidance, incorporating the resource into open space, capping, or deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement. In the event that avoidance and preservation	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation during project construction. • Prepare weekly construction monitoring reports. • Retain construction monitoring reports in project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
in place of a resource is determined by the City to be infeasible in light of factors such as project design, costs, and other considerations, then **CUL-4** shall be implemented for that resource. If avoidance and preservation in place of a resource is determined by the City to be feasible, then **CUL-5** shall be implemented for that resource.					
CUL-4: Development of an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan. The Qualified Archaeologist shall prepare an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan for all significant resources that will be impacted by the proposed project. The plan shall be submitted to the City for review and approval prior to the start of field work for data recovery efforts for resources that are eligible under Criterion D/4 (data potential). Data recovery field work shall be completed prior to the start of any project-related ground-disturbing activity. Treatment for resources that are eligible under Criteria A/1 (events), B/2 (persons), and/or C/3 design/workmanship) shall be completed within 3 years of completion of the project. The Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan shall include: • *Research Design.* The plan shall outline the applicable cultural context(s) for the region, identify research goals and questions that are applicable to each resource or class of resources, and list the data needs (types, quantities, quality) required to answer each research question. The research design shall address all four National Register/California Register Criteria (A/1-D/4) and identify the methods that will be required to inform treatment, such as subsurface investigation, documentary/archival research, and/or oral history, depending on the nature of the resource. • *Data Recovery for Resources Eligible under Criterion D/4.* The plan shall outline the field and	• Retain a Qualified Archaeologist to prepare the required Plans as required by the mitigation measure.	City	X	City	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
laboratory methods to be employed, and any specialized studies that will be conducted, as part of the data recovery effort for resources that are eligible under National Register/California Register Criterion D/4 (data potential). If a resource is eligible under additional criteria, treatment beyond data recovery shall be implemented (see CUL-4c). • *Treatment for Resources Eligible under Criteria A/1, B/2, and/or C/3.* In the event a resource is eligible under National Register/California Register Criteria A/1 (events), B/2 (persons), or C/3 (design/workmanship), then resource-specific treatment shall be developed to mitigate project-related impacts to the degree feasible. That could include forms of documentation, interpretation, public outreach, ethnographic and language studies, publications, and educational programs, depending on the nature of the resource, and may require the retention of additional technical specialists. Treatment measures shall be generally outlined in the plan based on existing information on the resource. Once data recovery is completed and the results are available to better inform resource-specific treatment, the treatment measures shall be formalized and implemented. Treatment shall be developed by the Qualified Archaeologist in consultation with the City and Native American Tribal representatives for resources that are Native American in origin. • *Security Measures.* The plan shall include recommended security measures to protect archaeological resources from vandalism, looting, and non-intentionally damaging activities during field work. • *Procedures for Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects.* The plan shall outline the protocols and procedures to be followed in the					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
event that human remains and associated funerary objects are encountered during field work. These shall include stop-work and protective measures, notification protocols, and compliance with California Health and Safety Code section 7050.5 and PRC section 5097.98. See also CUL-14. • *Reporting Requirements*. Upon completion of data recovery for resources eligible under Criterion D/4, the Qualified Archaeologist shall document the findings in an Archaeological Data Recovery Report. The draft Archaeological Data Recovery Report shall be submitted to the City within 360 days after completion of data recovery, and the final Archaeological Data Recovery Report shall be submitted to the City within 60 days after the receipt of City comments. The Qualified Archaeologist shall also submit the final Archaeological Data Recovery Report to the Central Coast Information Center. Upon completion of all other treatment for resources eligible under Criteria A/1, B/2, and C/3, the Qualified Archaeologist shall document the resource-specific treatment that was implemented for each resource and verification that treatment has been completed in a technical document (report or memorandum). The document shall be provided to the City within 30 days after completion of treatment. • *Curation Requirements*. Disposition of Native American archaeological materials shall be determined through consultation between Native American representatives, the Qualified Archaeologist, and the City. Disposition of human remains and associated funerary objects shall be determined by the landowner in consultation with the City and Most Likely Descendant (see **CUL-14**).					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Any historic-period archaeological materials that are not Native American in origin shall be curated at a repository accredited by the American Association of Museums that meets the standards outlined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 79.9. If no accredited repository accepts the collection, then it may be curated at a non-accredited repository as long as it meets the minimum standards set forth by 36 CFR 79.9. If neither an accredited nor a non-accredited repository accepts the collection, then it may be offered to a public, non-profit institution with a research interest in the materials, or donated to a local school or historical society in the area for educational purposes, to be determined by the Qualified Archaeologist in consultation with the City. • *Protocols for Native American Monitoring and Input.* The plan shall outline the role and responsibilities of Native American Tribal representatives. It shall include communication protocols and an opportunity and timelines for review of cultural resources documents. The plan shall include provisions for full-time Native American monitoring during field work (see **CUL-3**).					
CUL-5: Development of a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Program (CRMMP). Within 60 days of the award of the contractor's bid and prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activity (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil), the Qualified Archaeologist shall prepare a Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Program (CRMMP) based on the final City-approved project design plans. The CRMMP shall include:	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specification • Retain a qualified archaeologist to prepare a CRMMP including all components described in the mitigation measure. • Retain copies of the CRMMP in project file. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to periodically verify	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• *Establishment of Environmentally Sensitive Areas.* The CRMMP shall outline areas that will be designated Environmentally Sensitive Areas (including maps). Significant or unevaluated cultural resources that are being avoided and are within 50 feet of the construction zone shall be delineated with exclusion markers to ensure avoidance. These areas will not be marked as archaeological resources, but will be designated as "exclusion zones" on project plans and protective fencing in order to discourage unauthorized disturbance or collection of artifacts. • *Provisions for Archaeological Monitoring.* Full-time archaeological monitoring shall be required for all ground disturbance. The CRMMP shall outline the archaeological monitor(s) responsibilities and requirements (see **CUL-7**). • *Procedures for Discovery of Archaeological Resources.* Procedures to be implemented in the event of an archaeological discovery shall be fully defined in the CRMMP, and shall include stop-work and protective measures, notification protocols, procedures for significance assessments, and appropriate treatment measures. The CRMMP shall state avoidance or preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to historical resources and unique archaeological resources, but shall provide procedures to follow should avoidance be infeasible in light of factors such as the nature of the find, project design, costs, and other considerations. See also **CUL-9**. If, based on the recommendation of the Qualified Archaeologist, it is determined a discovered archaeological resource constitutes a historical resource or unique archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA, then avoidance and	conditions of the CRMMP are being met. • Retain copies of reports that document implementation of CRMMP in the project file.				

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
preservation in place shall be the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to such a resource in accordance with **CUL-3**. In the event that preservation in place is determined to be infeasible and data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation available, an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan shall be prepared and implemented following the procedures outlined in **CUL-4**. The City shall consult with appropriate Native American representatives in determining treatment of resources that are Native American in origin to ensure cultural values ascribed to the resource, beyond those that are scientifically important, are considered. • *Procedures for Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects.* The CRMMP shall outline the protocols and procedures to be followed in the event that human remains and associated funerary objects are encountered during construction. These shall include stop-work and protective measures, notification protocols, and compliance with California Health and Safety Code section 7050.5 and PRC section 5097.98 (see **CUL-14**). • *Reporting Requirements.* The CRMMP shall outline provisions for weekly, monthly, and final reporting. The Qualified Archaeologist shall prepare weekly status reports detailing activities and locations observed (including maps) and summarizing any discoveries for the duration of monitoring to be submitted to the City via email for each week in which monitoring activities occur. Monthly progress reports summarizing monitoring efforts shall be prepared and submitted to the City for the duration of ground disturbance. The Qualified Archaeologist shall prepare a draft Archaeological Resources					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Monitoring Report and submit it to the City within 180 days after completion of the monitoring program or treatment for significant discoveries should treatment extend beyond the cessation of monitoring. The final Archaeological Resources Monitoring Report shall be submitted to the City within 60 days after receipt of City comments. The Qualified Archaeologist shall also submit the final Archaeological Resources Monitoring Report to the Central Coast Information Center. If human remains are encountered, a confidential report documenting all activities shall be submitted to the California Native American Heritage Commission within 90 days after completion of any treatment (see **CUL-14**). • *Curation Requirements.* Disposition of Native American archaeological materials shall be determined through consultation between Native American representatives, the Qualified Archaeologist, and the City. Disposition of human remains and associated funerary objects shall be determined by the landowner in consultation with the City and Most Likely Descendant (see **CUL-14**). Any historic-period archaeological materials that are not Native American in origin shall be curated at a repository accredited by the American Association of Museums that meets the standards outlined in 36 CFR 79.9. If no accredited repository accepts the collection, then it may be curated at a non-accredited repository as long as it meets the minimum standards set forth by 36 CFR 79.9. If neither an accredited nor a non-accredited repository accepts the collection, then it may be offered to a public, non-profit institution with a research interest in the materials, or donated to a local school or historical society in the area for educational purposes, to be determined by the					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Qualified Archaeologist in consultation with the City. • *Protocols for Native American Monitoring and Input.* The CRMMP shall outline the role and responsibilities of Native American Tribal representatives. It shall include communication protocols, an opportunity and timelines for review of cultural resources documents related to discoveries that are Native American in origin, and provisions for Native American monitoring. The CRMMP shall include provisions for full-time Native American monitoring of all project-related ground disturbance, as well as during any subsurface investigation and data recovery for discovered resources that are Native American in origin (see **CUL-8**).					
CUL-6: Construction Worker Cultural Resources Sensitivity Training. Prior to start of any ground-disturbing activities (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil), the Qualified Archaeologist, or his/her designee, and a Native American representative shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. In the event construction crews are phased, additional trainings shall be conducted for new construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered, the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains, confidentiality of discoveries, and safety precautions to be taken when working with cultural resources monitors. The City shall ensure construction personnel are made available for and attend the training and retain documentation	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specification • Retain a Qualified Archaeologist to coordinate with a Native American representative to conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. • Retain documentation demonstrating the attendance of all personnel.	City; contractors	X		

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
demonstrating attendance. That training may be conducted in coordination with paleontological sensitivity training required by **CUL-11**.					
CUL-7: Archaeological Resources Monitoring. All project-related ground disturbance (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil) shall be monitored by an archaeological monitor(s) familiar with the types of resources that could be encountered and shall work under the direct supervisor of the Qualified Archaeologist. The number of archaeological monitors required to be on-site during ground disturbing activities is dependent on the construction scenario, specifically the number of pieces of equipment operating at the same time, the distance between these pieces of equipment, and the pace at which equipment is working, with the goal of monitors being able to effectively observe soils as they are exposed. Generally, work areas more than 500 feet from one another will require additional monitors. The archaeological monitor(s) shall keep daily logs detailing the types of activities and soils observed, and any discoveries. Archaeological monitor(s) shall have the authority to halt and re-direct ground disturbing activities in the event of a discovery until it has been assessed for significance and treatment implemented, if necessary, based on the recommendations of the Qualified Archaeologist in coordination with the City, and the Native American representatives in the event the resource is Native American in origin, and in accordance with the protocols and procedures outlined in the CRMMP (see **CUL-5**).	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • Retain an appropriate number of qualified archaeological monitors to conduct monitoring of project-related ground disturbance as required. • Conduct periodic monitoring of mitigation commitments during construction. • Retain construction monitoring logs and reports in project file. • If a discovery is made, document disposition and resolution of the find as required by the CRMMP.	City; contractors		City; contractors	
CUL-8: Native American Monitoring. The City shall	• Include mitigation measure in	City;	X		

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
retain a Native American monitor(s) from a Tribe that is culturally and geographically affiliated with the project site (according to the California Native American Heritage Commission). The Native American monitor shall monitor all project-related ground disturbance (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil) and all ground disturbance related to subsurface investigation and data recovery efforts for discovered resources that are Native American in origin. The number of Native American monitors required to be on-site during ground disturbing activities is dependent on the construction scenario, specifically the number of pieces of equipment operating at the same time, the distance between these pieces of equipment, and the pace at which equipment is working, with the goal of monitors being able to effectively observe soils as they are exposed. Generally, work areas more than 500 feet from one another require additional monitors. Native American monitors shall have the authority to halt and re-direct ground disturbing activities in the event of a discovery until it has been assessed for significance.	construction contracting specification • Retain an appropriate number of qualified Native American monitor(s) to conduct surveys on project-related ground disturbance. • If a discovery is made, document disposition and resolution of the find as required by the CRMMP.	contractors		contractors	
CUL-9: Inadvertent Discovery. In the event archaeological resources are encountered during construction of the proposed project, all activity in the vicinity of the find shall cease (within 100 feet), and the protocols and procedures for discoveries outlined in the CRMMP (see **CUL-5**) shall be implemented. The discovery shall be evaluated for potential significance by the Qualified Archaeologist. If the Qualified Archaeologist determines that the resource may be significant (i.e., meets the definition for historical resource in *CEQA Guidelines* subdivision 15064.5(a) or unique archaeological resource in PRC subdivision	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • If found, document and retain records regarding discovery of archaeological resources as required by the CRRMP. • Retain construction monitoring report in project file.	City; contractors		X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
21083.2(g)), the Qualified Archaeologist shall develop an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan for the resource in accordance with the CRMMP (see **CUL-5**) and following the procedures outlined in **CUL-4**. When assessing significance and developing treatment for resources that are Native American in origin, the Qualified Archaeologist and the City shall consult with the appropriate Native American representatives. The Qualified Archaeologist shall also determine if work may proceed in other parts of the project site while data recovery and treatment is being carried out.					
CUL-10: Retention of a Qualified Paleontologist. Within 60 days prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activity (*i.e.*, demolition, pavement removal, pot-holing or auguring, boring, drilling, grubbing, vegetation removal, brush clearance, weed abatement, grading, excavation, trenching, or any other activity that has potential to disturb soil), the City shall retain a paleontologist who meets the (SVP) Standards (SVP, 2010) (Qualified Paleontologist) to carry out all mitigation measures related to paleontological resources.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • Retain a qualified paleontologist to carry out all mitigation measures related to paleontological resources.	City; contractors			
CUL-11: Paleontological Resources Sensitivity Training. The Qualified Paleontologist, or his/her designee, shall conduct construction worker paleontological resources sensitivity training prior to the start of ground disturbing activities. In the event construction crews are phased, additional trainings shall be conducted for new construction personnel. The training session shall focus on the recognition of the types of paleontological resources that could be encountered within the project site and the procedures to be followed if they are found. The City shall ensure construction personnel are made available for and attend the training and retain documentation demonstrating attendance. That training may be	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • Retain a qualified paleontologist to conduct paleontological resources sensitivity training prior to the start of ground disturbing activities. • Retain documentation demonstrating paleontological resources sensitivity training and attendance.	City; contractors	X		

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
conducted in coordination with construction worker cultural resources sensitivity training required by CUL-6.					
CUL-12: Paleontological Resources Monitoring. All ground disturbance in excess of 5 feet within areas that are mapped as younger alluvial gravel (Qa) and beach and dune sands (Qs) shall be monitored on a full-time basis during initial ground disturbance. The Qualified Paleontologist shall spot check the excavation on an intermittent basis and recommend whether the depth of required monitoring should be revised based on his/her observations. If the Qualified Paleontologist determines full-time monitoring is no longer warranted, based on the specific geologic conditions at the surface or at depth, then the Qualified Paleontologist may recommend that monitoring be reduced to periodic spot-checking or cease entirely. Paleontological resources monitoring shall be performed by a qualified paleontological monitor (meeting the standards of the SVP, 2010) under the direction of the Qualified Paleontologist. Monitors shall have the authority to temporarily halt or divert work away from exposed fossils in order to recover the fossil specimens. Any significant fossils collected during project-related excavations shall be prepared to the point of identification and curated into an accredited repository with retrievable storage. Monitors shall prepare daily logs detailing the types of activities and soils observed, and any discoveries. The Qualified Paleontologist shall prepare a Paleontological Resources Monitoring Report detailing the locations of monitoring and any discoveries. The report shall be submitted to the City within 60 days after completion of the monitoring program, or treatment for significant discoveries should treatment extend beyond the cessation of monitoring.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contracting specification • Retain a qualified paleontologist to monitor excavation in excess of five feet. • Conduct periodic monitoring of mitigation commitments during construction. • Retain copies of all surveys and reports in the project file.	City; contractors		City; contractors	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
CUL-13: Inadvertent Discovery of Fossils. If construction or other proposed project personnel discover any potential fossils during construction, regardless of the depth of work or location, then work at the discovery location shall cease in a 50-foot radius of the discovery until the Qualified Paleontologist has assessed the discovery and made recommendations as to the appropriate treatment. If the find is deemed significant, it shall be salvaged following the standards of the SVP (2010) and curated with a certified repository.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specification • If found, document and retain records regarding discovery of paleontological resources as required	City; contractors		X	
CUL-14. Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains: If human remains are encountered, then the City shall halt work in the vicinity (within 100 feet) of the discovery and contact the County Coroner in accordance with PRC section 5097.98 and Health and Safety Code section 7050.5. If the County Coroner determines the remains are Native American, then the Coroner will notify the California Native American Heritage Commission in accordance with Health and Safety Code subdivision 7050.5(c), and PRC section 5097.98. The California Native American Heritage Commission will designate a Most Likely Descendent for the remains per PRC section 5097.98. Until the landowner has conferred with the Most Likely Descendent, the contractor shall ensure the immediate vicinity where the discovery occurred is not disturbed by further activity, is adequately protected according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, and that further activities take into account the possibility of multiple burials. If human remains are encountered, the Qualified Archaeologist, in consultation with the Most Likely Descendant shall prepare a confidential report documenting all activities and it shall be submitted to the California Native American Heritage Commission within 90 days after completion of any treatment.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specification • If found, document and retain records regarding discovery of human remains as required	City; contractors		X	X

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity					
GEO-1 Geotechnical Investigation: A geotechnical investigation shall be prepared by a certified engineer for all facilities involving substantial ground disturbance or excavation. The investigation shall assess geologic and seismic hazards, including but not limited to, subsidence, liquefaction, landslide, expansive soil potential and collapsible soil potential of each facility site. Structural mitigation recommendations provided in the geotechnical investigation shall be incorporated into the design of the facility prior to construction. The contents of the geotechnical investigation shall vary depending on the jurisdiction and risks associated with each facility's location.	• Include mitigation measure in design contractor specifications • Retain qualified consultant to prepare Geotechnical Investigation • Retain a copy of Geotechnical Investigation report, recommendations, and design specifications in project file	City; contractors	X	X	
GEO-2: Post-Construction Site Restoration. After construction of project pipelines, disturbed areas shall be managed to control erosion, including without limitation: repaving areas within roadways, restoring vegetated areas (with native plants if applicable), and regrading surfaces to minimize changes in drainage patterns.	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of mitigation implementation at completion of project construction. • Retain construction monitoring reports in project file.	City; contractors	X		X
Noise					
NOISE-1: Construction Noise Reduction Measures. The City shall develop and submit a Construction Noise Reduction Plan to the building official prior to initiating construction activities during hours that are not included in the exemption under the Morro Bay Municipal Code. The City or its contractor shall implement the Construction Noise Reduction Plan. A disturbance coordinator shall be designated for the project to implement the provisions of the Plan. At a minimum, the Construction Noise Reduction Plan shall implement the following measures:	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified construction monitor to conduct routine inspections of noise reduction measures during project construction. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance. • Maintain written documentation of all noise complaints and the resolution of complaints in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Distribute to the potentially affected residences and other sensitive receptors within 150 feet of project construction boundary a "hotline" telephone number, which shall be attended during active construction working hours, for use by the public to register complaints. The distribution shall identify a noise disturbance coordinator who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator would determine the cause of the noise complaints and institute feasible actions warranted to correct the problem. All complaints shall be logged noting date, time, complainant's name, nature of complaint, and any corrective action taken. The distribution shall also notify residents adjacent to the project site of the construction schedule. • All construction equipment shall have intake and exhaust mufflers recommended by the manufacturers thereof, to meet relevant noise limitations. • Maintain maximum physical separation, as far as practicable, between noise sources (construction equipment) and sensitive noise receptors. Separation may be achieved by locating stationary equipment to minimize noise impacts on the community. • Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers, pavement breakers) used during construction activities will be hydraulically or electrically powered where feasible to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. Where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used.					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
• Use construction noise barriers such as paneled noise shields, blankets, or enclosures adjacent to noisy stationary equipment. Noise control shields, blankets or enclosures shall be made featuring a solid panel and a weather-protected, sound-absorptive material on the construction-activity side of the noise shield.					
NOISE-2: Operational Noise Reduction Measures. Prior to final design of the proposed injection wells, the City shall prepare an Operational Noise Reduction Plan demonstrating that the proposed injection wells will not expose the nearest sensitive receptor to noise levels that would exceed the City's daytime and nighttime noise standards (see Table 3.11-4). The operational noise reduction plan shall be prepared by a qualified noise consultant. Once all noise reduction measures outlined in the Operational Noise Reduction Plan are implemented, the City shall measure noise at the nearest sensitive receptor property line to validate the effectiveness of the measures and to demonstrate that operational noise levels are below the City's noise standards.	• Include mitigation measure in design specifications. • Retain qualified noise consultant to prepare Operational Noise Reduction Plan. • Conduct noise measurements once project components are constructed. • Retain copies of the Operational Noise Reduction Plan and results of noise measurements in the project file.	City	X	City	X
Transportation and Traffic					
TRAF-1: Traffic Control Plan. Prior to the start of construction of project components that would occur within a roadway right-of-way, the City shall require the construction contractor to prepare a Traffic Control Plan. The Traffic Control Plan will show all signage, striping, delineated detours, flagging operations and any other devices that will be used during construction to guide motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians safely through the construction area and allow for adequate access and circulation to the satisfaction of the City's Public Works Director and Fire and Police Chiefs. When construction activities disrupt travel on major collectors or arterials, electronic signing shall be used to provide the public, on	• Include mitigation measure in construction contractor specifications. • Retain a qualified mitigation monitor to implement mitigation monitoring activities during project construction. • Conduct routine inspections of construction equipment to ensure compliance. • Maintain written inspection records in the project file to verify compliance • All monitoring records shall be retained in the project file.	City; contractors	X	X	

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
all transportation modes, with current construction information and the availability of alternate travel routes. The Traffic Control Plan will be prepared in accordance with the City's traffic control guidelines and will be prepared to ensure that access will be maintained to individual properties, and that emergency access will not be restricted. Additionally, the Traffic Control Plan shall also include a scheduling plan showing the hours of operation to minimize congestion during the peak hours and special events. The scheduling plan will ensure that congestion and traffic delay are not substantially increased as a result of the construction activities. Further, the Traffic Control Plan will include detours or alternative routes for bicyclists using on-street bicycle lanes as well as for pedestrians using adjacent sidewalks. In addition, the City shall provide written notice at least two weeks prior to the start of construction to owners/occupants along streets to be affected during construction. During construction, the City will maintain continuous vehicular and pedestrian access to any affected residential driveways from the public street to the private property line, except where necessary ture of the future use, the land could also result in improved economic benefits for the City and, thus, im prove its ability to pray. If a driveway needs to be closed or interfered with as described above, the City shall notify the owner or occupant of the closure of the driveway at least five working days prior to the closure. The Traffic Control Plan shall include provisions to ensure that the construction of the lift station, conveyance pipelines, and the IPR injection and monitoring wells do not interfere unnecessarily with the work of other agencies such as mail delivery, school buses, and municipal waste services. The City shall also notify local emergency responders of					

Mitigation Measures	Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Schedule		
			Before Construction	During Construction	After Construction
any planned partial or full lane closures or blocked access to roadways or driveways required for construction of the proposed project facilities. Emergency responders include fire departments, police departments, and ambulances that have jurisdiction within the proposed project area. Written notification and disclosure of lane closure location must be provided at least 30 days prior to the planned closure to allow for emergency response providers adequate time to prepare for lane closures.					

Appendix B

Supplemental Biological Resources Report

Kevin Merk Associates, LLC | P.O. Box 318, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 | 805-748-5837

February 21, 2025

Mr. Greg Kwolek
Public Works Director
City of Morro Bay
595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, CA 93406

Subject: Supplemental Biological Resources Report for the Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility Project, Recycled Water Facilities Component (Phase 3), Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo County, California

Dear Mr. Kwolek:

Kevin Merk Associates, LLC (KMA) is providing the following technical information to supplement the Biological Resources Assessment (KMA, April 2017; BRA), Delineation of Waters of the United States and State of California (KMA, March 2018; Delineation Report), and other Biological Resources Reports (KMA, June 2018 and June 2019) prepared for the Morro Bay Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) project. This report focuses on the refined Phase 3 component of the project, which includes the proposed recycled water facility conveyance pipeline segments and injection wells. The goal of the recycled water facility phase of the project is to utilize the recycled water from the WRF to replenish groundwater in the Morro Basin and for non-potable reuse for irrigation. This report characterizes existing conditions and biological resources present in the Phase 3 study area to support the preparation of a second addendum to the project's Final Environmental Impact Report (ESA, 2018; FEIR). Please refer to the attached Project Overview Map provided by the City of Morro Bay, and Figures 1 and 2 for further site location detail.

The Phase 3 project was refined from earlier iterations using current hydrogeological analysis to identify the preferred locations for injection wells to replenish the Morro Basin. Several potential pipeline routes to these injection wells were identified and are evaluated in this analysis. Please refer to the attached Modified Project Overview Map for further information. The potential recycled water distribution pipeline alignments are as follows:

- **Vistra Indirect Potable Reuse (IPR) Recycled Water System Easement Alignment.** This alignment consists of Segment 4 and would connect Injection Well (IW)-1, IW-2, and IW-3 to the indirect potable reuse (IPR)-West pipeline. Segment 4 and the injection well locations are located in disturbed/ruderal ground with ornamental species.
- **Willow Camp Creek Alignment.** This alignment consists of Segments 4, 5A, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation. As stated above, Segment 4 is disturbed, but Segment 5A occurs along Willow Camp Creek (also referred to as Drainage 1 in previous reports). Segment 6 is in disturbed ground adjacent to Morro Creek. Segments 7A and 10 are located in paved roadways with disturbed road shoulders.
- **Marine Mammal Center Alignment.** This alignment consists of Segments 2A, 3A, 4, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide

connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation. All areas within Segment 2A are highly disturbed from many years of power plant operation. Segment 3A, 7A and 10 are located in paved roadways. Segment 6 follows paved and unpaved roadways adjacent to Morro Creek. The pipeline would be installed under Morro Creek using an existing 12-inch pipeline or other trenchless methods such as jack and bore consistent with the WRF project.

- **Surf Street Alignment.** This alignment consists of Segments 1, 3A, 4, 6, 7A, and 10 and would connect IW-1 through IW-8 to the IPR-West pipeline and provide connections to the proposed areas for non-potable irrigation. Segment 1 would follow existing roadways in an urban setting to connect with Segment 3A located on Embarcadero Road.

The following details the methods and results of the supplemental investigation.

METHODS

The methods used for preparation of this analysis were similar to those used in the above referenced KMA reports. A study area was developed by establishing a 50-foot buffer on each side of the pipeline routes and surrounding injection well locations. A larger area was provided around Injection Well 7 to help with siting the optimal well location. The supplemental analysis included a review of available background information such as historic aerial photographs and other biological studies conducted by KMA in the Morro Bay region. We also reviewed the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures in the Biological Resources section of the project's FEIR and Addendum (ESA, 2019) and the Biological Opinion (2020; BO) and two amendments (2021 and 2022) issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB, May and July 2024) maintained by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was also queried during the analysis to determine if any new special status species observations were reported in the study area since the previous investigations occurred. This search used the same five-mile study area buffer to identify special status species and plant communities with potential to occur in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Please refer to the 2017 BRA for further information related to methodologies used in this analysis.

Federal listed species occurrences and critical habitat data were also evaluated with a focus on species known to occur in the immediate project area. This included species such as the federal threatened Morro shoulderband snail (*Helminthoglypta walkeriana*; MSS), federal endangered tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), federal threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), and federal threatened snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*). The USFWS's online National Wetland Inventory, Information, Planning and Consultation system (IPaC), and Critical Habitat Mappers were also used to determine the extent of documented wetlands, federal listed species and designated critical habitat defined in the region. The online list of endangered and threatened marine (and anadromous) species under National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries (or National Marine Fisheries Service) jurisdiction was also reviewed to confirm the analysis adequately identified all special status species with potential to occur in the study area and be affected by the project. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2024) was reviewed again to assess the soil mapping units present within the supplemental study area and aid with the special status plants and animals analysis.

As detailed in the 2017 BRA, special status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered by the USFWS under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA); those listed or proposed for listing as Rare, Threatened, or

Endangered by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); animals designated as "Species of Special Concern," "Fully Protected," or "Watch List" by the CDFW; and plants having a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1, 2, 3 and 4 developed by the CDFW working in concert with the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). The specific code definitions are as follows:

- *1A = Plants presumed extinct in California;*
- *1B.1 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat);*
- *1B.2 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened);*
- *1B.3 = Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere, not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences threatened or no current threats known);*
- *2 = Rare, threatened or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere;*
- *3 = Plants needing more information (most are species that are taxonomically unresolved; some species on this list meet the definitions of rarity under CNPS and CESA); and*
- *4.2 = Plants of limited distribution (watch list), fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened).*
- *4.3= Plants of limited distribution (watch list), not very endangered in California.*

Sensitive natural communities are those native plant communities listed in the CNDDB (CDFW 2024) as rare or of limited distribution. They are evaluated using NatureServe's Heritage Methodology to assign global and state ranks based on rarity and threat, and these ranks are reviewed and adopted by CDFW's *Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program* (VegCAMP). Evaluation with the state (S) level results in ranks ranging from 1 (very rare or threatened) to 5 (demonstrably secure), with S1-S3 being rare or sensitive natural communities.

KMA biologists conducted field work to assess existing conditions and plant community distribution in the Phase 3 study area on multiple occasions over the course of the last seven years during the planning and construction of the WRF project. Focused surveys of the Phase 3 study area occurred on the following days in 2024: 8 May, 30 May, 7 June, 11 June, 9 September and 21 September. Weather was generally foggy in the mornings and clearing later in the day. Winds were light (<5mph) to moderate (5-10mph) out of the west. Temperatures were approximately 60 to 64 degrees Fahrenheit, and visibility was good.

The injection well sites and pipeline segments were walked, with several of the pipeline routes in urban areas, such as Segments 1 and 10, driven. Vantage points were used along the routes and at the injection well sites to assess wildlife activity with a focus on natural areas such as Morro Creek and the unnamed tributary to Morro Creek referred to as Willow Camp Creek (identified as Drainage 1 in the KMA BRA and supplemental reports). Available aerial imagery (Google Earth and ESRI, 2024) was reviewed, and vegetation signatures were inspected in the field to delineate the habitat types included on the attached Habitat Map (refer to attached Figures 4, 4A and 4B). For special status resources such as rare plants encountered during field surveys, the occurrence was mapped using a Trimble GeoXH600 global positioning system, imported into ArcGIS, and plotted on the Habitat Map. Vegetation classification generally followed Holland's *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (1986) and was cross-referenced with *A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition* (Sawyer et al., 2009) for consistency, and evaluated with

VegCAMP to determine rarity. Plant taxonomy followed the *Jepson Manual, Second Edition* as updated online (Baldwin et al., 2024).

The evaluation of special status plants and wildlife and identification of habitat that could support these species was based on our field observations, knowledge of the particular species biology, and review of documented records included in the CNDDB. Definitive surveys for the presence or absence of the wildlife species that may be present were not conducted, but many hours of field work provided valuable insight as to the potential occurrence of rare animals in the project area. Wildlife species generally require specific survey protocols with extensive field survey time to be conducted only at certain times of the year. The level of field work conducted in 2024 along all segments and injection well sites was adequate to determine the presence or absence of all special status plants from the site.

RESULTS

The 2024 biological resources investigation for the Recycled Water Facilities component of the WRF project found site conditions to be unchanged with findings documented in reports prepared for the project by KMA from 2017 through 2019. KMA biologists surveyed the project area regularly during construction of the WRF project including the installation of the first injection well, and to date, no federal or state listed species have been observed in the WRF study area including the Phase 3 potential disturbance areas. The survey work for the refined Recycled Water Facility component of the project identified primarily ruderal and disturbed land uses in the study area where pipelines and injection wells would be installed. One new habitat type, Central Dune Scrub, not previously observed in the WRF project study area, was present in dune lands along the road margins where pipeline Segment 3A is located in Embarcadero Road. The Habitat Map included as Figure 4 (with Figures 4A and 4B showing the site in closer detail) identifies habitat types onsite, including the extent of Central Dune Scrub in the study area.

The 2024 field surveys also identified the occurrence of one special status plant, Blochman's leafy daisy (*Erigeron blochmaniae*; CRPR 1B.2) present along the east side of Embarcadero Road in proximity to Segment 3A. No special status wildlife were observed in the study area. The attached photo plate provides further detail regarding existing site conditions, which are described below. Figures 1 and 2 (see attachments) provide site location information, and Figure 3 illustrates USDA/NRCS soil map units in the study area. The attached Figures 5, 6, and 7 illustrate special status biological resources occurrence data in the greater project area, as well as the extent of federally-designated critical habitat and sensitive natural communities present within five miles of the site. Please refer to the 2017 BRA for a detailed characterization of the habitat types observed in the study area and mapped on the attached Habitat Maps. A list of species observed and special status biological resources evaluated in the study are provided in the 2017 BRA as Appendices B and C, and additional detail is provided below that should be used to supplement the past reports.

Soils

Figure 3 was created to illustrate the USDA/NRCS soils data in the Phase 3 study area. No new soil map units were identified in the study area since the BRA and supplemental reports were prepared. As detailed in past biological reports, the majority of the WRF project elements have or would be constructed in the urban environment in areas paved and/or developed. Observations of natural habitats and soils in Segments 4, 5A and 6 are consistent with NRCS soils data, as well as areas

outside the road prism on Segments 3A, 7A and 10. The geographic position of the Phase 3 project area has a predominance of sandy marine soils given its proximity to the Pacific Ocean.

Habitat Types

With the inclusion of the Embarcadero Road segments in the study area boundary, two small strips of Central Dune Scrub were mapped. This habitat type is typically a dense coastal scrub community of shrubs occurring on stabilized backdune slopes and flats. Characteristic species observed in this part of the site included common sandaster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*), beach lupine (*Lupinus chamissonis*), mock heather (*Ericameria ericoides*), and seacliff buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*). While the proposed pipeline route would be entirely within the road right of way, the width of the study area (i.e., 50 feet on each side of the pipeline) includes a strip of dune scrub vegetation along both the west and east sides of the roadway in this portion of Segment 3A. Central Dune Scrub is a special status plant community (ranks G2 and S2.2) since it has a limited range and is associated with a special geologic feature, coastal sand dunes. In the study area, it was disturbed from roadway development, human activities and the presence of extensive cover of non-native plants such as blackwood acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*) and iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*). The plant species observed in the western part of the study area in areas of Central Dune Scrub habitat were not recorded during previous biological studies for the WRF project, and are provided in the below table to supplement the list of plants observed included in Appendix B of the 2017 BRA:

Table 1. List of New Plants Observed Onsite.

Scientific Name	Common Name
*Acacia melanoxylon**	Blackwood acacia (invasive)
Ambrosia chamissonis	Beach bur
Corethrogyne filaginifolia	Common sandaster
Ericameria ericoides	Mock heather
Erigeron blochmaniae	Blochman's leafy daisy (CRPR 1B.2)
Eriogonum parvifolium	Seacliff buckwheat
Lupinus chamissonis	Beach lupine

*non-native species

Special Status Biological Resources

The 2017 BRA and the supplemental analysis reviewed numerous special status plant communities, plants and animals documented by the CNDDB in the vicinity of the project area. The Phase 3 study area has moved the project elements slightly west to include Segments 3A and 7A along Embarcadero Road to deliver water to injection well locations, and this has resulted in the addition of Central Dune Scrub and Blochman's leafy daisy into the study area. As stated in the methods section above, for this biological resources supplement report, we queried not only the CNDDB, but also searched the USFWS IPaC system, the CNPS's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, and NOAA Fisheries list of covered species. Please refer to the attached Figures 5, 6, and 7 for further detail.

The IPaC list generated species throughout San Luis Obispo County, and the results were not specific to the coastal Morro Bay region. NOAA Fisheries has jurisdiction over federal listed marine and anadromous species, and review of their list of endangered and threatened marine species under NMFS' jurisdiction identified no new species beyond south-central coast steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 9) as having potential to occur within the defined study area.

The 2017 BRA identified this species in addition to tidewater goby and the California red-legged frog as potentially present in Morro Creek. The BRA and FEIR adequately analyzed project-related activities and confirmed habitat avoidance and setbacks from Morro Creek with the use of trenchless pipeline installation technology would avoid impacts to the aquatic habitat where these species could potentially occur.

Sensitive Natural Communities and Special Status Plants

Background literature and CNDDB review did not identify any new sensitive natural communities in the project area, but did identify additional special status plants from those described in the 2017 BRA. This included more recent observations of San Luis Obispo ceanothus (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* var. *obispoensis*; CRPR 1B.1) and blushing layia (*Layia erubescens*; CRPR 1B.2) from the region. San Luis Obispo ceanothus is an erect perennial shrub that was observed in coastal scrub on Hollister Peak to the east of the project area in 2022 and 2024. The onsite coastal scrub habitat delineated on the Habitat Map is highly disturbed and dominated by weedy coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and is not suitable for this very localized species. Blushing layia is also a newly described rare species (previously included as *Layia glandulosa*; Baldwin, 2022) occurring in stabilized hind dune habitats in the Central California region. It has no formal state or federal regulatory status, and was given a CRPR of 1B.2 since it is in decline and being impacted from habitat loss from development and the spread of veldt grass (*Ehrharta calycina*). This species is an annual herb that typically blooms from March through June, and occurs on loose sandy soils. It would have been in identifiable condition if it were observed in the study area during surveys. Kellogg's and mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* ssp. *sericea* CRPR 1B.1, and *H. c.* ssp. *puberula* CRPR 1B.1) are two additional special status plants that are known from coastal scrub and dune scrub habitats in the Central Coast region. Neither of these perennial species were observed in the study area during field work conducted in 2024 for the Phase 3 component of the WRF project.

Surveys in 2024 identified several patches of Blochman's leafy daisy growing in Central Dune Scrub along Segment 3A on Embarcadero Road (refer to the attached Habitat Maps). Blochman's leafy daisy was located along the east side of unpaved Embarcadero Road south of Morro Creek. Several Blochman's leafy daisy plants were also observed adjacent to the power plant property growing in iceplant mats. Blochman's leafy daisy has no formal state or federal listing status, but is a rare plant (CRPR 1B.1) that meets the rarity threshold under CEQA (Section 15380). The occurrences are situated just off the roadway and can be avoided by project activities since pipeline installation would be sited within the disturbed road.

No other special status plants were observed in the Phase 3 study area or identified as potentially occurring onsite. Therefore, special status plants such as the federal endangered California seablite (*Suaeda californica*), federal and state endangered marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola*), and CRPR 1B.2 salt marsh bird's beak (*Chloropyron* = *Cordylanthus maritimus* ssp. *maritimus*) that are known to occur in the upper reaches of the Morro Bay estuary in salt marsh and freshwater wetland habitats are not expected to occur in the study area and be affected by the proposed project. As stated above, the background review identified a number of species that are not known to occur in coastal habitats in the Morro Bay area. Based on the lack of suitable habitat, known range restrictions for these species, and results of direct searches for rare plants during the spring and summer bloom periods during 2024 surveys, the majority of special status plants identified in the background review are not expected to occur onsite. Only Blochman's leafy daisy was confirmed to be present along Segment 3A in select areas shown on the attached Habitat Maps, and no additional rare plants are expected to occur in the project area.

Special Status Wildlife

One new special status invertebrate, the Morro Bay June beetle (*Polyphylla morroensis*; a species of concern with no formal state or federal listing status), was identified in the CNDDB review that was not previously analyzed in earlier studies. This species is known to occur in dune scrub and maritime chaparral habitats on Baywood fine sands in Los Osos to the south of the study area. It has not been recorded within the study area. It has no formal federal or state listing status, and is not expected to occur in the study area due to its restricted range and lack of suitable habitat on site. All other special status wildlife identified in the background review were previously analyzed in the 2017 BRA and supplements. While the Phase 3 project area is closer to the immediate coastline and the Morro Bay estuary, no suitable special status wildlife habitats are present in the disturbance footprint associated with pipeline and injection well installation. The project now includes work on Embarcadero Road, which is in close proximity to a number of special status wildlife in the Morro Bay estuary and along the Pacific Ocean including both state and federal listed species. Birds such as the California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*; state threatened), California Ridgway's (formerly the clapper rail) rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*; federal and state endangered), and western snowy plover (federal threatened) would not be expected to be affected by the project since construction activities would occur away from suitable breeding habitats in disturbed urban areas devoid of vegetation. Positioning the Phase 3 project in existing developed areas avoids potentially suitable foraging and nesting habitats for these species. In addition, marine mammals such as the federal threatened southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) are present in Morro Bay and Estero Bay and would not be affected by the Phase 3 project. The majority of species evaluated in this analysis have highly restricted habitats that are not present within the project area.

On a similar note to the special status plant discussion above, the IPaC system identified numerous inland species that have not been recorded along the immediate coast of San Luis Obispo County. Therefore, species such as the Giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*; federal endangered, state endangered), San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*; federal endangered, state endangered), and Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*; federal endangered, state endangered) are not expected to occur within the project area and be affected by project activities. In addition, species such as the federal endangered California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) are known from the general region, but occur further inland and to the north of the study area at higher elevations along the Santa Lucia Mountain Range. Condors would not be expected to occur in the Morro Bay area and be affected by the project.

With the inclusion of Segment 3A along Embarcadero Road, a small area of Central Dune Scrub habitat is now present in the study area. While this strip of native dune scrub habitat can be avoided, it had extensive mats of iceplant and native shrubs that could potentially support species found in coastal dune scrub habitats on sandy dune soils. This includes species such as the globose dune beetle (*Coelus globosus*; special animal), Morro Bay blue butterfly (*Plebejus = Icaricia icarioides moroensis*; special animal), Morro shoulderband snail (federal threatened), Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*; species of special concern), and coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*; species of special concern). Avoidance and protection measures detailed in the FEIR will be sufficient to ensure impacts to special status animals are avoided. As stated above, the study area is highly disturbed and the road margins are regularly maintained thereby reducing the potential for these animals to occur in the mapped Coastal Dune Scrub adjacent to project activities.

Of interest, several species such as the southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys pallida*) are undergoing review to determine if they warrant protection under FESA. The southwestern pond turtle is a freshwater reptile now proposed to be listed under FESA as threatened, and the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is a candidate species. No recorded occurrences of pond turtles were identified within the study area, and the species has not been observed in the lower reach of Morro Creek during numerous surveys by KMA biologists over the course of this project. They are primarily known to occur in perennial drainages in the Estero Bay area with prolonged pools and slow moving water. While seasonal aquatic habitat is present throughout the reach of Morro Creek downstream of Highway 1, the lower lagoon within the study area has higher salinity due to proximity with the Pacific Ocean, which reduces the habitat quality for these freshwater turtles, and reduces the potential for this species to occur onsite. With drainage avoidance and buffers from wetland and riparian habitats, no impacts to aquatic habitat are proposed, and therefore, no impacts to the southwestern pond turtle or potentially suitable breeding habitat are expected to occur.

The monarch butterfly is known to roost colonially during the fall and winter in the Morro Bay area. It utilizes protected groves of blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) in close proximity to the Pacific Ocean for temperature regulation. The groves provide indirect sunlight, source of moisture, and protection against freezing temperatures and strong winter winds. The coastal locations have a milder climate compared to inland areas. "Autumnal sites" are temporary sites used for roosting that do not persist through the winter and may not be used every year. Several overwintering sites are located in the Estero Bay area, and an autumnal site was observed during the conveyance phase of this project on a tree-covered hillside on the power plant property (west of Main Street and north of Scott Street) outside of the study area. The study area does not support suitable groves of trees to be used as an aggregation site. In addition, no milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.) plants that are used for monarch reproduction were observed in the proposed disturbance zones of the study area. Monarch butterflies could fly through the study area, but no aggregation sites are present in proposed pipeline routes or injection well sites that would be affected by the proposed project.

The Phase 3 project has been designed to avoid potentially suitable habitat for special status wildlife, and adequate mitigation measures consisting of riparian and wetland habitat avoidance and pre-activity surveys were included in the FEIR to avoid impacts to these species. In addition, the use of environmental awareness training and construction Best Management Practices detailed in the FEIR would further reduce project related impacts to special status animals to a less than significant level. By avoiding impacts to Morro Creek, Willow Camp Creek, riparian/wetland and Central Dune Scrub habitats, as well as having qualified biologists ensure compliance with all permit requirements, impacts to special status animals, including nesting birds, and potentially suitable habitats occupied by special status species can be avoided.

CONCLUSIONS

The Biological Resources Supplement Report for the Phase 3 Recycled Water Facility component of the WRF project analyzed a refined study area to support the preparation of the second addendum to the FEIR. The project will be sited in disturbed and developed urban areas as shown on the Project Overview Map, and staging of equipment and materials would occur in disturbed areas with no native habitat impacts. One new habitat type, Central Dune Scrub (a sensitive natural community), and one special status plant, Blochman's leafy daisy, were identified in the western

study area along Embarcadero Road in Segment 3A. Past biological reports identified all other habitat types and sensitive resources (i.e., Morro Creek and Willow Camp Creek) in the project area. No special status wildlife beyond those described and analyzed in the 2017 BRA were observed in the 2024 study area, but with the presence of native Central Dune Scrub habitat along Segment 3A, several special status animals that were previously given a low potential to occur onsite, now have an increased probability of occurring adjacent to project activities in the western part of the study area. Please note that these species would not occur on the roadways or bare soil/gravel areas in the pipeline alignment or within the identified injection well sites, but could occur in the native Central Dune Scrub habitat areas near future project activities. This includes species such as the Morro Bay blue butterfly, Morro shoulderband snail, and a variety of birds. The tidewater goby is likely present in the Morro Creek lagoon near Segments 3A and 7A, and the California red-legged frog and southwestern pond turtle could also occur in aquatic habitat in Morro Creek further upstream from the study area near the confluence of Morro Creek and Willow Camp Creek. It is unlikely given high human presence and increased salinity that the California red-legged frog and southwestern pond turtle would occur in the lower reach of Morro Creek at the lagoon where the pipeline could potentially cross within the study area.

From a biological resources perspective, the pipeline routes located in disturbed urban areas would be the preferred alignments since they completely avoid native habitats. This would include the Surf Street alignment (Segment 1), the Marine Mammal Center alignment (Segment 2A), the Embarcadero Road and Atascadero Road alignments (Segments 3A, 7A, and 10), and the Vistra IPR easement alignment (Segment 4). Segment 6 would also be sited in paved and disturbed ruderal areas and is not expected to adversely affect native habitats (refer to the attached Project Overview Map). All injection well sites are located in disturbed, paved and ruderal areas and their construction and operation would not be expected to result in adverse impacts to special status biological resources. The use of Segment 5A, however, could potentially impact riparian habitat along Willow Camp Creek. Use of this alignment would be less preferable due to the presence of dense riparian scrub habitat and seasonal aquatic habitat within Willow Camp Creek near it's confluence with Morro Creek. While trenchless methods or the use of a pipe bridge could be utilized to avoid and minimize impacts to this smaller tributary drainage and associated habitats, additional study (i.e., a wetland delineation report) and consultation/permitting from regulatory agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board and CDFW are recommended prior to any construction activities in this area.

As a result of the analysis in relation to proposed project activities that will install pipelines and injection wells in disturbed or ruderal areas, no new impacts to common or special status biological resources, including state or federal listed species, were identified. The investigation determined the most significant biological resources issues present within the study area were the riparian and seasonal aquatic habitats within Morro Creek and Willow Camp Creek, and the presence of Central Dune Scrub and the rare Blochman's leafy daisy along the Embarcadero Road margins. All pipeline routes, other than Segment 5A, and injection well locations are in disturbed areas that do not contain sensitive habitats or the potential to support special status species. Through habitat avoidance and pre-activity surveys consistent with avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures included in the FEIR (refer to Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9), impacts to special status wildlife including the federal threatened Morro shoulderband snail, tidewater goby, and California red-legged frog are not expected to occur. These protection measures would also be sufficient to avoid impacts to species proposed for listing under FESA such as the southwestern pond turtle. The BRA and FEIR also contain detailed measures to protect special status animals and nesting birds that may be present within the work areas on a seasonal basis. Sufficient room exists

in roadways and adjacent disturbed areas to install pipelines, construct injection wells, stage/store equipment and materials, and ultimately avoid impacts to native habitat and any special status biological resources such as Morro Creek, Willow Camp Creek, and their riparian corridors.

The supplemental analysis coupled with the findings of the 2017 BRA identified all special status biological resources, including state and federal listed species and special status plants and animals, that have the potential to occur or do occur in the project area. The FEIR was reviewed to confirm adequate protection and mitigation measures are in place, consisting of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9, to ensure Phase 3 project impacts to special status biological resources are less than significant pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide environmental consulting services for this project. I trust that the above information is sufficient for your reporting requirements at this time. If you have any questions regarding the information contained herein, please contact me at the phone number listed above or via email at kmerk@kevinmerkassociates.com.

Sincerely,
KEVIN MERK ASSOCIATES, LLC

Kevin B. Merk
Principal Biologist

Attachments: *Project Overview Map*
Figure 1 – Site Location Map
Figure 2 – Aerial Overview Map
Figure 3 - Soils Map
Figures 4, 4A and 4B – Habitat Maps
Figure 5 – CNDDB Plant Occurrence Map
Figure 6 – CNDDB Animal Occurrence Map
Figure 7 – Critical Habitat/Sensitive Natural Communities Map
Photo Plate

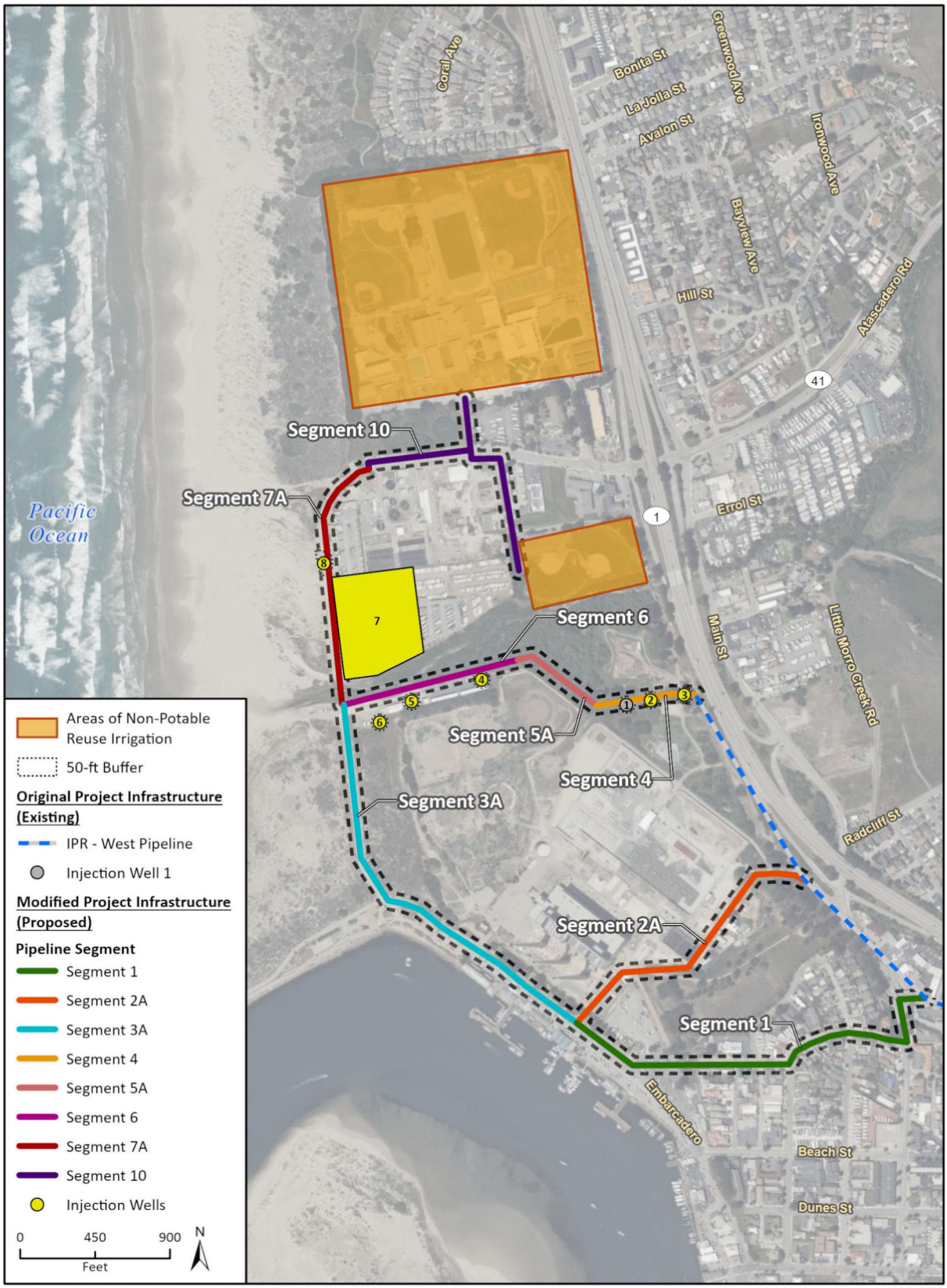

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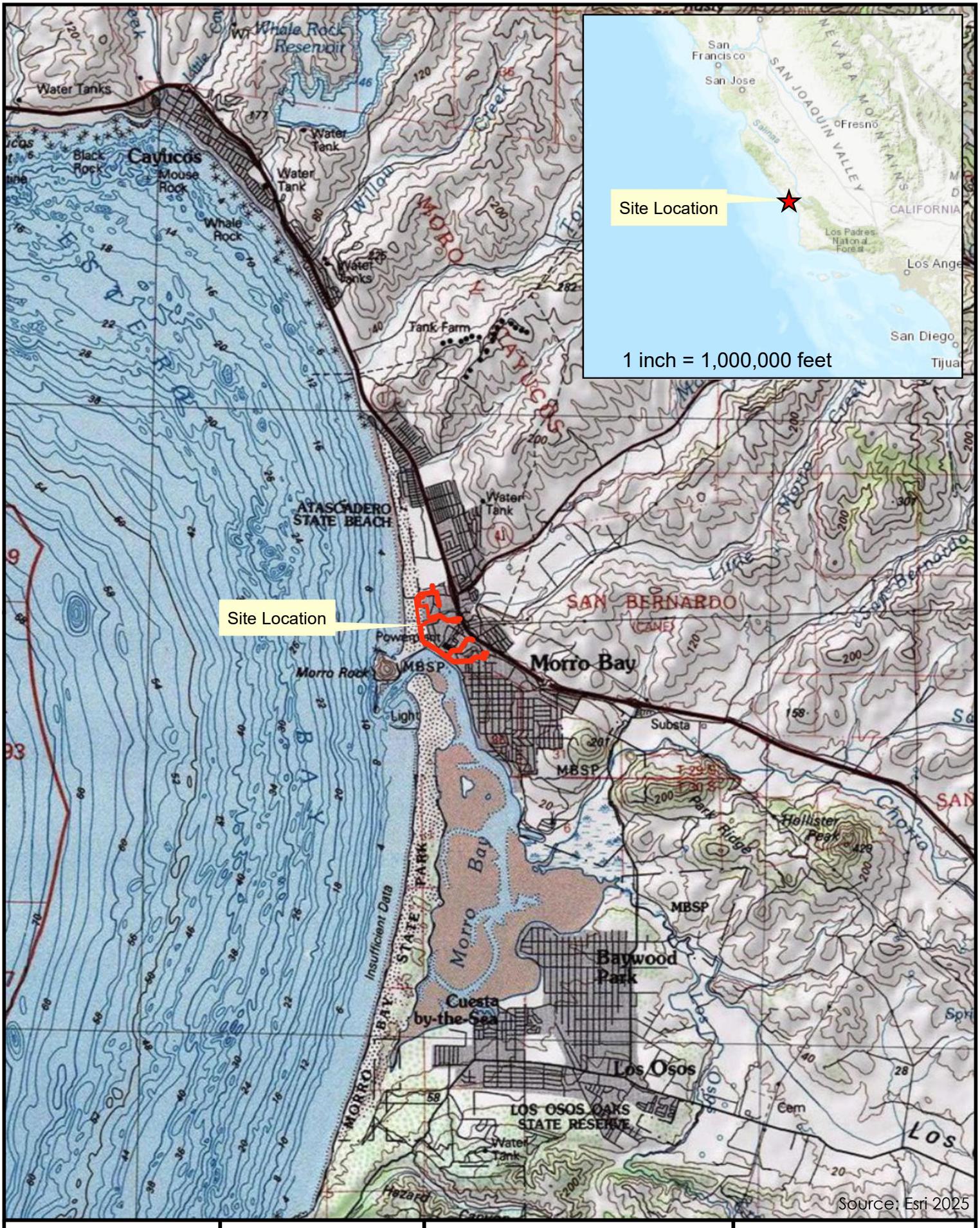
Fig 2 CEQA Project Location



KEVIN MERK ASSOCIATES

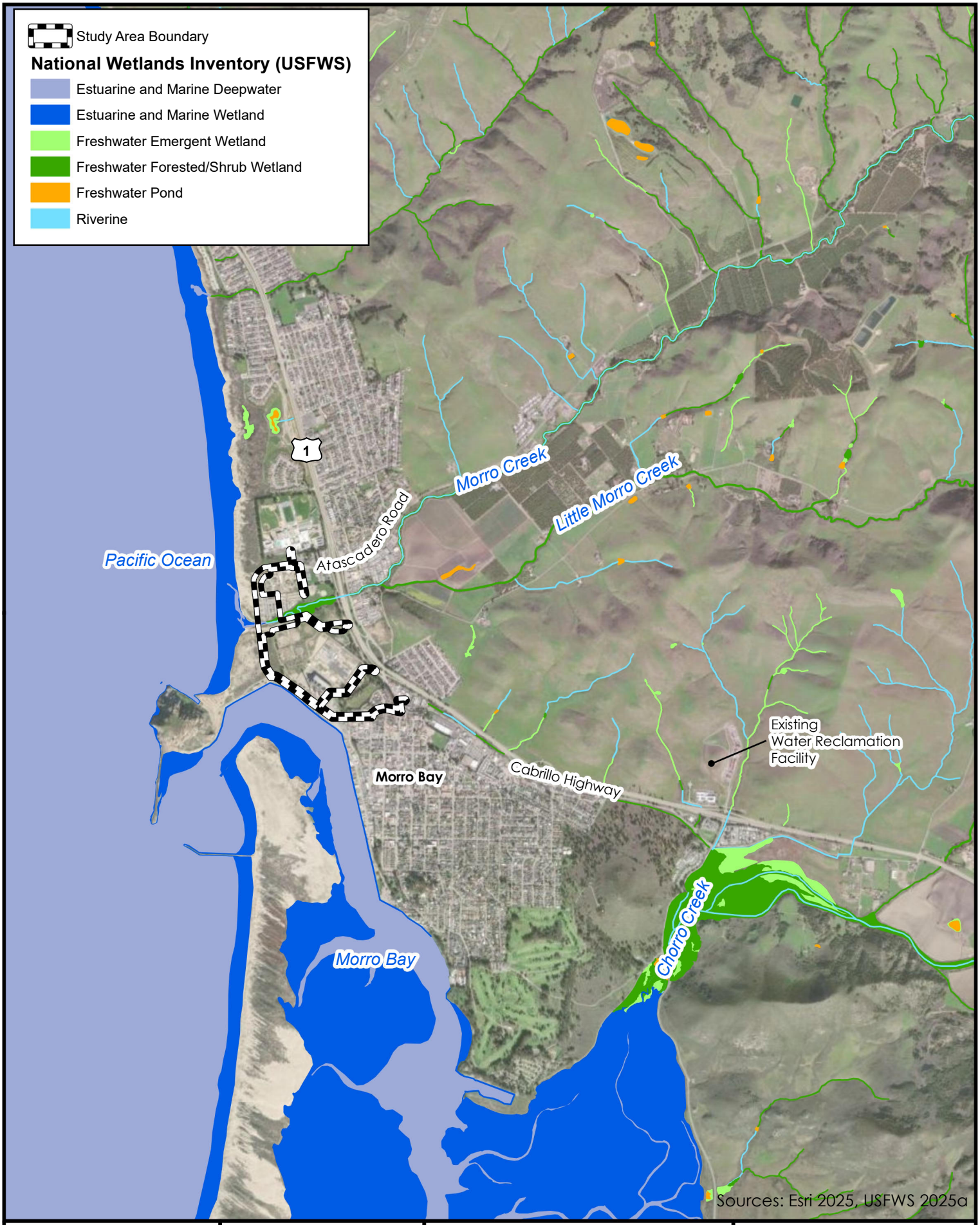
1 inch = 8,000 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 1

Site Location Map



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N
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1 inch = 3,000 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 2

Aerial Overview Map

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N W E S

1 inch = 500 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 3

Soils Map

Study Area Boundary

Match Line

Habitat Types

- Annual Grassland
- Central Dune Scrub
- Coastal Scrub
- Iceplant
- Ornamental
- Riparian Scrub
- Riverine
- Ruderal/Disturbed
- Wetland

Riverine

Rare Plant

Blochman's Leafy Daisy

Morro Bay High School

Atascadero Road

Lila Keiser Park

Morro Creek

Pacific Ocean

Match Line A

Figure 4B

Cabrillo Highway

Coleman Drive

Morro Bay

Figure 4A

Source: Esri 2025

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N W E S

1 in = 500 ft

0 125 250 500 Feet

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Figure 4

Habitat Overview Map

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N W E S

1 in = 300 ft

0 75 150 300 Feet

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City of Morro Bay

Figure 4A

Habitat Map

Study Area Boundary

Match Line

Habitat Types

- Annual Grassland
- Central Dune Scrub
- Coastal Scrub
- Iceplant
- Ornamental
- Riparian Scrub
- Riverine
- Ruderal/Disturbed
- Wetland

Riverine

Morro Bay High School

Atascadero Road

Lila Keiser Park

Morro Creek

Pacific Ocean

Cabrillo Highway

Match Line A

Source: Esri 2025

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N W E S

1 in = 300 ft

0 75 150 300 Feet

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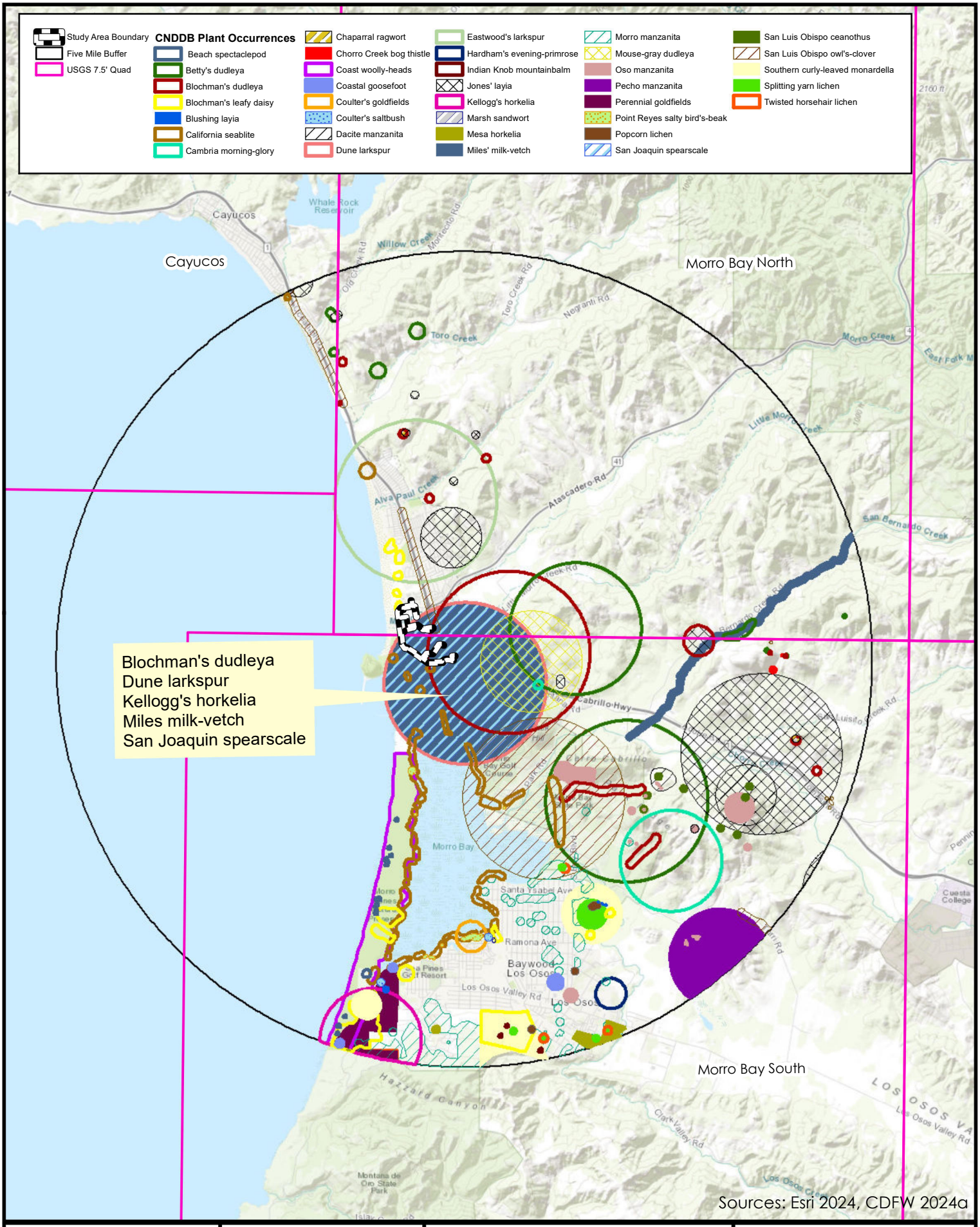
Figure 4B

Habitat Map



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N W E S

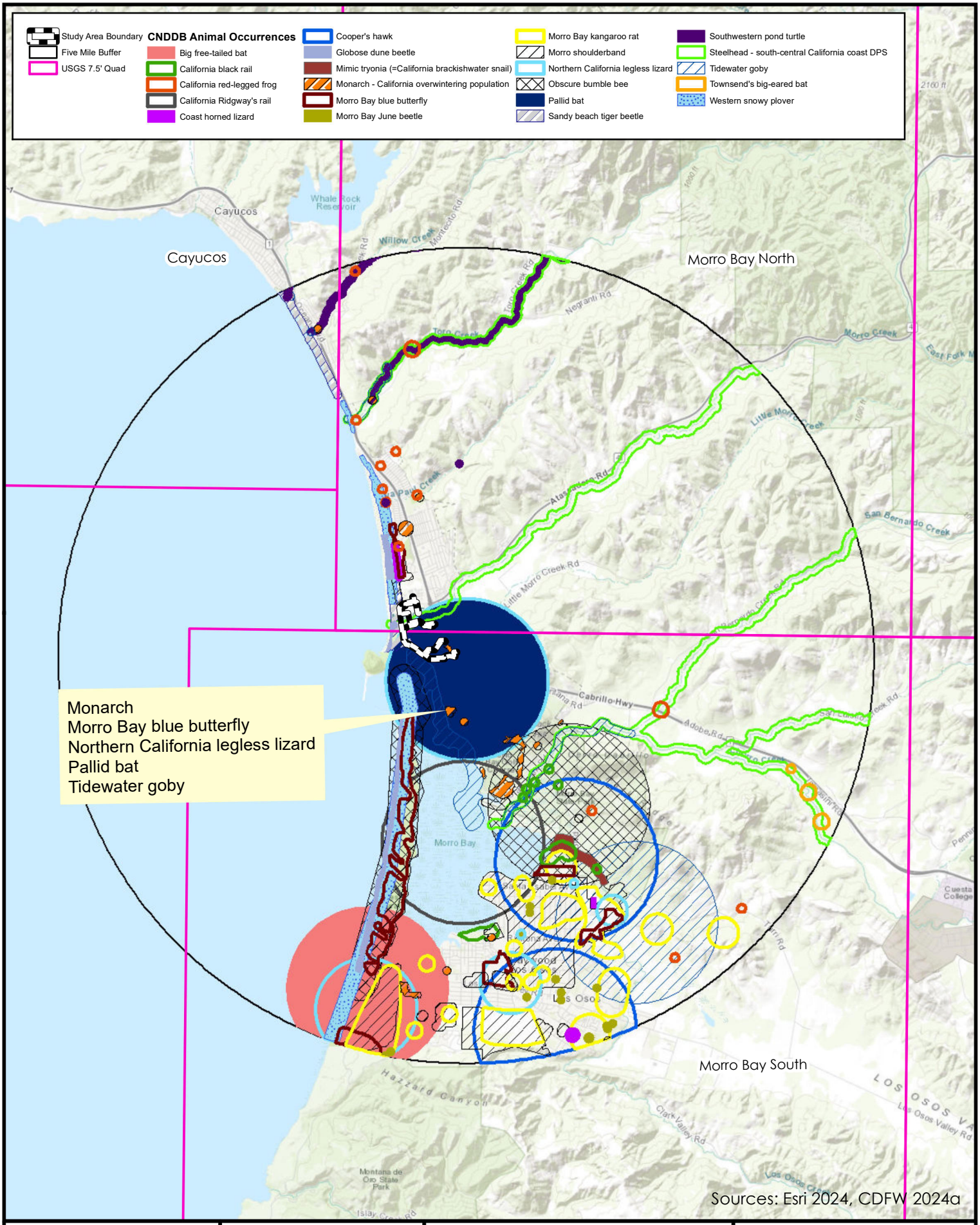
1 inch = 8,000 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 5

CNDDB Plant Occurrences Map



KEVIN MERK ASSOCIATES

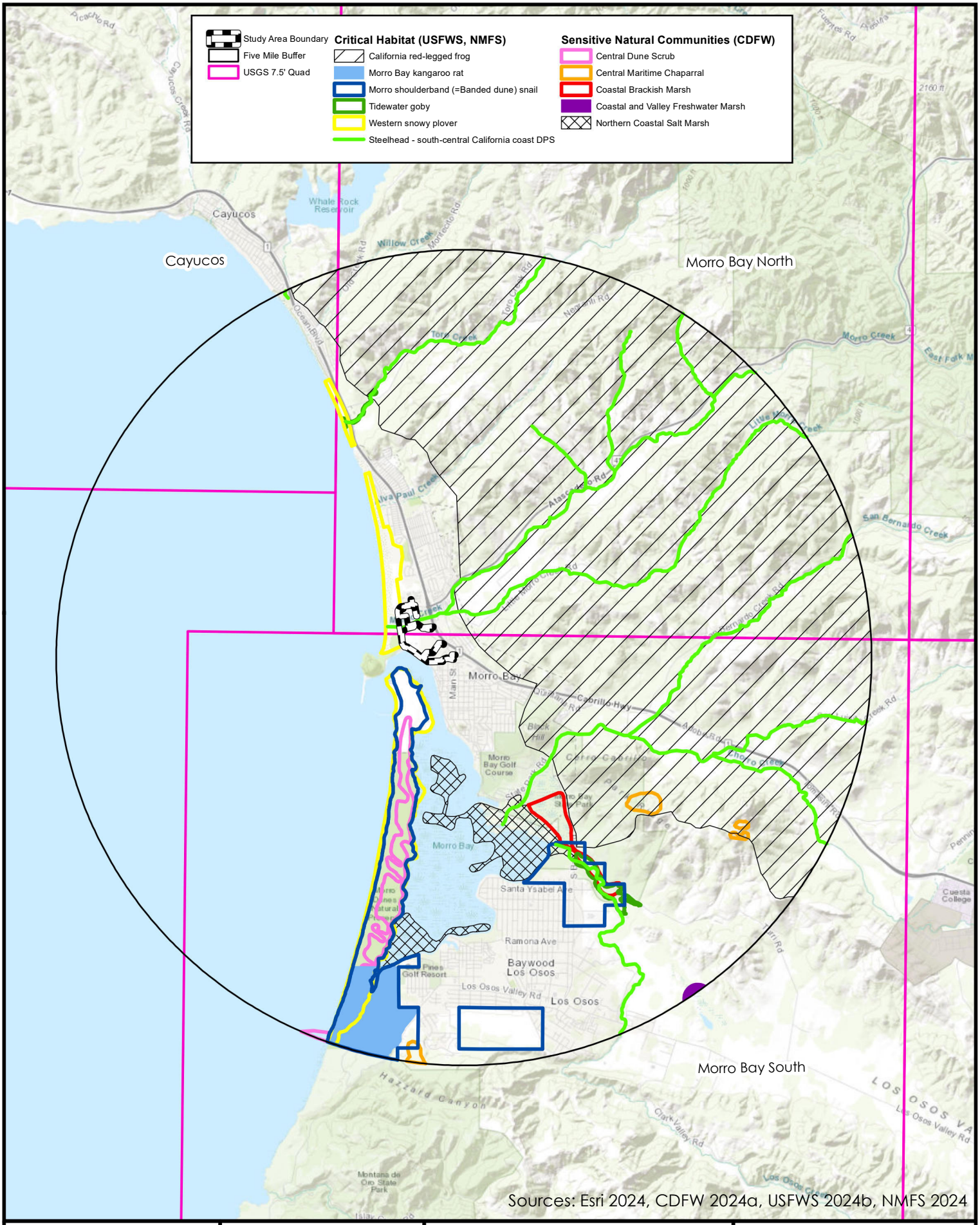
1 inch = 8,000 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 6

CNDDB Animal Occurrences Map



KEVIN MERK ASSOCIATES

N W E S

1 inch = 8,000 feet

Morro Bay Water Reclamation Facility

City of Morro Bay

Figure 7

Critical Habitat/ Sensitive Natural Communities Map

Photo Plate

Photo 1. Representative view of ruderal and developed areas in urban areas along Segment 1.

Photo 2. Northerly view of Segment 2A near the entrance to the former power plant and area currently used by the Marine Mammal Center. Ornamental and non-native vegetation is present along the road margins in this location.

Photo 3. Segment 2A would follow existing pipeline infrastructure through disturbed areas on the former power plant property, which in this area is currently used by the Marine Mammal Center.

Photo 4. Westerly view of Segment 3A that would be sited in Embarcadero Road. Note ornamental plantings to the right along a disturbed road margin composed of weedy herbaceous species and leaf litter.

Photo 5. Easterly view of native Central Dune Scrub habitat adjacent to Segment 3A in Embarcadero Road. The pipeline would be sited in the roadway and would not impact this native habitat area.

Photo 6. Southerly view of the unpaved portion of Embarcadero Road where Segment 3A is located. Shown in this photo is a patch of Blochman's leafy daisy, a rare plant, growing in Central Dune Scrub habitat.

Photo 7. Northerly view of Segment 3A located in the unpaved portion of Embarcadero Road. To the right and left of the disturbed roadway is native habitat that will be avoided by the project.

Photo 8. Westerly view of Segment 4 leading to Injection Well 1 on the former power plant property. Coastal scrub, ornamental and riparian scrub habitats are present in this area outside the pipeline corridor and well site.

Photo 9. Easterly view of Segment 4 looking towards Highway 1 with Injection Wells 2 and 3 identified by stakes in the distance. This area was dominated by weedy species along with planted ornamental vegetation such as eucalyptus and Monterey cypress.

Photo 10. Northerly view of Segment 5A that follows an unnamed drainage tributary to Morro Creek (known locally as Willow Camp Creek). This photo shows areas of riparian scrub and wetland vegetation along the drainage feature surrounded by non-native ornamental species.

Photo 11. Easterly view of Segment 6 and the City storage facility in the distance. Morro Creek is to the left and Injection Wells 4, 5 and 6 are in this general location.

Photo 12. Easterly view of the terminus of Segment 6 showing the disturbed conditions of the site for Injection Well 4.

Photo 13. View of potential Injection Well 6 that would be installed in the dirt parking lot.

Photo 14. Northerly view of the existing bridge over Morro Creek that is in Segment 7A. In this location, the RWF pipeline would be installed in an existing pipeline under the creek or attached to the bridge to avoid impacts to riverine, riparian and wetland habitats.

Photo 15. Southerly view of Segment 7A near Morro Creek with the bridge crossing visible in the distance. This entire area is highly disturbed by human activities, and no native habitat would be impacted by the project.

Photo 16. Northerly view of Segment 7A showing paved roadway and disturbed road shoulders with sand dunes vegetated by iceplant just outside the study area.

Photo 17. Southerly view within the RV park showing the developed and disturbed condition in this part of the study area. View is looking south towards the location of Injection Well 7, which would be near the end of this driveway.

Photo 18. Easterly view of Segment 10 near the former Wastewater Treatment Facility showing developed areas and disturbed, bare ground that has been used as a staging area for the project.

Photo 19. Northerly view of Segment 10 looking toward Morro Bay High School, which is identified as an area of non-potable reuse irrigation. The pipeline would be installed in the street to avoid impacts to ornamental vegetation such as the Monterey cypress windrow.

Photo 20. Southerly view of Segment 10 leading to Lila Keiser Park that will be an area of non-potable reuse irrigation. The pipeline would be installed in the roadway and no ornamental vegetation including a Monterey cypress windrow in the distance would be impacted.