

5.0 LONG-TERM IMPACTS

This section presents the evaluation of additional environmental impacts analyses required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that are not directly addressed within the other sections of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR), including irreversible environmental changes and growth inducing impacts (including removal of obstacles to growth). In particular, Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. Accordingly, in addition to the analysis provided in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures*, this section identifies growth inducing impacts and significant irreversible environmental changes that would potentially result from implementation of the proposed project, or future development under the LOCP.

5.1 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of how the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Induced growth is distinguished from the direct economic, population, or housing growth of a project. Induced growth is any growth that results from new development that would not have taken place in the absence of the project and that exceeds planned growth. The CEQA Guidelines also state that growth in any area should not be assumed to be necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

Growth-inducing impacts are caused by those characteristics of a project that tend to foster or encourage population and/or economic growth. Inducements to growth include the generation of construction and permanent employment opportunities in the support sectors of the economy. The proposed Project could result in four types of growth-inducing impacts: 1) the creation of short- and long-term employment opportunities which draw newcomers to the region; 2) the associated increase in housing demand; 3) the generation of new commercial and tourist accommodations to entice people to the area, and 4) expansion of utilities and infrastructure.

Growth-inducing impacts are discussed in detail in Section 4.10, *Population and Housing*, the key findings of which are summarized here:

- There are no expansion areas planned outside the URL. Although no expansion is anticipated, there are areas within the URL where special planning area standards will apply, which are intended to guide and facilitate future growth in these areas, which are described in detail in the *Project Description*. Within these areas, most existing land use designations will remain the same as they currently are. In some cases, minor land used designation changes are

contemplated. In general, however, future growth will be a function of developing on currently vacant parcels.

There are no parcels within the plan area that would be converted from Open Space to any urban land use, with the exception of the following:

- *four parcels totaling 3.81-acres west of 3rd Street between Pismo and El Moro Avenues will be redesignated from Open Space (OS) to Recreation (REC);*
- *a 0.19-acre parcel that contains a LOCSO well site, west of 3rd Street near El Moro Avenue will be redesignated from Open Space (OS) to Public Facility (PF).*

In each case, the change is intended to reflect an existing logical development pattern rather than to facilitate new or unplanned growth. Both are infill sites surrounded by existing urban development, and neither is growth-inducing.

- There are no parcels designated for Agriculture (AG) within the plan area, so there is no potential for the conversion of agriculture to urban use that might otherwise be growth-inducing.
- No new arterial roadways would be built, and existing roadways would be improved only to the extent necessary to accommodate planned development, or to correct existing deficiencies (see Section 5.12 for further analysis of this issue).
- The new community sewer system will remove an existing obstacle to growth, but will not induce growth beyond what is planned under the LOCP. It has been sized to accommodate growth within the USL, and is not intended to extend service beyond the USL (Final EIR, County of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Project, 2009).

In summary, the LOCP is intended to focus on urban infill, and will convert substantial areas currently designated for urban use to Open Space under the existing Estero Area Plan. There are no expansion areas, and no lands currently designated as Open Space or Agriculture will be converted to urban use. The LOCP plans for orderly growth, and future development and infrastructure improvements are not considered growth-inducing. In addition, proposed LOCP policies and standards address a variety of growth-related issues throughout the community. Most crucially, the following policy is included in Chapter 7 of the LOCP as a Planning Area Standard, which ties future growth to water availability in the Los Osos Groundwater Basin:

D. Los Osos Groundwater Basin.

- 1. Basin Plan compliance. Development of land uses that use water from the Los Osos Groundwater Basin shall be prohibited until the Board of Supervisors determines that successful*

completion and implementation of specific programs identified in the Los Osos Basin Plan (“Basin Plan”) have occurred. The following programs from the Basin Plan must be successfully completed and implemented to address existing resource constraints prior to development of new dwelling units or commercial uses:

- a. Program “M” – Groundwater Monitoring*
- b. Program “E” – Urban Efficiency*
- c. Program “U” – Urban Water Reinvestment*
- d. Program “A” – Infrastructure Program A*
- e. Program “P” – Wellhead Protection*
- f. At least one of the following additional programs:*
 - Program “B” – Infrastructure Program B*
 - Program “C” – Infrastructure Program C*
 - Program “S” – Supplemental Water Program*

2. Amendments to Title 26. Development of new dwelling units that use water from the Los Osos Groundwater basin shall be prohibited until 1) a growth limitation for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin is established in Section 26.01.070.k of the Growth Management Ordinance to reflect current basin conditions and the successful completion of the programs identified in the Basin Plan and 2) the Board of Supervisors determines that the specific programs identified in the Basin Plan and required by these standards as a prerequisite for additional development have been successfully completed and implemented and are effective, as follows:

- a. The Basin Plan program(s) shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works, in consultation with the Los Osos Groundwater Basin Watermaster.*
- b. As part of the review for Basin Plan effectiveness, the County shall consider data collected as part of the Groundwater Monitoring program (Program “M”). If the data indicate that completed programs have not been effective in reducing groundwater demand, increasing the perennial safe yield or facilitating seawater retreat as predicted in the Basin Plan, then the development of new residential units shall be limited accordingly.*
- c. As part of the review for Basin Plan effectiveness, the Board of Supervisors shall consider trends in commercial development and commercial water demand to ensure that such demand is not growing beyond a proportional relationship with the community’s population.*

3. Growth limitation standards. Development of new residential units that use water from the Los Osos Groundwater Basin shall be prohibited until successful implementation of all programs identified in Subsection D.1. Once this has been achieved, Section 26.01.070.k of the Growth Management Ordinance may be modified to allow development of new residential units as follows:

- a. Implementation of one additional program.*

(i) *Implementation of Program “B”.* Upon successful implementation of Program “B,” an additional 1,230 residential units may be constructed within the Los Osos Groundwater Basin.

(ii) *Implementation of Program “C”.* Upon successful implementation of Program “C,” an additional 680 residential units may be constructed within the Los Osos Groundwater Basin.

(iii) *Implementation of Program “S”.* Upon successful implementation of Program “S,” assuming groundwater desalination producing 250 acre feet per year, 550 residential units may be constructed within the Los Osos Groundwater Basin.

b. *Implementation of more than one additional program.* In the event that more than one additional Basin Plan program is pursued, additional residential dwelling units may be constructed within the Los Osos Basin. The number of additional units allowed shall be as indicated in the following table, which are in addition to those indicated in Subsection 3a:

Previously Implemented Program	New Program(s) to be Completed	Additional Dwelling Units
B	C	560
	C + D	1,030
	C + S	1,550
	C + D + G	3,020
	C + D + S	2,020
C	B	1,110
	B + D	1,580
	B + S	2,100
	B + D + G	3,570
	B + D + S	2,570
S (250 AFY)	Additional S (+500 AFY = 750 AFY)	1,590
	B + C	2,230
	B + C + D	2,700
	B + C + G	3,620

4. *Exemptions.* All development approved (pursuant to land use permits or entitlements) prior to the effective date of this standard that complies with Title 19 retrofit requirements shall be exempt from the provisions of these standards in Subsections D.1, 2 and 3.

In the aggregate, proposed LOCP policies, particularly the one described above related to growth management and Basin Plan compliance, build on the existing state and County regulatory framework, and when applied to new development, will ensure orderly planned growth within the community. Collectively, they provide a high level of programmatic protection, and serve as a clear basis for liming growth inducement when applied to future development through the entitlement process associated with that development. Growth-inducing Impacts would be less than significant.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2(c) requires that irretrievable commitments of resources be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. This includes use of nonrenewable resources, the commitment of future generations to similar uses, and irreversible damage which can result from environmental accidents associated with the proposed LOCP.

The LOCP is a regulatory document that in itself proposes no development. It does, however, provide a framework for any future development projects that may be considered in Los Osos, and in that sense, provides a mechanism for potential changes to the environment. However, it should be noted that the existing Estero Area Plan provides a similar framework for changes to the environment.

Construction of new buildings and paved surfaces with new development under the LOCP would involve consumption of building materials and energy, some of which are nonrenewable or locally limited natural resources (e.g., fossil fuels and wood). Nonrenewable resources utilized for the proposed Project could no longer be utilized for other purposes. Consumption of building materials and energy is associated with any development in the region, and these commitments of resources are not unique or unusual to the proposed project. The proposed project would represent an incremental commitment to long-term use of nonrenewable resources, particularly gasoline for substantially increased automobile use and oil, coal, and natural gas for power generation.

Although not unique to the proposed project, automobile trips generated from future development would increase energy consumption, particularly in the form of gasoline and related petroleum products. As discussed in Section 4.6, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, use of these forms of non-renewable energy would contribute to the generation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) with an incremental contribution to global climate change.

Development under the LOCP would not be expected to convert agricultural resources, nor would it result in environmental accidents that have the potential to cause irreversible damage to the natural or human environment.

5.3 ENERGY CONSERVATION

Per Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines and Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(2), an EIR must disclose and discuss the potential for a project to result in impacts related to energy conservation

and/or consumption. A project may have the potential to cause such impacts if it would result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy, including electricity, natural gas, or transportation fuel supplies and/or resources. While Appendix F requires a disclosure and discussion of such impacts, no specific thresholds are provided by the CEQA Guidelines. However, Appendix F offers several recommendations related to analyzing impacts on energy resources to determine whether a project would:

- a. *Use large amounts of fuel or energy in an unnecessary, wasteful, or inefficient manner;*
- b. *Constrain local or regional energy supplies, affect peak and base periods of electrical or natural gas demand, require or result in the construction of new electrical generation and/or transmission facilities, or necessitate the expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or*
- c. *Conflict with existing energy standards, including standards for energy conservation.*

The proposed LOCP is a programmatic long-range plan to guide future development within the Los Osos community. There are no specific development proposals associated with the LOCP; instead, it would facilitate future development in accordance with the LOCP, which in turn is a subset of the adopted Estero Area Plan. In general, the proposed LOCP supports policies that encourage energy conservation, which would be applied to future development projects. Specifically, development under the LOCP must implement the County's adopted Climate Action Plan, also known as the EnergyWise Plan, adopted in November 2011. The EnergyWise Plan includes reduction measures associated with energy conservation, renewable energy, solid waste, land use and transportation, water conservation, and agriculture. The Implementation Program of the EnergyWise Plan provides a strategy for action with specific measures and steps to achieve the identified reduction targets.

Chapter 5 of the EnergyWise Plan includes the following energy conservation-related Goal, Programs, and Supporting Actions:

GOAL: ADDRESS FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS THROUGH INCREASED CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENCY IN ALL SECTORS.

Electricity and natural gas consumption support businesses, industrial facilities, and homes. Residents use natural gas to heat water and power natural gas cooking ranges. Industrial and commercial enterprises use natural gas for water heating in addition to on-site fuel combustion that supports manufacturing and industrial processes. Electricity powers appliances that are the cornerstones of daily life, from personal appliances to local infrastructure such as traffic signals. Greenhouse gas emissions are created by the consumption of electricity and natural gas. But greater efficiencies in existing levels of energy consumption can be realized while still supporting the needs of existing and future communities. Implementation of energy conservation measures

will not only reduce GHG emissions but will also reduce household and business costs associated with energy consumption.

1. Energy Conservation Programs

Collaborate with local utility providers, educational institutions, and stakeholders to develop effective energy conservation campaigns through energy competitions and to provide targeted marketing for new and existing conservation programs.

Supporting Actions:

- *Work with local utility providers to develop a competition between the communities within SLO County to reduce total energy consumption over an extended period of time (6 months to 1 year).*
- *Continue to encourage and promote utility provider energy conservation programs for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and governmental buildings.*
- *Develop and host a community web portal to streamline access to community and institutional sustainability websites.*
- *Continue to recognize and encourage conservation programs and educational outreach conducted by industry organizations, non-governmental entities, and government agencies.*

In general, the EnergyWise Plan energy conservation programs direct the implementation of a community-wide public outreach and education campaign to inform residents, businesses, and consumers about the ways that individuals can reduce their energy costs and GHG emissions. This includes informing the public about the benefits of using energy-efficient lighting, appliances, and electronics and reminding them of the easiest ways to reduce household and business energy use. In addition, the EnergyWise Plan references Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), which mandates how each new home and business is built in California. Title 24 includes requirements for the structural, plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems of buildings, and for fire and life safety, energy conservation, green design and accessibility in and about buildings.

New development under the LOCP must comply with the adopted EnergyWise Plan. In so doing, programmatic impacts associated with energy conservation will be addressed, in compliance with the direction set forth in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines.