NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Who: County of San Luis Obispo

What: A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared and issued for the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works Huasna Road over Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge Replacement Project. The purpose of this safety improvement project is to replace the existing 42-ft long by 24-ft wide bridge with a 90-ft long by 44-ft wide replacement bridge with concrete abutments set back from the creek. The existing approach lanes will include 2-ft wide shoulders and will be slightly realigned to improve safety and sight distance in close proximity to Lopez Drive.
A temporary traffic detour using Cecchetti and Branch Mill Roads is proposed for an approximate duration of 9 months. Construction will be scheduled during the non-rainy season when conditions are dry, or creek flows are at their lowest, however creek diversion and dewatering will likely be required. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure project impacts are less than significant. The bridge is located within the South County Planning Area, San Luis Bay South Subarea, Supervisorial District 4, approximately 2.25 miles east of Highway 101 in the City of Arroyo Grande.

Where: Copies of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and all the associated documents referenced in the Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for review at on the County's website at https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/Huasna-Road-Bridge-MND, as well as at the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works, 976 Osos Street, County Government Center Room 206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.

Comments: The 30-day review and comment period for the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration begins on July 5, 2024, and ends on August 5, 2024. Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the review period and should be addressed to: William Fox, Environmental Specialist, wafox@co.slo.ca.us, County Government Center, Room 206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.

Public Hearing: The County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration. The hearing is tentatively scheduled sometime in 2025. Interested persons can access the Board of Supervisor's agenda at http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/bos/BOSagenda.htm to locate the date of the public hearing for this project.

Project Number **Project Name**

PLN-2039
04/2019

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Title & No. Huasa Road Bridge Replacement Project, ED22-011 (300620)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The proposed project could have a "Potentially Significant Impact" for environmental factors checked below. Please refer to the attached pages for discussion on mitigation measures or project revisions to either reduce these impacts to less than significant levels or require further study.

☐ Aesthetics	☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☒ Public Services
☐ Agriculture & Forestry Resources	☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Recreation
☒ Air Quality	☒ Hydrology & Water Quality	☐ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Land Use & Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities & Service Systems
☐ Energy	☐ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☒ Geology & Soils	☐ Population & Housing	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the Environmental Division Manager finds that:

☐ The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Monica Stillman	Monica Stillman	Environmental Specialist	7-1-2024
Prepared by (Print)	Signature		Date
Kate Shea	Kate Shea		07-01-2024
Reviewed by (Print)	Signature	Environmental Div. Mgr.	Date

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Environmental Analysis

The County's environmental review process incorporates all of the requirements for completing the Initial Study as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study includes staff's on-site inspection of the project site and surroundings and a detailed review of the information in the file for the project. In addition, available background information is reviewed for each project. Relevant information regarding soil types and characteristics, geologic information, significant vegetation and/or wildlife resources, water availability, wastewater disposal services, existing land uses and surrounding land use categories and other information relevant to the environmental review process are evaluated for each project. Exhibit A includes the references used, as well as the agencies or groups that were contacted as a part of the Initial Study. The County Public Works Department uses the checklist to summarize the results of the research accomplished during the initial environmental review of the project.

Persons, agencies or organizations interested in obtaining more information regarding the environmental review process for a project should contact the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department, 976 Osos Street, Rm. 206, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408-2040 or call (805) 781-5252.

A. Project

DESCRIPTION:

The County of San Luis Obispo (County) Public Works Department, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and oversight by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), proposes to replace the existing, structurally deficient Huasna Road Bridge (49C-0124). The Huasna Road over Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge Replacement Project (project) is located on Huasna Road just east of the intersection with Lopez Drive in a rural area adjacent to the city of Arroyo Grande and approximately 2.25 mile east of U.S. Highway (US) 101. The purpose of this project is to improve public safety by replacing a structure near the end of its service life. Safety would be improved by replacing the bridge, constructing wider shoulders, installing approach guard railing, and improving the existing roadway alignment.

The project footprint consists of an approximate 0.9-acre area and contains the right-of-way for the proposed project, all areas of ground disturbance, and potential staging areas. Staging is proposed within fields that have been previously disturbed by grading and would not require improvements (e.g., grading, leveling). Temporary construction easements would be required for staging areas and a permanent easement would be required for the road realignment on the east side of the bridge.

The existing single-span bridge is 42 feet long and 24 feet wide. The new bridge would be a 90-foot-long, single-span, precast concrete bridge, 44 feet wide. The increased width is proposed to accommodate 8-foot-wide shoulders, which would improve safety for agricultural equipment that uses the bridge. The new concrete foundations would be supported on cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) columns and a soldier pile retaining wall is proposed on the west side of the bridge because of the steep slope.

The existing bridge would be demolished and a temporary construction detour would be required.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S): County right-of-way and APN 047-125-016 to west, APN 047-161-013 to the north and northeast, 047-161-022 to the south

Latitude: 35.1392 **Longitude:** -120.5469 **Supervisorial District #** 4

B. Existing Setting

Plan Area: South County **Sub:** San Luis Bay (South) **Comm:** Rural

Land Use Category: Agriculture Residential suburban

Combining Designation: Flood Hazard

Parcel Size: 0.9

Topography: Nearly level to steeply sloping

Vegetation: Tree Shrub Urban built up

Existing Uses: Transportation

Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:

North: Agriculture; Residential Rural ***East:*** Agriculture; residential

South: Agriculture Residential Rural; ***West:*** Residential Rural ;

C. Environmental Analysis

The Initital Study Checklist provides detailed information about the environmental impacts of the proposed project and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts.

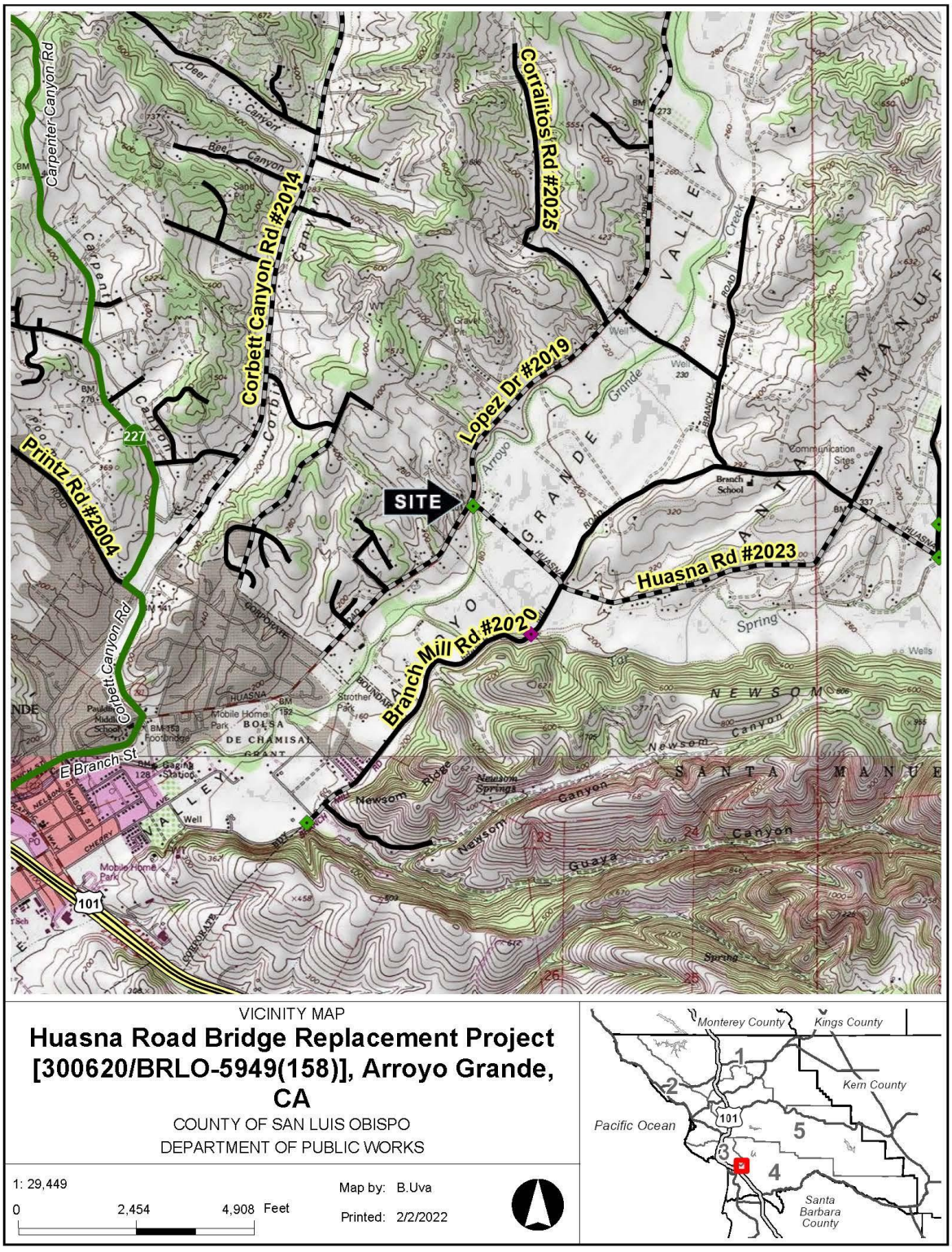

Figure 1 – Vicinity map

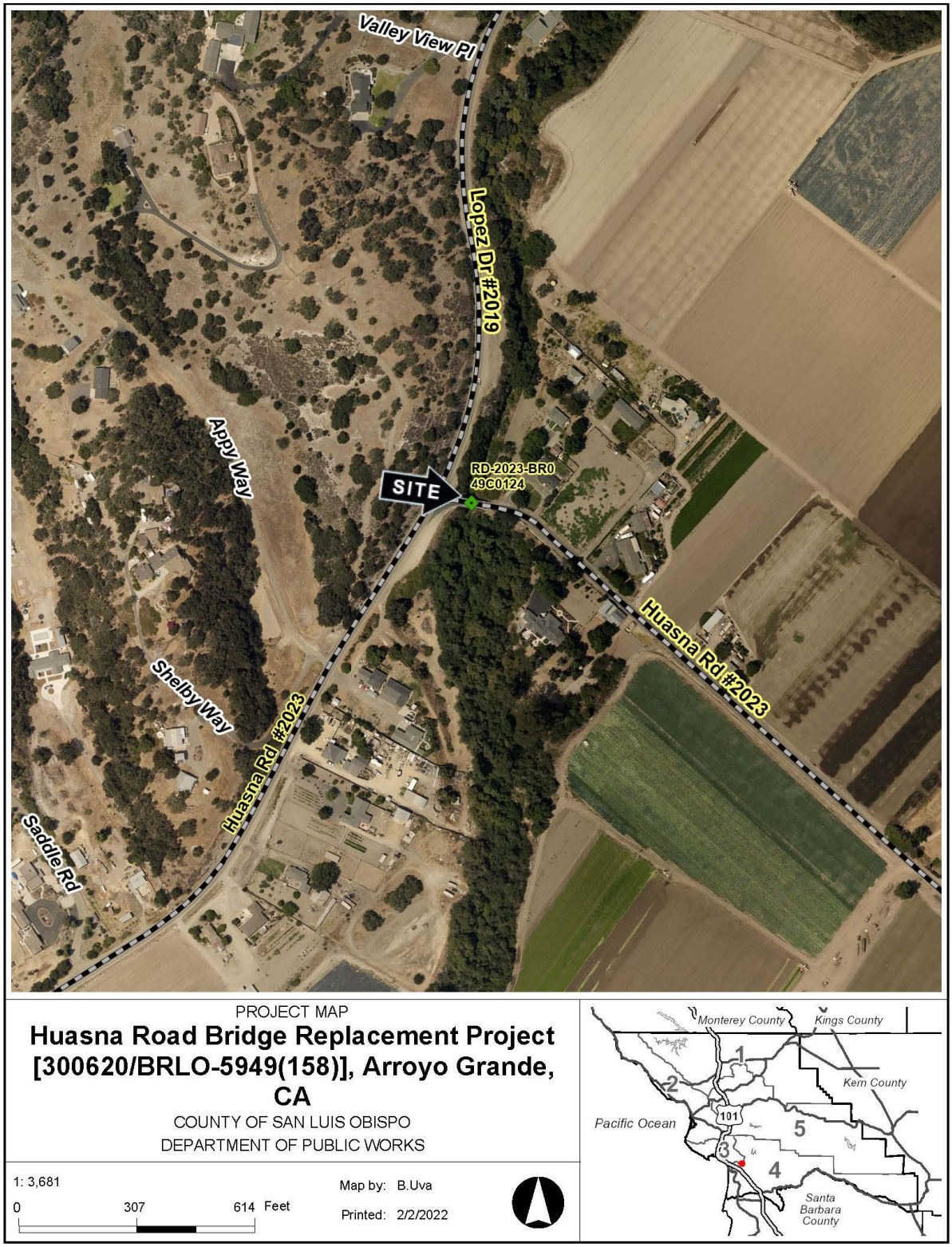

Figure 2 – Project location – aerial view

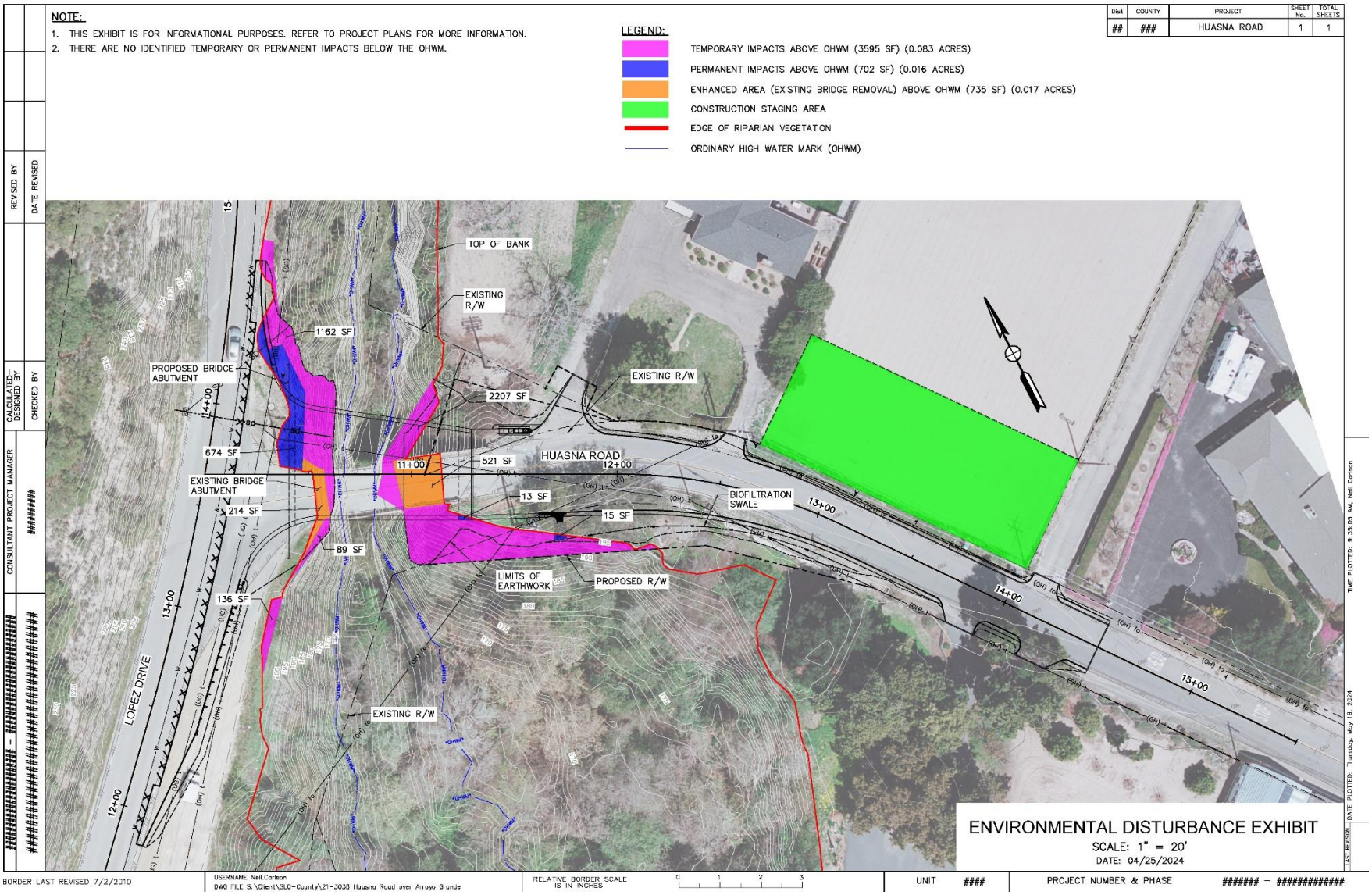

Figure 3 – Project plan view

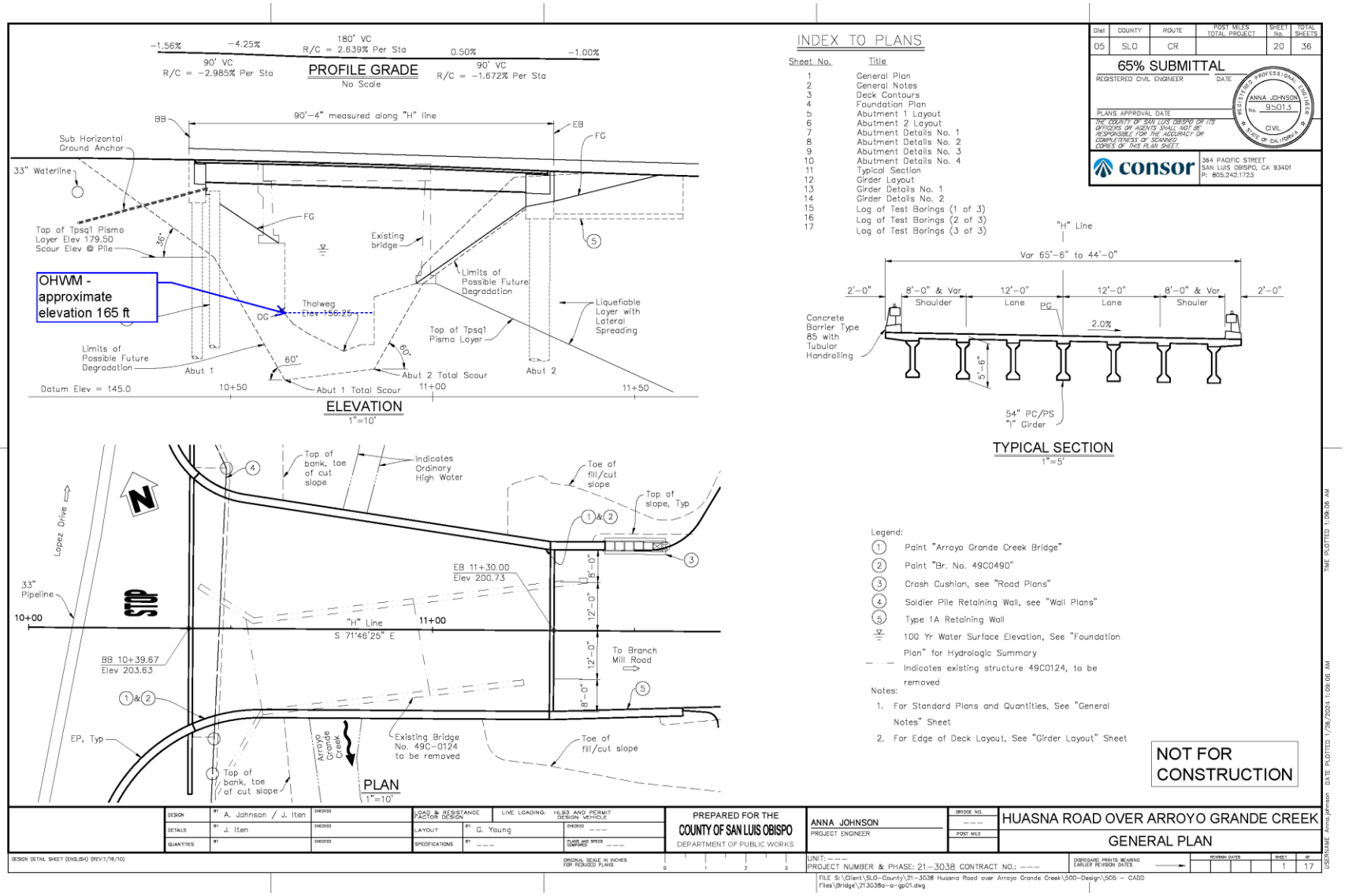

Figure 4 – Project cross section view

(a) Aerial view looking south along Lopez Drive and over Huasna Road bridge (center of view).

Figure 5. Site photographs

(b) Existing Huasna Road Bridge looking west to Lopez Drive.

(c) Existing Huasna Road Bridge looking east along Huasna Road.

Figure 5. Site photographs (continued)

(d) View looking north from existing bridge along upstream Arroyo Grande Creek channel.

Figure 5. Site photographs (continued)

(e) Existing Huasna Road Bridge panorama looking north.

Figure 5. Site photographs (continued)

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

I. AESTHETICS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:					
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The project is located in a rural residential and agricultural area east of the city of Arroyo Grande. The project site is surrounded by single-family rural residences, agriculture, and undeveloped land. The existing bridge spans Arroyo Grande Creek, a perennial stream with a dense riparian canopy.

The proposed concrete bridge would be consistent with the current bridge aesthetics. The proposed bridge structure would be designed in accordance with applicable County, AASHTO, and Caltrans design guidelines and standards. The County is coordinating with the adjoining landowners and will accommodate their request to maintain the historic aesthetic character of the bridge to the extent feasible.

The project is not located on a designated scenic highway and is not within a designated scenic area, although Lopez Drive from Huasna Road to Lopez Lake is a Suggested Scenic Corridor in the County of San Luis Obispo Conservation and Open Space Element of the Inland General Plan (2015).

Discussion

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

The project is located in close proximity to a suggested scenic corridor along Lopez Drive, but would not affect a designated scenic vista. The existing and proposed bridges are low-profile structures in the landscape. The

project would improve the general appearance of the bridge by replacing a deteriorated bridge with a new one, and would not alter the overall character of the bridge or scenic views from Lopez Drive or Huasna Road. Tree removals that are necessary for construction would have incremental effects on reducing tree cover bordering Lopez Drive, while simultaneously incrementally expanding the views of farmland and hills to the east. The project would not adversely affect views of scenic vistas that are afforded by Lopez Drive and Huasna Road in the vicinity.

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

The project is not in or near a designated state scenic highway, although Lopez Drive from the Huasna Road intersection to Lopez Dam is included as a potentially scenic corridor in the County Inland Plan. This segment of Lopez Drive is bordered by dense tree growth as well as open agricultural and undeveloped areas. The project would not damage scenic resources such as rock outcroppings or historic structures. The historic character of the bridge would be maintained. Tree removals required for construction would be limited to localized effects within the footprint of grading for the new bridge foundations and associated retaining walls and the minor road realignment. The trees proposed to be removed for construction include coast live oaks on both sides of the Lopez Drive/Huasna Road intersection, and several along the south side of Huasna Road east of the bridge. Where tree removals are proposed, there are other trees that will remain in place that will be visible from Lopez Road, so the project's tree removals are not expected to result in a significant impact on aesthetics.

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

The project is in a rural area. As described in (a), the project would not degrade the character or quality of public views from surrounding roads and from the bridge itself. The existing bridge is deteriorated, and the project would improve the scenic quality of the bridge without altering its rural character. Tree removals required for construction would have negligible aesthetic effects, removing a small number of trees without appreciably altering the character of the views from surrounding roads.

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

The project does not include installation of lights or surfaces that would create glare and therefore would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would not materially change the scenic character of the bridge. As part of the biological mitigation measures, tree replacement plantings would be installed in County right-of-way in the project area to the extent feasible (refer to Biological Resources Section). However, the removal of native oak trees in project impact areas is not expected to have negative aesthetic effects and no additional aesthetic mitigation measures are required.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a)	Convert 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The project site is in the Arroyo Grande Agricultural Preserve Area. Lands bordering and in the vicinity of the project site that lie east of Lopez Drive are mapped as agricultural land use. Active agricultural land uses border the north side of the project area and both sides of Huasna Road to the east. There are lands currently

under Williamson Act Contracts adjoining Huasna Road immediately east of the project area and off Branch Mill Road north and south of Huasna Road.

Mapped soil units in the project area include Corducci and Typic Xerofluvents, 0 to 5% slopes, bordering Arroyo Grande Creek. This soil type formed in alluvium associated with Arroyo Grande Creek and is not a prime farmland soil. Soil units outside of the river corridor in the project area consist of Tujunga loamy sand, 0 to 2% slopes, which are considered prime farmland if irrigated.

"Forest land," as defined at Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

"Timberland," as defined at Public Resources Code Section 4526, or "timberland production zone," as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g), mean areas which have been zoned pursuant to Section 51112 or 51113 that are used for growing and harvesting timber.

There are no managed forest lands or timberland at or near the project site.

Discussion

(a) Convert 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?

Project impacts would primarily be in County right-of-way. Huasna Road and County ROW are included in areas mapped as agricultural land use and portions of the County ROW have a mapped soil unit that is a prime farmland soil. However, the existing road and ROW is developed and maintained as transportation infrastructure and these areas are not currently used for agricultural purposes and would not be suitable for agricultural use.

Designated farmland is present adjacent to County right-of-way and will be used for a temporary construction easement (TCE) on an adjoining parcel. The TCE would be restored to pre-existing conditions upon completion of construction and no permanent impacts to existing farmland would result from the project. Therefore, the project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use.

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

The project would not affect access to or use of nearby agricultural lands and/or Williamson Act contract properties. A temporary construction detour would result in longer commutes to/from some active agricultural lands bordering Huasna Road and Branch Mill Road to the east. This would be a temporary impact and would not prevent access or create a conflict with agricultural use or zoning. In terms of operational impacts, the project would enhance use of Huasna Road bridge for agricultural equipment by widening the existing shoulders. This is expected to enhance safety for agricultural vehicles, including those associated with Williamson Act contract parcels east of the bridge.

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

There are no designated forest lands or timberland at or near the project site, and the project would not impact or conflict with forest land or timberland. Approximately five mature trees located in County ROW may

need to be removed for the new bridge foundation on the west side of the bridge. They are part of the vegetated areas bordering Arroyo Grande Creek but are not part of a managed natural area, including forest land or timberland.

(d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project would not result in a loss or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

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

The project would not involve other changes that could result in conversion of farmland or forest land to other uses. The project would enhance agricultural uses in the vicinity, including existing agricultural land uses and Williamson Act contract parcels, by improving agricultural vehicle use and safety at the Huasna Road bridge.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project will not adversely affect agricultural, forest, or timberlands. A TCE in an agricultural field on an adjoining parcel will be restored to pre-existing conditions in accordance with the TCE terms developed with the landowner. A temporary bridge closure would be required during construction but traffic would be accommodated with a short detour. From an operational perspective, the project would improve safety for agricultural vehicles and other bridge users by widening the bridge shoulders. No mitigation measures are required.

III. AIR QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:					
(a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

San Luis Obispo County is in non-attainment status for ozone and particulate matter 10 micrometers in size and smaller (PM_{10}) under the California standards. This means that the state air quality standards for ozone and PM_{10} are not being met. The County's Clean Air Plan describes strategies to reduce emissions of these pollutants with the goal of improving air quality to meet the state standards by the earliest possible date.

In regard to the federal standards, while the eastern portion of the County is in non-attainment status for ozone, the western portion of the County, including the project site, is in attainment status under the federal standards. Therefore the discussion in this section focuses on the state standards.

The Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) Clean Air Plan (CAP) provides guidance for long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and countywide programs developed with the goal of reaching acceptable air quality levels. The CAP states that consistency analysis is generally required for large residential and commercial projects or industrial developments. Air quality improvement strategies in the Clean Air Plan that may potentially be applicable to Public Works projects are those aimed at reducing the use of fossil fuels and reducing vehicle travel.

For project-specific emissions analyses, the current guidance is the County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2012) with administrative updates (2017, 2021/22 and 2023). The Handbook provides daily and quarterly air pollutant significance thresholds that apply to project operations and construction and specifies mitigation measures to address threshold exceedances. These include diesel idling restrictions for on-road and off-road construction vehicles and equipment, control measures for any grading activities that would generate airborne dust or disturb naturally occurring asbestos, and control measures for disturbance of hydrocarbon-contaminated soils, demolition of asbestos-containing buildings and structures, and demolition of structures coated with lead-based paint.

Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Serpentine and other ultramafic rocks are abundant throughout the state and may contain NOA. Serpentine bedrock is not present in the project area, and the project is not located within the County APCD planning area for NOA. Therefore NOA is not anticipated to be encountered at the project site.

Soils within the project area were sampled and analyzed for petroleum hydrocarbons. Laboratory results from two out of eight soil sampling locations in the project area indicate that shallow soils may contain residual low levels of petroleum products (total petroleum hydrocarbons as motor oil, TPHmo). Soil concentrations were substantially below screening levels for residential and commercial/industrial land uses, and do not pose a threat to human health or the environment (WRECO 2022).

Lead is an APCD concern if sandblasting or heat gun removal techniques will be used to remove lead paint; these removal methods require a Lead Work Plan approved by APCD. Lead-based paint could be present in bridge or pavement paint. Paint samples from the bridge guard rails, pipe wrapping, and pavement striping were analyzed for lead; paint on the bridge railings had lead concentrations exceeding the reporting limit (WRECO 2022).

APCD regulates demolition of asbestos-containing structures with greater than 1% asbestos content. Samples to analyze asbestos containing materials (ACM) were collected from the Huasna Bridge concrete deck, rails, and pipe wrapping (WRECO 2022). Three samples collected from pipe wrapping had ACM detected above the reporting limit of 1%.

A referral was submitted to the APCD and the County received a response on March 19, 2024. APCD's recommendations are incorporated below.

Discussion

(a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The source control measures in the Clean Air Plan are not directly applicable to the project. The project would not affect population growth or vehicle use such as by generating new traffic or increasing vehicle miles. Accordingly, the project does not conflict with the Clean Air Plan. Additionally, the project would improve conditions for alternative modes of transportation by including 8-foot-wide shoulders on the new bridge that would enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety (part of the CAP transportation control measures).

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

Construction activities could generate temporary increases in local air pollution and have the potential to increase ozone and PM_{10} emissions. Construction equipment exhaust includes reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) that are precursors of ozone. Construction-related sources of PM_{10} emissions include diesel particulates and dust from demolition and ground-disturbing activities.

The proposed project's potential construction emissions were modeled using CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1 (County 2024). The CalEEMod emissions estimates for the project are substantially below the daily and quarterly APCD thresholds for criteria air pollutants as shown in Table 1.

From an operational perspective, the project would not increase traffic volumes or vehicle miles traveled, so there would be no operational increases in emissions.

Table 1. Comparison of project emissions estimated in CalEEMod to APCD thresholds.

Threshold Criteria	ROG and NOx (combined)	Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM_{10})	Fugitive Particulate Matter (PM_{10})
Project Daily Emissions(1)	3.08 lbs/day	0.12 lbs/day	0.16 lbs/day
Project Q1 Emissions(1)	0.35 tons	0.01 tons	0.03 tons
Project Q2 Emissions(1)	0.39 tons	0.01 tons	<0.005 tons
SLO County APCD Daily Threshold	137 lbs/day	7 lbs/day	N/A
SLO County APCD Q1 Threshold	2.5 tons	0.13 tons	2.5 tons
SLO County APCD Q2 Threshold	6.3 tons	0.32 tons	N/A
Thresholds Exceeded?	No	No	No

1. The project's potential construction emissions were modeled using CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.

(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential dwelling units. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are residences located less than 1,000 feet from the area of disturbance. Construction activities may temporarily expose sensitive receptors to construction-related pollutants.

Construction contractors must comply with state laws regarding diesel engine idling. These regulations apply to diesel-powered construction vehicles and equipment used for the project and would help minimize the potential for exposure to nearby sensitive receptors. The regulations include a five-minute idling restriction

and the requirement to post signs in designated queuing areas and job sites to remind drivers and operators of the idling limit.

Construction activities may generate fugitive dust. Implementation of the APCD standard dust control measures would ensure potential effects to sensitive receptors are reduced to less than significant.

APCD concerns regarding lead-based paint would be triggered by project construction if sandblasting or heat gun methods are used to remove lead-based paint from bridge railings. APCD concerns regarding ACM would be triggered by removal of ACM in pipe wrapping attached to the bridge. APCD requirements regarding appropriate dust control measures, reporting requirements for lead-based paint removal, and appropriate handling and disposal for ACM, would ensure potential effects to sensitive receptors are less than significant.

Based on close proximity of construction areas to sensitive receptors, in addition to the state-required diesel idling requirements, the County will implement additional requirements to minimize impacts to nearby sensitive receptors to the extent feasible. These include locating staging and queuing areas for construction vehicles at least 150- feet away from nearby residences/other receptors to the extent feasible, and using alternatively fueled equipment to the maximum extent practicable.

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

The project would not result in any odors beyond those typically associated with construction projects. Those odors would be short-term and limited to the immediate construction area. This potential impact is less than significant.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would not have operational effects on air emissions. The project would result in temporary construction-related air quality impacts, but the maximum daily and quarterly construction emissions estimated using the current version of CalEEMod would be well below the APCD pollutant thresholds. Close proximity to residences triggers potential air quality concerns for sensitive receptors. Project construction would be subject to standard diesel idling restrictions codified in state law, and standard mitigation measures would be implemented to address the potential for adverse effects to sensitive receptors, including more stringent diesel idling measures, dust control measures (as provided in the APCD CEQA Handbook, APCD 2023), and APCD notification and permitting requirements regarding removal of asbestos-containing bridge materials and lead-based paint. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potential air quality effects would be reduced to a less than significant level (see mitigation measures AQ-1 through AQ-6 in Appendix B).

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(f)	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

Biological Assessments (BA) were prepared for the project to address federally listed species managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (SWCA 2024a) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (SWCA 2024b). The BAs

describe vegetation communities, special-status species of plants and wildlife, migratory birds, and jurisdictional areas potentially impacted by the project. This information was supplemented with site visits and a literature review, including generating a list of special-status species within a 5-mile radius of the site in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB 2/20/2024).

Habitat Types

The project site supports coast live oak woodland, arroyo willow thicket, poison oak scrub, and agricultural fields and orchards. Arroyo Grande Creek flows through the project area, providing unvegetated creek channel habitat. Developed land includes the existing bridge and roads, and residential development. Ruderal and disturbed lands generally border paved areas in County ROW.

The creek channel in the project area is incised and bordered by steep slopes with bedrock outcrops. Channel substrate consists of poorly sorted silt, sand, and gravel, with boulders dislodged from the adjacent bedrock. The Creek is considered perennial but the project site may experience dry conditions during the summer months.

Coast live oak comprises the dominant vegetation community type in the project vicinity, with an understory community of California sagebrush, poison oak, sticky monkeyflower, and non-native annual grasses.

Arroyo willow thickets dominate the riparian tree canopy, but oaks, box elder, and western sycamore also occur in the riparian zone. The riparian community understory includes poison oak, California blackberry, California coffeeberry and blue elderberry.

Given surrounding developed land uses, the creek and riparian zone provide important wildlife movement, shelter, and foraging habitat.

Ruderal lands are dominated by non-native invasive species such as thistles, poison hemlock, and annual grasses.

Special-Status Species

Based on a California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) search, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPAC) species list for the project site, and literature review, several special-status plant species have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the project: marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola),* Pismo clarkia *(Clarkia speciosa ssp. Immaculata),* mesa horkelia *(Horkelia cuneata var. puberula), and* chaparral ragwort *(Senecio aphanactis).*

Marsh sandwort was included because the project area may provide marginally suitable habitat. However, this species generally grows in marshes with dense mats of reeds and sedges, which do not occur in the heavily incised channel reach in the project area. Pismo clarkia has documented occurrence roughly 0.4 mile northwest of the project area in Gaviota fine sandy loam, a sandy soil type that does not occur in the project area. Mesa horkelia and chaparral ragwort may occur in woodland and coastal scrub sites; the project area is considered marginally suitable habitat and is highly disturbed, resulting in a low likelihood of occurrence. None of these species were identified in the project area during appropriately timed blooming periods. The remaining special-status plant species identified by the literature search occur in specific habitats that are not present in the project area, and were not identified during field surveys.

Based on the CNDDB and IPAC species lists, several special-status animal species have the potential to occur in the vicinity, including South-Central Coast (SCC) Distinct Population Segment (DPS) steelhead *(Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus pop. 9),* California red-legged frog *(*CRLF; *Rana draytonii),* white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii Extimus*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), loggerhead

shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*), coast range newt (*Taricha torosa*), coast horned lizard *(Phrynosoma blainvillii*), and Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*).

Steelhead, CRLF, western pond turtle, coast range newt, and coast horned lizard have documented occurrence in Arroyo Grande Creek below Lopez Dam and could be present in the project area. For each of these species, aquatic habitat in the project area is considered marginally suitable based on the incised condition of the channel, lack of suitable spawning substrate (steelhead) and breeding and/or basking pools (CRLF and pond turtle). Riparian habitat is considered marginally suitable due to the presence of steep bedrock cliffs in the vicinity of the bridge; however, any of these species could be present on a transient aquatic basis and/or dispersing in non-channel habitats. Potential presence of these species would be addressed by the standard construction monitoring protocols for CRLF.

The project area is outside the documented range of Least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher, although they could occur on a transient basis. The project area provides marginally suitable habitat for white-tailed kite and loggerhead shrike, which have documented occurrences in less disturbed, more suitable habitat areas (in the San Luis Obispo vicinity for kite, and over 10 miles from the project area for shrike). There is no evidence of bat use of the bridge, and there are limited documented occurrences of western red bat in the County; therefore, occurrence of western red bat in the project area is considered unlikely. Potential presence of these species would be addressed by standard nesting bird surveys.

Arroyo Grande Creek channel in the project area is designated critical habitat for steelhead; there will be no temporary or permanent channel impacts for the project. Temporary construction impacts will be restored to pre-existing conditions to the extent feasible on the steep creek banks. This will include re-establishing stable slopes and vegetative cover that serve important functions for water quality conditions in the channel.

A total of 28 invasive plant species were observed in the vicinity of the project area during site surveys, including five plant species rated as "high" for invasiveness (SWCA 2024b). Site restoration plans would include revegetating disturbed areas with native species and implementing non-native, invasive species control measures using mechanical approaches.

Jurisdictional Areas and Permits

The limits of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdiction in freshwater systems are the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) or the landward limit of wetlands. The OHWM in Arroyo Grande Creek in the project area was delineated in accordance with the USACE Arid West procedures (REF; SWCA 2024a and b). No federal wetlands (i.e., three-parameter wetlands) occur in the project area. The jurisdictional boundary for California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is the riparian bank, which was delineated as the landward dripline of the riparian vegetation community (SWCA 2024a and b). The project would not have any direct temporary or permanent impacts below the OHWM. There would be temporary impacts to riparian bank for construction access (0.083 acre) and a small area of permanent bank fill (0.016 acre). Relocating the bridge abutments further from the creek would restore riparian bank areas totaling approximately 0.017 acre. These estimates are based on the 65% design plans and may change slightly with further iterations of the project design. Substantial increases in impacts are not expected to result from the final design.

Discussion

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

There is potential for adverse effects to the special-status species listed above from temporary and permanent project impacts. Construction impacts would be configured to avoid and minimize habitat impacts, and fencing would be used to prevent inadvertent construction impacts in adjacent areas. The project would result in temporary construction impacts to approximately 0.5 acre of ruderal and agricultural land, and approximately 0.05 acre each of oak woodland and willow thicket. Permanent impacts to natural habitats would be limited to a small area for the realigned road east of the bridge (approximately 0.08 acre). Temporary construction impacts would be restored to pre-existing conditions. Permanent impacts would be mitigated in accordance with the applicable permits for the project.

The new bridge foundations would be set further apart than the existing foundations, resulting in an increase in the bridge opening width and an increase in bank area bordering the channel. The restored habitat areas would be beneath the new bridge but would provide an incremental increase in wildlife habitat.

No direct temporary or permanent impacts would be required in the channel (below OHWM). Indirect impacts from construction activities would be avoided and minimized with implementation of standard best management practices, including environmentally sensitive area (ESA) fencing, sedimentation and erosion controls, and measures to prevent debris from falling into the channel during construction and bridge demolition activities.

Impacts to individuals of special-status species would be avoided and minimized through implementation of appropriate pre-construction surveys and construction monitoring. These include standard construction monitoring requirements for CRLF that would be implemented by a qualified biologist. The CRLF monitoring requirements ensure that a qualified biologist would be on-site and would be monitoring for other special-status species with potential to occur on site. Standard nesting bird surveys during the bird nesting season, generally February 1 through September 1, would address potential occurrence of special-status birds, including migratory birds, and would also document any unlikely evidence/occurrence of bat use of the area.

With incorporation of these standard species monitoring and habitat avoidance, restoration, and mitigation approaches, the project is not expected to result in substantial adverse effects to special-status species.

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

Sensitive natural communities in the project area include designated critical habitat for steelhead and riparian habitat bordering Arroyo Grande Creek. The project has been designed to avoid and minimize temporary and permanent impacts to areas below the OHWM and in the riparian community bordering the creek. No direct temporary or permanent impacts would be required in the channel (below OHWM). Indirect impacts from construction activities would be avoided and minimized with implementation of standard best management practices, including environmentally sensitive are (ESA) fencing, sedimentation and erosion controls, and measures to prevent debris from falling into the channel during construction and bridge demolition activities.

Temporary construction impacts to riparian bank would be restored to pre-existing conditions to the extent feasible. Temporary construction impacts to native oak trees would be reduced if feasible based on a pre-construction review of construction access and staging areas with the contractor. Permanent impacts to

native oak woodland would be mitigated by planting replacement trees in accordance with the County's standard practice. Replacement trees would be located in County right-of-way in the project area or in similar settings in the general vicinity, with the goal of replacing the existing tree functions as close to the project area as feasible.

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

There are no state or federally protected wetlands in the project area. The project would not have hydrologic effects in upstream or downstream areas that may support wetlands. Therefore, the project would not have any effect on state or federally protected wetlands.

(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No direct temporary or permanent impacts would be required in the channel (below OHWM) and thus there is no potential to substantially interfere with native resident and migratory aquatic species. The project area does not provide suitable nursery areas for aquatic species. The project would not alter channel hydrology and therefore would not affect the condition of upstream or downstream nursery areas. Construction disturbance would interfere with use of the creek corridor by non-aquatic species on a temporary basis. Standard construction measures would limit the extent of the construction disturbance and restoration of temporarily disturbed areas would restore the pre-existing functions.

Nesting bird activity could occur in vegetation communities in the project area during the nesting season (generally February 1 through September 1). Impacts to nesting birds would be avoided by removing vegetation outside the bird nesting season if feasible, by conducting pre-construction surveys of vegetation communities in the vicinity during the appropriate nesting seasons, and using appropriate measures to avoid impacts to active nests during construction.

The project is expected to improve the condition of the bridged area as a wildlife corridor by widening the bridge abutments; this is expected to result in an incremental improvement in undercrossing conditions compared to existing conditions for small terrestrial wildlife that may use the river corridor. The wider bridge foundations should expose small areas of relatively flat terrain beneath the bridge (approximately 13-foot setback on the west side of the bridge and 35-foot setback on the east side) compared to the steep outcrops that currently predominate the slopes next to the creek.

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

The project would not conflict with any local policy or ordinance protecting biological resources such as trees. Native oak trees that are removed for the project would be replaced in accordance with County practice. A pre-construction review of construction access and staging areas would be conducted with the contractor to minimize impacts to native oak trees to the maximum extent possible.

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

There are no Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) or other conservation plans directly applicable to the project. Arroyo Grande Creek is the subject of an HCP currently being developed for the Lopez Water Project. The project would not alter high-value steelhead habitat, would not impede fish passage, and would not interfere

with any future channel enhancement activities that could be developed for Arroyo Grande Creek as part of the HCP.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project site is generally a disturbed, ruderal environmental due to the surrounding land uses and roadways in the project vicinity. Oak woodland and arroyo willow habitats border Arroyo Grande Creek, providing a narrow corridor of habitat for wildlife. Arroyo Grande Creek is designated critical habitat for steelhead, and has documented occurrence of special-status species in other locations. The creek channel in the project area is deeply incised and bordered by steep slopes with bedrock outcrops. Project impacts have been reduced to avoid and minimize impacts to the creek channel and riparian habitats. The project would not require any permanent impacts below the OHWM. Permanent impacts to riparian and oak woodland communities are limited to a small area of road relocation to improve safety. Temporary construction impacts to approximately 0.5 acre would be restored to pre-existing conditions, including stable slopes and native vegetative cover.

Standard mitigation measures would be implemented during construction to protect sensitive habitats, special-status species, and water quality. These include measures such as conducting surveys before and during construction by a qualified biologist; delineating environmentally sensitive areas beyond the approved project impact area as no-disturbance zones; implementing standard construction practices pertaining to sedimentation and erosion controls, equipment refueling and maintenance, spill response, trash management, and having a qualified biologist monitor construction activities to ensure compliance with all environmental measures.

Implementation of these mitigation measures (see Exhibit B Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-19) would reduce potential adverse effects to Biological Resources to a less than significant level.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The following inventories were examined for cultural resources: historic topographic maps and aerial photographs, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, California Office of Historic Preservation Historic Property Directory and Determinations of Eligibility, and Native American Sacred Lands Files. A records search of the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC) was conducted on July 13, 2021. The records search covered a one-half mile radius around the project area and included archaeological and historical resources, locations and citations for previous cultural resources studies, as well as a review of the State Office of Historic Preservation's historic properties directory. Twenty previously conducted cultural resource surveys were identified with a 1/2-mile buffer of the project area, of which one partially overlapped with the project area. The CCIC records search indicated that no previously identified cultural resources are within the project area. Two previously identified archaeological resources were identified within 0.5-mile of the project area.

No historical buildings, structures or sites listed in the California Register of Historical Resources are located in or near the project area. The current Huasna Road Bridge was previously listed in the Caltrans Historic Bridge Inventory as a Category 5 bridge, which means not eligible for listing in the NHRP. Two architectural/built environment resources in the project area were evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places: 2000 Huasna Road, private parcels with structures associated with the Harris Farm, and 2009 Huasna Road, two single-family residences and a barn. These were determined to be ineligible for listing, and by letter dated February 20, 2024, the State Historic Preservation Office concurred with that determination.

An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) (SWCA 2023) was completed for the project. The cultural resource investigations included all areas of potential project effects. Cultural resource investigations in support of this project also included consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission regarding proximity of any designated sacred lands (September 2, 2021), outreach to Native American groups and/or individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area (February 3, 2022), review of previously conducted studies in the vicinity, and a site-specific field survey.

Discussion

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

There are no historical resources listed in or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (which can include resources such as buildings, structures, districts, or sites) in the project impact area. This includes the bridge itself, which was determined by Caltrans not to be an eligible resource, and existing residential buildings and farm structures near the project site. Therefore, the project would have no effect on the historical resources.

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

Based on past site disturbance and lack of identified archaeological resources, the project is not expected to cause an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. Because of the archaeological sensitivity of lands bordering Arroyo Grande Creek, construction monitoring would be conducted during ground disturbance.

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

As described in (b), there is low likelihood that the project would disturb cultural resources. However, due to the archaeological sensitivity of the area, it is appropriate to include mitigation measures requiring construction monitoring and measures to be followed in the event construction activities result in the discovery of cultural resources.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Because of past site disturbances, there is low likelihood of encountering archaeological resources during project construction. Nonetheless, the creek corridor is generally considered sensitive for archaeological resources and it is appropriate to include mitigation measures that require pre-construction cultural resources training for construction crews, construction monitoring during initial earth disturbance in potentially sensitive areas, and that prescribe actions to be taken in the event previously unanticipated resources are discovered during construction. As requested by the Salinan Tribe, ground disturbing activities would be monitored by an archaeologist and a tribal representative (see Tribal Cultural Resources). With the inclusion of these mitigation measures, potential adverse impacts to cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant level (see Exhibit B mitigation measures CR-1 through CR-4).

VI. ENERGY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Energy considerations under CEQA are intended to evaluate projects with respect to the goals of decreasing energy consumption and reliance on fossil fuels, and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources (CEQA Guidelines Appendix F). Relevant factors for consideration can include energy consumption required for the project, compliance with energy standards, and effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies, electricity demand, and transportation energy requirements.

Discussion

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

From an operational perspective, the project would not increase the capacity of the bridge or any regional roads. By including wider shoulders, the project would increase safety for pedestrian and bicycle travel over the bridge, which could encourage non-fossil-fuel based modes of local transportation that would reduce fossil fuel consumption.

Consideration of the project's energy requirements and energy use efficiencies primarily pertain to construction-generated vehicle and equipment consumption. Construction vehicle emissions have been evaluated for the project as part of the evaluation described in the Air Quality section, and would be designed and managed to avoid wasteful or unnecessary consumption of fuel that would contribute to air emissions. The temporary construction detour has been configured along the shortest possible alignment to avoid unnecessary increases in vehicle commutes. Therefore, the project is not expected to contribute to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of fossil fuels.

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

The County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element (2010) outlines measures to achieve the County's energy efficiency goals. They pertain to sustainable energy supply, building efficiency and conservation practices, waste reduction, and increased use of renewable energy resources. These County goals are not directly relevant to the project.

However, as discussed in the Air Quality section, the County APCD's Clean Air Plan includes approaches for controlling transportation-related air emissions. The project is consistent with the Plan goal of increasing opportunities and convenience for bicycling and walking as a means of reducing vehicle traffic. The project would increase safety for bicycling and pedestrian alternatives to vehicle transit for local travel and is therefore consistent with the Clean Air Plan.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is not expected to result in significant impacts to energy resources. The project is consistent with the goals in the Clean Air Plan to encourage increased bicycle and pedestrian transportation modes and may have a beneficial effect by reducing vehicle-related energy consumption. The Air Quality section addresses construction-related consumption of fossil fuels and recommends project-specific mitigation measures that may avoid wasteful or unnecessary fuel consumption. No additional mitigation measures pertaining to energy use are required.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The entire County is mapped as a seismically active area based on the USGS Seismic Design Standards. The project site is not near the Alquist-Prolio Fault zone, but there are mapped capable and potentially capable faults in relatively close proximity to the project site, including to the east along Huasna Road and to the north along Lopez Drive.

Soil types in the project area include Tugunga loamy sand (0 to 2 percent slopes (occurs on both sides of the creek), Gaviota fine sandy loam (15 to 50 percent slopes) (occurs along the hillside northwest of Huasna Road), and Corducci and Typic Xerofluvents (0 to 5 percent slopes), occasionally flooded (occur in the creek banks) (SWCA 2024a and b). Additional geotechnical studies were conducted by Yeh and Associates. These results are also included below, but they are not shown in Figure 5.

The project site is mapped as having moderate soil liquefaction risk and low landslide risk; the west side of Lopez Drive in the vicinity has moderate landslide risk.

The geological units in the project area include latest Pleistocene to Holocene alluvium mapped east of Arroyo Grande Creek, and the Pismo Formation mapped west of the creek. Quaternary formations include Pleistocene (older) and Holocene-aged (younger) rocks and can have sensitivity for fossils particularly in older units. Based on the geotechnical survey for the project, the Quaternary units consist of unconsolidated sediments. The Pismo Formation has high sensitivity for paleontological resources. It is a marine shale with thickly bedded sandstone and conglomerate layers. Numerous fossils have been recovered in the Pismo Formation within the County, including large mammals and sea creatures. Based on the geotechnical survey and the design plans, the Pismo Formation is present at depth on both sides of the creek at depths that will be impacted by the project.

Discussion

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

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

(a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

(a-iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

(a-iv) Landslides?

In regard to (a-i to iv), the project purpose is to ensure that the Huasna Road Bridge meets current design standards, including seismic-related potential for bridge failure and soil liquefaction, settlement, and

landslides resulting from seismically produced ground shaking. This is part of the basic project purpose and is being informed by site-specific geotechnical data and a detailed engineering design that ensures conformance with State and Federal seismic design standards. Therefore, the project is not expected to have a risk of loss, injury, death or other adverse effects related to seismic hazards.

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

The project would result in the temporary disturbance of up to approximately an acre and would be required to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit, which requires preparation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) or water pollution control plan (WPCP). The plan would describe how sedimentation and erosion controls would be used during construction to prevent adverse effects to adjacent resource areas.

The site has steep slopes and bedrock outcrops bordering Arroyo Grande Creek that would require proper application of erosion controls and may warrant more rigorous monitoring and maintenance compared to flatter sites. There are no other unique conditions or constraints that would require non-standard approaches to sedimentation and erosion controls.

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

See response in (a); the primary purpose of the project is to ensure that the bridge is stable under potential seismic risks, including liquefaction collapse. Site-specific geotechnical information would be used in the project design to ensure the bridge and surrounding soils are stable. The project would not disturb the steep, potentially erodible slopes along the west side of Lopez Drive.

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

The mapped soil units at the site have low erodibility and low shrink-swell potential. Substantial portions of the project area have historic fill, which is also presumed to have low shrink-swell potential as it was placed for construction of Huasna Road and the existing bridge.

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

Not applicable; the project does not include installation of new septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems.

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

The project would impact geologic units that have paleontological sensitivity. Based on the engineering drawings, the project would impact the Pismo Formation at depth for cast-in-drilled-hole pilings to support the new bridge foundations and a soldier-pile retaining wall on the steep slope on the west side of the bridge. Additionally, removal of the western bridge foundation has the potential to expose and/or disturb the Pismo Formation.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would be designed to meet current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards, which have been developed to establish the minimum requirements necessary

for road design to safeguard the public health, safety and general welfare through structural strength, stability, access, and other standards. Compliance with AASHTO, Caltrans, and other applicable standards would ensure that risks to people and structures, including those related to seismic hazards and unstable soil conditions, have been properly safeguarded against. Therefore, potential impacts related to geological hazards are considered less than significant.

Standard construction measures would be implemented to control sedimentation and erosion (see Exhibit B Mitigation Measures BR-13 and 14, BR-17(11), and GS-1). These measures would reduce potential impacts from soil erosion to a less than significant level.

The project would disturb geological units with paleontological sensitivity. As proposed, project disturbance that would impact the sensitive geologic unit would be limited to CIDH drilling of discrete support piles for the new bridge foundations and retaining wall and removal of the existing poured concrete bridge abutment. Mitigation Measure GS-2 (Exhibit B) requires preparation of a paleontological resources monitoring plan to identify areas where monitoring would be performed and actions to be taken if paleontological resources are discovered during construction. Implementation of this mitigation measure would ensure potential impacts to paleontological resources are less than significant.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions are broadly recognized as contributing to an increase in the earth's average surface temperature and long-term changes in climate. Potential GHG emissions associated with the project would be limited to burning fossil fuels from construction vehicles and equipment.

The passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006), recognized the need to reduce GHG emissions and set the GHG reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law codifies the statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. This is to be accomplished by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions.

In January 2021, the APCD released interim Greenhouse Gas Guidance (APCD 2021). The interim guidance replaces previous thresholds of significance for GHG emissions that were based on a 2020 planning horizon. Current recommended options for CEQA consideration of GHG emissions include: (a) consistency with a

qualified climate action plan; (b) no net increase; and (c) lead-agency-adopted defensible CEQA GHG emissions thresholds. Generally, these approaches pertain to new commercial and residential development and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which are not relevant for the project.

The CalEEMod construction emissions estimates described in the Air Quality section included greenhouse gases. As described in the APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2023), daily and quarterly construction emissions were amortized over a 30-year life of the project to get yearly project contributions to greenhouse gases. Project emissions would be substantially lower than the APCD recommended threshold of 930 tons/year.

Discussion

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

As described in the Air Quality section, a project referral was submitted to the APCD and their comments were incorporated into the evaluations in the Air Quality Section. The project is consistent with the Climate Action Plan, and will not result in new operational emissions or an increase in vehicle miles traveled. The proposed construction approach would require a temporary detour for traffic on Cecchetti Road for approximately 7 months of the 9-month construction duration. Based on the generally rural character of use of Huasna Road, this is not expected to materially increase vehicle emissions contribution to GHGs. Construction detour mileage estimates are not one of the inputs for CalEEMod. However, an informal analysis was done in CalEEMod by increasing the construction commute mileage to include the maximum anticipated local vehicle traffic increases attributable to the detour. Results indicated that the project-related GHG emissions remained below the APCD thresholds.

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

As described in the Air Quality section, the project is consistent with the Climate Action Plan, will not result in new operational emissions or an increase in vehicle miles traveled, and will better serve alternative modes of transportation.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would not generate operational emissions or increase VMT, either of which would contribute to GHG emissions. Construction emissions would be comparable to typical construction projects and for a temporary duration, and CalEEMod emissions estimates (including with the addition of estimates of construction detour mileage increases for local travel) are well below the APCD annual greenhouse gas emissions threshold. As described in Section III, Air Quality, mitigation measures pertaining to GHG precursors, including equipment and generator emissions and diesel idling, would be required (e.g., Exhibit B Mitigation Measures AQ-4 and AQ-5). No additional mitigation measures specific to GHG emissions are required.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Results of the Initial Site Assessment and Preliminary Site Investigation for the project (WRCEO 2022) identified the following potentially hazardous materials in the project area: treated wood in supports for guardrails, signs, and utility poles; asbestos containing materials (ACM) detected in pipe wrapping attached to the bridge; and lead-based paint in bridge railings.

Review of the Envirostor and County databases (2024) for hazards and hazardous materials indicate that the closest mapped RWQCB cleanup sites and/or underground storage tanks are at least two miles southwest of the project site in urbanized areas in Arroyo Grande.

Aerially deposited lead is common in surface soils along roadways because of historical use of leaded gasoline. Based on a survey in the project area, soil lead concentrations in the vicinity of the project would be classified as non-hazardous waste, suitable for reuse or disposal, and not subject to hazardous waste handling and disposal requirements. Additionally, soil lead concentrations in the project area would not require restricted use or management in accordance with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Department of Toxic Substances Control Soil Management Agreement for Aerially Deposited Lead (2016).

The site is not in close proximity to ultramafic rock outcrops known to contain naturally occurring asbestos (NOA). Additionally, soil samples from the proposed abutment and bent locations were analyzed for naturally occurring asbestos for appropriate handling, reuse, and disposal considerations. No NOA was detected in any sample.

Soils within the project area were sampled and analyzed for petroleum hydrocarbons. Laboratory results indicate that shallow soils in two out of eight boring locations in the project area may contain residual low levels of TPHmo (total petroleum hydrocarbons as motor oil). Concentrations were well below regulatory levels of concern for residential or industrial exposures (ISA 2021).

The project is adjacent to a high Fire Hazard Severity Zone along the west side of Lopez Drive, and a moderate fire severity zone lies roughly one-half mile east of the bridge along Huasna Road. The project site is in a local fire response responsibility zone, and borders California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) responsibility areas along the west side of Lopez Drive and roughly 0.5 mile east on Huasna Road. The closest CalFire station is the Pismo Beach Station located approximately 5.3 miles from the project site; the mapped response time is 5 to 10 minutes for Huasna Road and Branch Mill near the project site, and 10 to 15 minutes further northeast.

The project site is in the dam inundation zone for Lopez Dam, approximately 7 miles upstream. The project site is outside the airport review areas, and farther than two miles from the San Luis Obispo County Airport to the north and the Oceano County Airport to the west.

Discussion

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

The project is a bridge replacement and would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

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

Construction activities have the potential to introduce hazardous materials into the area in the form of fuel in construction vehicles and equipment. Potential for spills or releases would be prevented with standard

conditions regarding equipment and vehicle refueling and maintenance, and appropriate spill response preparedness.

As described in Section III, Air Quality, removal of asbestos-containing materials and certain methods of removal of lead-based paint in bridge materials would require advance coordination with the APCD. The contractor would be required to prepare an Asbestos Work Plan for bridge demolition and coordinate with APCD for its approval. If sandblasting or heat gun removal would be used to remove lead-based paint, the contractor would be required to provide a Lead Work Plan to APCD for approval at least ten work days before the start of demolition. The contractor would be responsible for determining appropriate handling and disposal for any potentially hazardous materials as a result of bridge demolition.

Appropriate measures would be taken during bridge demolition to prevent bridge material from falling into the creek. This would include sheeting or other containment devices to capture any falling debris during demolition.

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

The project site is not within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The closest school is approximately 1.4 miles east-northeast of the project site on School Road. The project is not expected to result in hazardous emissions and would not use any acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste.

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

The project is not at or near a hazardous materials storage or cleanup site.

(e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

The project is not in an airport review area or within two miles of a public use airport.

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

The project site is not in an area subject to an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project site is in the dam failure inundation zone for Lopez Dam. The County has a public alert system, and provides the public with safety guidance, including a map of potential evacuation routes. If a dam emergency were to occur during construction, the project detour may need to be used as part of evacuation routes. Notification of the project detour, duration, and status will be provided to affected landowners as part of the Public Outreach Plan for the project.

Construction is expected to take approximately nine months and the traffic detour is expected to be in place approximately seven months. The detour will be a maximum of 3.2 miles and about 10 minutes increased travel times for the farthest displaced travelers (those seeking to travel to/from properties immediately east of the bridge). The detour would not impede emergency access but would increase travel distances and response times by up to 3.2 miles and about 10 minutes. Construction notifications would be provided to fire departments, emergency responders, schools, transit companies, and local residents in accordance with the project Public Outreach Plan to ensure that project construction would not result in undue delays for

emergency situations. CalFire provided comments based on early coordination on the project, indicating that the proposed bridge would meet applicable safety standards and that they do not have concerns with the temporary construction detour because there are other County roads that can be used.

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

As described in (f), the project would require a temporary construction detour that would not interfere with the ability to travel but may increase travel times between Huasna Road, Branch Mill Road, and Lopez Drive by up to 10 minutes. Construction detour notifications would be provided to local and state fire responders, both of which have responsibilities in the project vicinity. As stated in (f), CalFire provided comments based on early coordination on the project, indicating that they do not have concerns with the temporary construction detour because there are other County roads that can be used.

Standard construction measures to avoid parking vehicles in areas of dry vegetation would be implemented to reduce the potential for igniting brush fires (Exhibit B mitigation measure HZ-2).

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project's potential to have adverse effects due to presence and/or handling of hazardous materials would be limited to construction-related fuels leaks and spills, for which the contractor would be required to develop and implement an appropriate hazardous materials spill containment and response plan (Exhibit B Mitigation Measure BR-5). Removal of potentially hazardous materials, including asbestos-containing material, lead-based paint, hydrocarbon in soils, and other materials would be managed by the contractor in accordance with appropriate plans for handling and disposal, including coordination with APCD if required (Exhibit B Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, AQ-6, HZ-1, HZ-3). Standard construction measures would be implemented to reduce risk of hazards from bridge demolition and from use of vehicles and equipment in dry vegetation (Exhibit B Mitigation Measures BR-19 and HZ-2). With these mitigation measures, project impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level. Construction notifications pursuant to the project's Public Outreach Plan would be provided to all local entities that could be potentially adversely affected by any confusion regarding the construction detour. This will minimize potential for safety risks due to emergency situations and is therefore included as a mitigation measure (Exhibit B Mitigation Measure HZ-4). No additional mitigation measures are necessary.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☒	☐	☐
	(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

Surface Waters. Surface waters at the site consist of Arroyo Grande Creek, which receives flows from Lopez Reservoir formed by Lopez Dam approximately 7 miles upstream from the project site. Arroyo Grande Creek and multiple other tributaries contribute flow to Lopez Reservoir. Arroyo Grande Creek downstream of the project site is joined by Tar Springs and Los Berros Creeks before discharging to the ocean, approximately 8 miles downstream.

Creek flows can be characterized by data from a U.S. Geological Survey stream gauge approximately 1.6 miles downstream from the project site. Hydraulic modeling has been conducted to confirm that the project will meet State and Federal design recomendations for bridges (i.e., the new bridge must pass the 50-year design flood with sufficient freeboard to include anticipated drift and debris, or the 100-year base flood, whichever is greater). The hydraulic evaluation also considered potential scour of the new bridge foundations, which was determined not to be a concern because they will be set back from the channel.

Arroyo Grande Creek downstream from Lopez Dam is listed as an impaired surface waters on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list of impaired and threatened waters (2022) for the following constituents: benthic community effects, cadmium, DDE, *Escherichia coli*, molybdenum, nickel, nitrate, pH, selenium, and toxicity. The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) status is listed as "still required," which means that EPA requires the development and approval of TMDLs to address the listed impairments.

For consideration of potential stormwater effects on surface water quality, the existing bridge and adjacent road sections lack up-to-date stormwater features.

Flood Hazard Zones. The project site is in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapped 100-year flood zone with a base flood elevation at the project site of approximately 180 feet (NAVD88). The FEMA mapped 100-year floodplain at the project site is approximately 140 feet wide at the bridge and immediately upstream where the channel is incised and confined by steep banks. The floodplain widens immediately downstream.

Groundwater. The project site is the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin; Arroyo Grande Creek has been designated a subbasin and extends from Lopez Dam generally to Highway 101, also including approximately three miles of Tar Springs Creek. From the perspective of the State Division of Water Resources, the Arroyo Grande Subbasin has been designated a very low priority basin, not subject to the requirement to develop a sustainable groundwater management plan. However, the County of San Luis Obispo and the City of Arroyo Grande jointly developed plan for the sustainable management of the subbasin to provide a better overall understanding of hydrogeologic processes such as surface water and groundwater interconnections.

Discussion

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

From the list of established water quality impairments in Arroyo Grande Creek, potential project-related effects would be limited to metals in stormwater runoff. Stormwater treatment would prevent direct runoff to the creek and provide pollutant removal via infiltration in vegetated drainage swales. This is expected to prevent the project from contributing to adverse water quality conditions in the creek. The project design would comply with the County's stormwater requirements, and construction activities would comply with the stormwater general permit, including implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Water Pollution Control Plan (WPCP). As such, the project would improve stormwater treatment compared to existing conditions. Construction impacts on water quality would be controlled by use of standard BMPs to prevent erosion and transport of contaminants to the creek.

The construction stormwater plan would include spill response procedures for hazardous materials spills, and conditions regarding equipment and vehicle fueling and maintenance to prevent inadvertent releases that could adversely impact surface waters and groundwater. As such, the project is not expected to degrade groundwater quality.

In regard to the other regional water quality issues of concern, the project would not generate sources of organic waste or use fertilizers that would impact nutrient and bacterial concentrations in the adjacent surface waters.

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

The project would not rely on groundwater supplies and would not alter surface flow conditions in the creek and therefore would not interfere with groundwater conditions or recharge.

(c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

(c-i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Construction activities have the potential to cause erosion and sedimentation from disturbed areas. Appropriate sedimentation and erosion controls would be used to ensure there is no substantial erosion or siltation. Operational impacts would be reduced compared to current conditions by incorporation of stormwater controls designed to current standards.

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

(c-iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

The project would replace an existing bridge and road approaches with a slightly realigned bridge and road approaches. The project is not expected to result in a material increase in the amount of impervious surface. As described in (a), appropriate stormwater management features would be incorporated into the project design to prevent direct discharges of stormwater runoff from the road into the adjacent surface waters. The stormwater system would be appropriately sized to accommodate anticipated runoff in a manner that would prevent an increase of polluted runoff.

Construction runoff would be managed and controlled with standard BMPs to prevent the discharge of pollutants from the site during construction, including appropriate erosion control devices, dust control measures, fuel storage and handling requirements, and measures to cover and contain stockpiled materials.

(c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

No fill in the 100-year floodplain would be required for the project. The new bridge abutments will be further from the channel than the existing abutments, and above the 100-year flood elevation. Regrading to remove the existing abutments and provide stable contours around the proposed abutments would include incremental removal of material below the base flood elevation. The new bridge would be designed to accommodate the base flood elevation with at least one foot of freeboard and therefore would not impede or redirect flood flows.

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

The project would not require any temporary or permanent structures or fill in the 100-year floodplain (i.e., below the base flood elevation). Temporary construction impacts for grading around the new bridge abutments would be stabilized prior to the rainy season. All construction-related equipment and debris would

be removed upon completion of construction and prior to the rainy season to prevent any potential risk of pollution during high flow events in the creek.

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

Compliance of the project with County stormwater requirements to ensure no adverse effects to water quality are described in (a). The project would not affect groundwater conditions and therefore would not conflict or obstruct management of the nearby groundwater resource.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is in direct proximity to surface waters that support a variety of sensitive habitats (see Biological Resources section) and that have been impaired over time from a variety of stressors and surrounding land uses. The project is also in the 100-year floodplain with potential for significant effects on flood storage and flood water conveyance. Operational impacts of the project would be minimized by designing the project to maintain or improve the existing flood capacity and conveyance conditions at the bridge, and to treat stormwater runoff prior to discharge to adjacent surface waters. The potential for significant construction-related impacts would be mitigated with use of sedimentation and erosion controls as well as BMPs for good housekeeping, waste management and materials management to prevent hazardous materials or waste and debris from getting into the waterway. These mitigation measures would ensure impacts to water quality and hydrology are less than significant (e.g., Exhibit B mitigation measures BR-1, BR-5, BR-6, BR-10, BR-11, BR-12, BR-13, BR-14, BR-19, GS-1, HZ-1, and HZ-3). No additional mitigation measures pertaining to hydrology and water quality are necessary.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Surrounding land uses consist of residential development, agriculture, and undeveloped land. The project was reviewed for consistency with policy and/or regulatory documents relating to the environment and appropriate land use. Referrals were sent to outside agencies to review for policy consistencies (e.g., CalFire for Fire Code, APCD for Clean Air Plan).

The project is in the South County/San Luis Bay Inland South Planning Area, which is addressed by the County Inland Area Plan. The South County Area Plan does not have specific policies for road or bridge projects. Standard Caltrans and County policies and BMPs would apply to the project. Mitigation measures to ensure avoidance and minimization of impacts in various resource sections of this MND comply with the standards in the County General Plan and other applicable plans (e.g., the County Stormwater Management Program described in the Hydrology and Water Quality section). The project is not in the coastal zone and therefore would not require approval from the California Coastal Commission and/or the Local Coastal Program.

Discussion

(a) Physically divide an established community?

The project would not physically divide an established community and would not alter existing transportation routes between communities. The project would help maintain an established, safe road between Lopez Drive and land uses to the east.

(b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The project is compatible with the surrounding uses and would improve the safety of the bridge for the benefit of travelers and local agricultural uses. The project was found to be consistent with the applicable plans (listed in Exhibit A). The project would not conflict with the plans or policies of any of the referral agencies, with the incorporation of the air quality conditions recommended by the APCD and described in the Air Quality section (Exhibit B, mitigation measures AQ-1 through AQ-6).

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would have no effect on land use and planning and would be consistent with applicable plans and programs with incorporation of the mitigation measures from other sections of the MND cited above. No additional mitigation measures are required.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

There are no active mines, including active or past sand and gravel pits, within one mile of the project site. The closest such mines in the Arroyo Grande Creek system are located more than 5 miles downstream from the project site, in the coastal dune system.

Discussion

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

The project would impact primarily disturbed lands within the County right-of-way and is not located within or near any known mineral resources.

(b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

The project is not located within or near any delineated mineral resource recovery sites and would not affect access to any active recovery sites.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would not impact mineral resources and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XIII. NOISE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:					
(a)	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

As described in the Air Quality section, the project is within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors including private residences. Lopez Drive is mapped as a 70-dB traffic zone in the County's noise contour maps. The Huasna Road Bridge and adjoining paved lanes are within the 60-dB traffic zone up to approximately 130 feet east of Lopez Drive, which includes the western portion of the project area.

The project is not in the vicinity of an airport plan area or a private airfield.

Discussion

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

The County noise standards (Title 22 at 22.10.120) provide an exception for construction noise sources provided such activities are limited to Monday through Friday from seven a.m. through nine p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from eight a.m. to five p.m. While County projects are not bound by the standards, the County strives to maintain consistency with them, and would require the contractor to follow them to the maximum extent possible. From an operational perspective, the project would replace an existing bridge and approach lanes in generally the same location and orientation and would not increase or alter existing use of the road, so is not expected to increase operational noise levels associated with the project area.

(b) *Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project site include residences, including three directly adjoining the project site. The closest school (Branch Elementary) is approximately one mile east of the project site and the Paulding Middle School is approximately 2 miles west-southwest; neither school is expected to be affected by construction-related noise.

The project would generate temporary construction noise for the duration of construction, which is expected to be approximately 9 months. Construction noise would be temporary in nature and would normally be limited to daylight hours. There is potential on construction jobs of this nature for occasional tasks to extend into nighttime hours. The public would be notified in advance to the maximum extent feasible in the unlikely event that occasional night work would be necessary.

The loudest anticipated construction activities include cast-in-drilled-hole drilling activities to install concrete support columns for the new bridge foundations and retaining walls. This activity would be for an expected duration of approximately 2 weeks on the west side of the bridge and 3 weeks on the east side. Heavy construction equipment may generate intermittent ground-borne noise and vibration.

(c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

The project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip or a public airport.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Construction-generated noise would be temporary and intermittent, would occur in a location where road-related noise is expected, and is not anticipated to be excessive. Private residences in the vicinity may experience adverse effects for intermittent, temporary durations during construction. Daylight construction

and use of standard construction hours would be adhered to the extent feasible and construction activities would be coordinated with the adjoining landowners. No noise-related mitigation measures are required.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Land uses surrounding the project site are residential and agriculture.

Discussion

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

The project purpose is to improve the safety of the bridge. The project would not create new transportation networks or increase the capacity of Lopez Drive or Huasna Road. As such the project would not have any impact on regional population growth.

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

The project would not displace any housing.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would have no impacts on population and housing and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	☐	☐	☒	☐
	Fire protection?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	Police protection?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	Schools?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

As described in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, the project is adjacent to a high Fire Hazard Severity Zone along the west side of Lopez Drive, and a moderate fire severity zone lies roughly one-half mile east of the bridge along Huasna Road. The project site is in a local fire response responsibility zone, and borders California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) responsibility areas along the west side of Lopez Drive and roughly 0.5 mile east on Huasna Road. The closest CalFire station is the Pismo Beach Station located approximately 5.3 miles from the project site; the mapped response time is 5 to 10 minutes for Huasna Road and Branch Mill near the project site, and 10 to 15 minutes further northeast.

As an unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County, the project area is under the police protection jurisdiction of the County Sheriff from the South Station, which is located in Oceano (at 1681 Front Street, a 5-mile, approximate 11-minute drive from the project site).

There are public schools located approximately 1 mile east and 2 miles west-southwest of the project site.

The closest recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project are passive recreational uses at Biddle Park, approximately 4 miles north on Lopez Drive, and the Lopez Recreation Area, providing boating, camping, and other recreational amenities, 8 miles north on Lopez Drive.

Discussion

(a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection? Police protection? Schools? Parks? Other public facilities?

There would be no increase in population or traffic as a result of the project. The proposed project would replace an existing bridge and road without changing their function or capacity, so would not affect existing police, fire, schools or other public services. The project would not add new residents or businesses and therefore would not result in the need for expanded or new services or facilities.

Temporary construction impacts on fire and emergency response are discussed in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. A temporary construction detour would add up to 3.2 miles and about 10 minutes increased travel times for the farthest displaced travelers (those seeking to travel to/from properties immediately east of the bridge). The detour would not impede emergency access but would increase travel distances and response times by up to 3.2 miles and about 10 minutes. Construction notifications would be provided to fire departments, emergency responders, schools, transit companies, and local residents in accordance with the project Public Outreach Plan (Exhibit B Mitigation Measure HZ-5).

Operational effects of the project on public services are expected to be positive by reducing the potential for catastrophic collapse of the bridge, which if it occurred, would create a public safety disaster/hazard, potentially resulting in loss of life and property damage and eliminating one of the designated evacuation roads in the Lopez Dam Failure Inundation Zone until such time as the collapse could be repaired. The new bridge would also improve safety by providing 8-foot-wide shoulders, which would more safely accommodate use of the bridge by large agriculture equipment.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project is not expected to adversely affect public services; temporary construction detour effects on public safety would be addressed with implementation of community notifications as required by Mitigation Measure HZ-4. No additional mitigation is required.

XVI. RECREATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

As described in Section XV, Public Services, the closest recreational areas and parks in the vicinity of the project are accessed from Lopez Drive north of the project site. There are no public facilities or access points for these or other recreational resource areas on or bordering the project area. Construction activities may potentially involve intermittent, temporary delays on Lopez Drive at the Lopez Drive/Huasna Road intersection.

There are no established pedestrian or bicycle trails on Lopez Drive or Huasna Road. The proposed 8-foot-wide bridge shoulders would enhance safety for existing pedestrian and bike use of the bridge.

Discussion

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

The project would replace an existing bridge and would not result in increased use of or demand for nearby recreational facilities.

(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The project would not include recreational facilities or require construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

Conclusion/Mitigation

The project would improve the safety of travelers already using Huasna Road on foot and bicycle. The project would not otherwise have an effect on existing recreational resources, with the exception of potential temporary, intermittent delays for traffic on Lopez Drive traveling to/from established recreation areas to the north. No mitigation measures are necessary.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Senate Bill 743, which was codified into the Public Resources Code section 21099, requires communities to achieve a 15% reduction in vehicle miles traveled. This resulted in a change in the CEQA Guidelines regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. As described in the December 2018 Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is considered the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts under CEQA, replacing level of service and other similar metrics for consideration of significant environmental effects. The guidance specifies that projects that would not likely lead to a substantial or measurable increase in VMT include repairs and maintenance, including replacement, of existing transportation assets (e.g., roads and bridges) that do not add motor vehicle capacity. The guidance also specifies that projects that would add less than 110 trips per day can be considered small projects that are expected to have a less than significant impact on VMT.

Discussion

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

The project does not conflict with any program plans, ordinances, or policies addressing transportation facilities, including the City of Arroyo Grande circulation plan and the County's South County Area Plan Circulation Element.

In regard to VMT, the proposed bridge replacement is not expected to affect VMT because it is designed to improve the safety of the bridge, not add or remove capacity. Replacement of bridges is listed in Section F of the December 2018 Technical Advisory as one of the transportation project types that would not likely lead to a substantial or measurable increase in VMT, and therefore should not require an induced traffic analysis.

Construction traffic would be temporary and is not considered for purposes of project-related VMT; construction emissions for consideration of air quality and GHG emissions were included in the CalEEMod analyses described in the Air Quality section. As described in the GHG section, VMT impacts from the project collectively, including the construction detour, are expected to be less than significant.

The project is expected to have positive effects for safety for agricultural equipment, bicycles and pedestrians by adding 8-foot-wide shoulders to the bridge.

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

Section 15064.3(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states that transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant impact on transportation. The proposed project would not change transportation routes or the capacity of the existing road and would not have any effect on vehicle miles traveled or traffic volumes. Therefore, the project would be consistent with Section 15064.3(b).

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

The project would not introduce new traffic uses. The project would incrementally reduce hazards by improving line-of-sight from the Huasna Road and Lopez Drive intersection, decreasing an existing curve east of the bridge, and providing 8-foot-wide shoulders to accommodate agricultural equipment use of the bridge.

(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

The new bridge would not alter emergency access. Emergency access would be accommodated at all times during construction by a short detour; notifications would ensure emergency responders and local residents are aware of the location, status, and schedule of the detour (Exhibit B, Mitigation Measure HZ-4).

Conclusion/Mitigation

Implementation of the project would not result in significant impacts on transportation, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code 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:				

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(i)	Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii)	A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The Cultural Resources section describes the cultural resources setting for the project site. There are no historical or archaeological resources in the project area; areas along Arroyo Grande Creek may be sensitive for archaeological resources. The County coordinated with Tribal representatives pursuant to Assembly Bill 52. A representative from the Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties stated that areas bordering Arroyo Grande Creek contain known cultural sites and that unknown resources may be impacted by the project. The Salinan Tribe recommended that ground disturbing activities be monitored by a cultural resources specialist from their tribe.

Discussion

(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code 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:

(a-i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

(a-ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

As described in the Cultural Resources section, no listed historical or archaeological resources have been identified in the project impact area. Tribal consultation resulted in information being conveyed to the County about the archaeological sensitivity of the region and the recommendation that excavation activities be monitored by an archaeologist and a representative of the Salinan Tribe.

Conclusion/Mitigation

Tribal consultation affirmed the archaeological sensitivity of the area as described in the Cultural Resources section. No additional resources pertaining to Tribal Cultural Resources were identified. Therefore, the mitigation measures described in the Cultural Resources section (see Exhibit B, CR-1 through CR-4) address tribal concerns related to the project. These include requirements for training construction crews and for conducting monitoring during construction activities in archaeologically sensitive areas with the participation of the Salinan Tribe. No additional mitigation measures are required.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

There are several underground and overhead utility lines in the project area (communications, electric, gas lines). The new bridge will have provisions for utilities to be placed under, on, or over the bridge.

Discussion

(a) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The project would not require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Portable chemical toilets would be available for use by construction crews. The project would require relocation of existing utilities in near proximity to the bridge. Coordination with utility providers will be conducted to determine if relocated utilities would be placed on the bridge or span overhead, similar to the existing routing. No expansion or change in use is planned with relocation of utilities.

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

Project requirements for water would be limited to water for dust control during construction, which would be trucked to the site.

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

As described in (a), the project would not require wastewater treatment or affect the capacity of existing wastewater treatment services.

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

Project generation of solid waste would consist of construction and demolition debris, including demolition of the existing bridge and removal of pavement on the approach roads. These materials would be disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations and are not expected to be in excess of local standards or capacity.

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

See response to (d).

Conclusion/Mitigation

The County would relocate existing utilities. The project would have no significant effects on water, wastewater, or other utilities and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XX. WILDFIRE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:					
(a)	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(d)	Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

As described in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, the project is adjacent to a high Fire Hazard Severity Zone along the west side of Lopez Drive, and a moderate fire severity zone lies roughly one-half mile east of the bridge along Huasna Road. The project site is in a local fire response responsibility zone, and borders California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) responsibility areas along the west side of Lopez Drive and roughly 0.5 mile east on Huasna Road. The closest CalFire station is the Pismo Beach Station located approximately 5.3 miles from the project site; the mapped response time is 5 to 10 minutes for Huasna Road and Branch Mill near the project site, and 10 to 15 minutes further northeast.

Discussion

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

(b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

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

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

In regard to (a) through (d), impacts of the project on emergency response are discussed under Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Public Services, and Transportation.

The project would relocate an existing bridge and road approaches with no material changes that would have adverse effects related to the occurrence of, or risks posed by, wildfires. Construction BMPs regarding parking vehicles in areas with dry vegetation would minimize the risk of igniting wildfires (Exhibit B Mitigation Measure HZ-2). Notifications to emergency responders regarding the temporary construction detour would ensure that project construction does not interfere with emergency response or evacuation.

Conclusion/Mitigation

With incorporation of construction measures to reduce the risk of igniting brush fires and construction detour notification requirements (Exhibit B Mitigation Measures HZ-2 and HZ-4), the project would have no significant effects on wildfire risk and emergency response and no additional mitigation measures are necessary.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The project setting is described in terms of surrounding land uses on pages 1 through 11 of this document and from the perspective of environmental resources in each resource section of this document, including, for example, aesthetics, biological resources, and cultural resources.

Discussion

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

The project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. Incorporation of the Air Quality (AQ), Biological Resources (BR), Cultural Resources (CR), Geology (GS), and Hazards and Hazardous

Materials (HZ) mitigation measures included in Exhibit B would ensure that the project would not substantially adversely affect air or water quality, reduce the number of fish and wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plant or animal species, and/or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history. Therefore, the anticipated project-related impacts are less than significant.

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

The project does not propose a new or different use than the existing use of the bridge and approach sections along Huasna Road. The project would be located within existing County right-of-way with a small permanent easement to reduce an existing curve and improve line-of-sight east of the bridge. Operational impacts would be comparable to the current conditions in terms of traffic, aesthetics, and environmental footprint, and would be improved from the perspective of stormwater treatment. The project would not contribute to cumulative floodplain impacts and would provide an incremental improvement in flood conveyance by reducing the footprint of structures adjacent to Arroyo Grande Creek. The project would also improve safety for agricultural vehicles and pedestrian and bicycle traffic by including 8-foot-wide shoulders on the bridge. Construction-related impacts of the project would be temporary and of limited duration and scope. The project is not expected to have impacts that would be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. Therefore, project impacts, when considered together with past, on-going, and future projects in the vicinity, would not be cumulatively considerable and would not compound or increase other environmental impacts. Therefore, all project-related impacts would be less than significant.

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

The project has a substantial beneficial effect on human beings by replacing a bridge at the end of it's life cycle and could pose a safety hazard to life and property. The proposed bridge would provide a safe bridge meeting current design standards and would further increase safety for agricultural vehicles and pedestrian and bicycle traffic by incorporating wider shoulders. The project would not result in environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Direct effects on human beings would be limited to the temporary need to use a detour around the construction site with potential minor increases in travel times. The anticipated effects of the project would not substantially conflict with any adjacent land uses. Therefore, the project is not expected to have adverse effects, and is expected to have some beneficial effects, on human beings.

Conclusion/Mitigation

With the implementation of the project-specific mitigation measures, including appropriate measures listed in Exhibit B, the project would have a less than significant impact on the environment.

Exhibit A - Initial Study References and Agency Contacts

The County Public Works Department has contacted various agencies for their comments on the proposed project. With respect to the subject application, the following have been contacted (marked with an ☒) and when a response was made, it is either attached or in the application file:

Contacted	Agency	Response
☐	County Public Works Department	**Not Applicable**
☒	County Environmental Health Services	**None**
☒	County Agricultural Commissioner's Office	**None**
☐	County Airport Manager	**Not Applicable**
☐	Airport Land Use Commission	**Not Applicable**
☒	Air Pollution Control District	**In File****
☒	County Sheriff's Department	**None**
☐	Regional Water Quality Control Board	**None**
☐	CA Coastal Commission	**Not Applicable**
☒	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife	**None**
☒	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	**None**
☐	CA Department of Transportation	**Not Applicable**
☐	Community Services District	**Not Applicable**
☐	Other ____	**Not Applicable**
☒	Other NMFS; USACE	**None**

** "No comment" or "No concerns"-type responses are usually not attached

The following checked ("☒") reference materials have been used in the environmental review for the proposed project and are hereby incorporated by reference into the Initial Study. The following information is available at the County Public Works Department.

☒ Project File for the Subject Application

County Documents

☐ Coastal Plan Policies
☐ Framework for Planning (Coastal/Inland)
☒ General Plan (Inland/Coastal), includes all maps/elements; more pertinent elements:
- ☒ Agriculture Element
- ☒ Conservation & Open Space Element
- ☐ Economic Element
- ☐ Housing Element
- ☒ Noise Element
- ☒ Parks & Recreation Element/Project List
- ☐ Safety Element

☐ Land Use Ordinance (Inland/Coastal)
☐ Building and Construction Ordinance
☐ Public Facilities Fee Ordinance
☐ Real Property Division Ordinance
☐ Affordable Housing Fund
☐ Airport Land Use Plan
☐ Energy Wise Plan
☒ SLO Area Plan/San Luis Bay Inland SA
☐ Design Plan
☐ Specific Plan
☐ Annual Resource Summary Report
☒ South County Circulation Study

Other Documents

☒ Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook
☐ Regional Transportation Plan
☐ Uniform Fire Code
☒ Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)
☒ Archaeological Resources Map
☐ Area of Critical Concerns Map
☐ Special Biological Importance Map
☒ CA Natural Species Diversity Database
☒ Fire Hazard Severity Map
☒ Flood Hazard Maps
☒ Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for SLO County
☒ GIS mapping layers (e.g., habitat, streams, contours, etc.)
☒ Other See reference list below.

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The following project-specific information and/or reference materials have been considered as a part of the Initial Study:

California Department of Transportation and Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2016. Soil Management Agreement for Aerially Deposited Lead Contaminated Soils. State of California Environmental Protection Agency Docket No. ESPO-SMA 15/16-001.

County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works (County). 2024. Huasna Road Bridge 300620 Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Memo for CEQA; including CalEEMod reports provided by SWCA dated 8/28/2023.

SWCA. 2023. Archaeological Survey Report for the Huasna Road over Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge Replacement Project, Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo County, California. November.

SWCA. 2024a. Huasna Road over Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge Replacement Project Biological Assessment for National Marine Fisheries Service. February.

SWCA. 2024b. Huasna Road over Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge Replacement Project Biological Assessment for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. March.

WRECO. 2022. Initial Site Assessment and Preliminary Site Investigation, Huasna Bridge Replacement Project, San Luis Obispo County, California. July.

Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary

Mitigation Monitoring Plan

The purpose of a Mitigation Monitoring Plan is to provide a program to examine, document and record compliance with the environmental plans and specifications pertinent to the proposed project, in order to comply with Section 21081.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This plan provides the standards and methods necessary to ensure and document the implementation of the environmental mitigation measures which have been included in the project description as well as with the conditions of approval placed on project permits. Responsibility for ensuring successful implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan lies with the County of San Luis Obispo, as the project proponent and Lead Agency for the project under CEQA. If the recommended mitigation measures and monitoring plan are implemented successfully, the potential significant adverse effects stemming from project construction will be reduced to a level of insignificance.

Mitigation monitoring will be carried out by the County's Environmental Programs Division. Upon approval of the CEQA document and issuance of all required permits, the Environmental Programs Division will assign internal responsibility for compliance with each mitigation measure to one or more members of the project team. Responsible parties include the Environmental Programs Division, the Project Manager (PM), the Resident Engineer (RE), and/or on-site monitors.

Mitigation measures are organized into project design, pre-construction, construction, and post-construction tasks. Compliance with mitigation measures is documented in the project file through written reports, accompanied by project photos where necessary. Post-construction monitoring of revegetation and other project components is documented by yearly reports, on a schedule typically determined by one or more of the project permits. Depending on the complexity of the post construction mitigation effort, tasks will be carried out by county staff or technical experts under contract to the County. Post-construction monitoring is typically conducted for three to five years, depending on permit requirements and success criteria.

Details of post-construction habitat restoration and mitigation, monitoring, and success criteria have been incorporated into a draft Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for the project. The HMMP would be finalized based on permit requirements. Implementation and oversight of the HMMP would be provided by the County's Environmental Programs Division.

Mitigation Measures

Air Quality Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 Depending on removal method, an APCD permit may be required for removal of lead-based paint, which has been identified on the bridge structures to be demolished. Contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at 805-781-5912 for more information. For additional information regarding lead abatement, contact the San Luis Obispo County Environmental Health Department at 805-781-5544 or Cal-OSHA at 818-901-5403. Additional information can also be found online at www.epa.gov/lead.

AQ-2 An APCD permit may be required for removal of asbestos-containing material (ACM), which has been identified on the bridge structures to be demolished. ACM must be removed and disposed of in accordance with the Caltrans Standard Special Provisions and the pertinent requirements of the National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (40 CFR R61 Subpart M – Asbestos). In addition, a Notification of Demolition and Renovation Form will be submitted to the APCD at least ten business days prior to the start of the removal and disposal activities.

AQ-3 Projects with grading areas that are greater than 4 acres or are within 1,000 feet of any sensitive receptor shall implement the following mitigation measures to minimize nuisance impacts and to significantly reduce fugitive dust emissions:

- Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible.
- Use of water trucks or sprinkler systems, in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site and from exceeding the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible. Please note that during drought conditions, water use may be a concern and the contractor or builder shall consider the use of an APCD-approved dust suppressant where feasible to reduce the amount of water used for dust control.
- All dirt stock-pile areas should be sprayed daily and covered with tarps or other dust barriers as needed.
- Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project revegetation and landscape plans should 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 should be sown with fast-germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established.
- All disturbed soil areas not subject to revegetation should be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the APCD.
- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible, and building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding, soil binders or other dust controls are used.
- Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles will 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 should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between the top of the load and the top of the trailer) in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- "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 defined in the California Vehicle Code Section 23113 and California Water Code 13304. To prevent Track Out, designate access points and require all employees, subcontractors, and others to use them. Install and operate a "track-out prevention device" where vehicles enter and exist unpaved roads onto paved streets. The track-out prevention device can be any 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. If paved roadways accumulate tracked out soils, the track-out prevention device may need to be modified.
- Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water should be used where feasible.
- All fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans.
- The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons whose responsibility is to ensure any fugitive dust emissions do not result in a nuisance and to enhance the implementation of the mitigation measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints and reduce visible emissions below the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress (for example, wind-blown dust could be generated on an open dirt lot). The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD Compliance Division prior to the start of any grading, earthwork or demolition.

AQ-4 Portable construction equipment, 50 horsepower (hp) or greater, used during construction activities may require California statewide portable equipment registration (issued by the California Air Resources Board) or an APCD permit. To minimize potential delays, prior to the start of the project, the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division should be contacted for specific information regarding permitting requirements.

AQ-5 In addition to the state-required diesel idling requirements, the County will comply with these more restrictive requirements to minimize impacts to nearby sensitive receptors:
To the maximum extent feasible, staging and queuing areas will not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors. If staging areas must be located within less than 1,000 feet, then additional signage will be used to remind project personnel that construction activities are occurring within close proximity to sensitive receptors and that compliance with the said air quality regulations must be maintained at all times. The use of alternatively fueled equipment is recommended and will be used to the maximum extent practicable.

AQ-6 If hydrocarbon contaminated soil is encountered during construction activities, the APCD must be notified as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after affected material is discovered to determine if an APCD permit will be required. In addition, the following measures shall be implemented immediately after contaminated soil is discovered:

- Covers on storage piles shall be maintained in place at all times in areas not actively involved in soil addition or removal;

- Contaminated soil shall be covered with at least six inches of packed uncontaminated soil or other Total Petroleum Hydrocarbon – non-permeable barrier such as plastic tarp. No headspace shall be allowed where vapors could accumulate;
- Covered piles shall be designed in such a way to eliminate erosion due to wind or water. No openings in the covers are permitted;
- The air quality impacts from the excavation and haul trips associated with removing the contaminated soil must be evaluated and mitigated if total emissions exceed the APCD's construction phase thresholds;
- During soil excavation, odors shall not be evident to such a degree as to cause a public nuisance; and
- Clean soil must be segregated from contaminated soil.

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures

BR-1 Prior to construction, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan will be prepared for the project in accordance with County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department requirements. Provisions of this plan will be implemented during and after construction as necessary to avoid and minimize erosion and stormwater pollution in and near the work area.

BR-2 Prior to construction, the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department will prepare a conceptual Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides for appropriate restoration for temporary impacts and mitigation for permanent impacts to jurisdictional areas. Any revegetation will be conducted using native plant species. The HMMP will identify the specific mitigation sites and will be implemented immediately following project completion.

BR-3 Native oak trees greater than 4-inch-diameter at breast height (DBH) that are removed or trimmed for the project will be replaced in accordance with County practice. Replacement trees will be planted in County right-of-way in the project area or in similar settings in the general vicinity, with the goal of replacing the existing tree functions as close to the project area as feasible. Replanting will be completed as soon as it is feasible (e.g. irrigation water is available, grading has been completed in replant area(s)). Replanted areas will be either in native topsoil or areas where native topsoil has been reapplied. Only designated trees will be removed or trimmed without prior approval from the County Environmental Programs Division.

BR-4 Prior to initiation of any construction activities, including vegetation clearing or grubbing, sturdy high-visibility fencing will be installed to delineate the specified project disturbance limits and protect environmentally sensitive areas (ESA). This ESA fencing will be placed so that unnecessary adverse impacts to the adjacent habitats are avoided, including oak woodland and riparian willow thicket. No construction work (including storage of materials) will occur outside of the specified project limits. The fencing will remain in place during the entire construction period, will be monitored periodically by a qualified biologist, and will be maintained as needed by the contractor.

BR-5 Prior to construction, the contractor will prepare a Hazardous Materials Response Plan to allow for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. Workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

BR-6 Construction activities adjacent to Arroyo Grande Creek and in riparian bank areas will be targeted to the dry season (generally May 1 through October 31) to the extent feasible to minimize potential water quality impacts to the creek and potential for sedimentation and erosion control issues due to precipitation events.

BR-7 If feasible, vegetation within the PIA will be removed during the fall or winter (September 2 to February 15) prior to construction, to minimize the potential for construction impacts to nesting birds.

For construction activities proposed during the typical nesting season (February 1 to September 1), pre-construction nesting bird surveys will be conducted by qualified biologists no more than two weeks prior to the start of construction to determine presence/absence of nesting birds. Nesting bird surveys will continue throughout the construction period as needed until the end of nesting season.

If active nests are encountered on site immediately prior to or during construction, an appropriate avoidance buffer will be established around the occupied nest(s). If the identified nest(s) belongs to a special-status species Caltrans and CDFW will be consulted. Avoidance will be accomplished by installation of high visibility orange construction fencing or flagging around the occupied areas with the appropriate setback. A qualified biological monitor will facilitate installation of the fence or flagging and will conduct periodic site visits to ensure that the fencing remains intact for the duration of construction activities in proximity to the active nest(s) and he or she will continue to monitor the nest(s). Construction activities will not occur within the nesting bird avoidance buffer area(s) until the biological monitor determines that either: a) all young have fledged and that the nest(s) are no longer occupied, or b) construction activity is not precluding nesting activity.

BR-8 Prior to construction, all personnel will participate in an environmental awareness training program conducted by a qualified biologist. The program will include a description of the special-status resources and federally designated critical habitat within the project boundary. If appropriate, the biologist may train and designate a representative of the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department or other designee to provide crew training as needed during construction.

BR-9 Prior to construction, the County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department will retain a qualified biological monitor(s) to monitor construction and ensure compliance with the avoidance and minimization efforts outlined in all project environmental documents. At a minimum, monitoring will occur during initial ground disturbance activities and vegetation removal.

BR-10 If cast-in-drilled-hole boring techniques require dewatering, dewatering discharge will be pumped to an appropriate storage tank for water quality monitoring to determine appropriate disposal options. Dewatering activities will not discharge directly to the creek channel.

BR-11 During construction, trash will be contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, trash and construction debris will be removed from the work areas. Vegetation removed from the construction site will be taken to a certified landfill to prevent the spread of invasive species. If soil from weedy areas (such as areas with poison hemlock or other invasive exotic plant species) must be removed offsite, the top 6 inches (152

millimeters) containing the seed layer in areas with weedy species will be disposed of at a permitted landfill.

BR-12 During construction, the cleaning and refueling of equipment and vehicles will occur only within a designated staging area and at least 60 feet (20 meters) from riparian habitat, wetlands, or other aquatic areas. At a minimum, equipment and vehicles will be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills.

BR-13 Prior to initiation of any construction activities bordering Arroyo Grande Creek, including but not limited to clearing and grubbing, excavation, and bridge and foundation removal, sturdy exclusionary silt fencing will be installed around all areas of ground disturbance to prevent the movement of sediment from the disturbance area into the stream. The bottom of the fencing will be buried a minimum of 6 inches below the ground surface or otherwise secured to prevent gaps between the bottom of the fence and the ground. No construction work (including storage of materials) will occur on the stream side of the silt fence. The fencing will remain in place during the entire construction period and be maintained as needed by the contractor.

BR-14 During construction, erosion control measures (e.g., silt fencing, fiber rolls, and barriers) will remain available onsite and will be utilized as necessary to prevent erosion and sedimentation beyond the project disturbance limits. No synthetic plastic mesh products will be used for erosion control and use of these materials onsite is prohibited. Erosion control measures and other suitable Best Management Practices used will be checked to ensure that they are intact and functioning effectively and maintained on a daily basis throughout the duration of construction. The contractor will also apply adequate dust control techniques, such as site watering, during construction to protect water quality.

BR-15 During construction, no pets will be allowed on the construction site.

BR-16 Prior to construction, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted during the appropriate blooming period to ensure special-status plant species are not present within the BSA. If Gambel's watercress, marsh sandwort, Pismo clarkia, or chaparral ragwort are found within the BSA, all work will be stopped immediately, the USFWS will be notified, and work will not commence until consultation is completed. If other special-status plant species are present, the location and number of individuals will be recorded and suitable mitigation will be incorporated into the project plans, such as seed collection and replanting of special-status species. Observations of these or other special-status species shall be documented on CNDDB forms and submitted to the CDFW upon project completion.

BR-17 During construction, the mitigation measures pertaining to California red-legged frog from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Programmatic Biological Opinion for Projects Funded or Approved under the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Aid Program (8-8-10-F-58) will be implemented:

1. Only USFWS-approved biologists will participate in activities associated with the capture, handling, and monitoring of California red-legged frogs. Biologists authorized under the Programmatic Biological Opinion do not need to resubmit their qualifications for subsequent projects conducted pursuant to the Programmatic Biological Opinion, unless

the USFWS has revoked their approval at any time during the life of the Programmatic Biological Opinion.

2. Ground disturbance will not begin until written approval is received from the USFWS that the biologist(s) is qualified to conduct the work. Caltrans will request approval of the biologist(s) from the USFWS.
3. A USFWS-approved biologist will survey the work area no more than 48 hours before the onset of work activities. If any life stage of the California red-legged frog is found and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist will be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work activities begin. The USFWS-approved biologist will relocate the California red-legged frog the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by the activities associated with the proposed action. The relocation site should be in the same drainage to the extent practicable. Caltrans will coordinate with the USFWS on the relocation site prior to the capture of any California red-legged frog.
4. Before any activities begin, a USFWS-approved biologist will conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training will include a description of the California red-legged frog and its habitat, the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the California red-legged frog for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished. Brochures, books, and briefings may be used in the training session, provided that a qualified person is on hand to answer any questions.
5. A USFWS-approved biologist will be present at the work site until the California red-legged frog have been relocated out of harm's way, workers have been instructed, and disturbance of the habitat has been completed. After this time, the County Public Works Department will designate a person to monitor on-site compliance with minimization measures. The USFWS-approved biologist will ensure that this monitor receives the training outlined in Measure 5 above and in the identification of California red-legged frog. If the monitor or the USFWS-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because California red-legged frog would be affected in a manner not anticipated by the USFWS, Caltrans, and the County during the review of the proposed action, they will notify the resident engineer (the engineer that is directly overseeing and in command of construction activities) immediately. The resident engineer will either resolve the situation by eliminating the adverse effect immediately or require that all actions that are causing these effects be halted. If work is stopped, the USFWS, Caltrans, and the County will be notified as soon as possible.
6. During project activities, all trash that may attract predators will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed from work areas.
7. All refueling, maintenance, and staging of equipment and vehicles will occur at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or waterbodies and in a location from where a spill would not drain directly toward aquatic habitat (e.g., on a slope that drains away from the water). The monitor will ensure contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. Prior to the onset of work, Caltrans and the County will ensure that a plan is in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of

the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

8. Habitat contours will be returned to their original configuration at the end of project activities. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by activities associated with the proposed action, unless the USFWS, Caltrans, and the County determine that it is not feasible, or modification of original contours would benefit California red-legged frog.
9. The number of access routes, size of staging areas, and total area of activity will be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project goals. Environmentally sensitive areas will be delineated to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction and minimize the impact to California red-legged frog habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.
10. Caltrans and the County will attempt to schedule work for times of the year when impacts to the California red-legged frog would be minimal. For example, work that would affect large pools that may support breeding would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November–May). Isolated pools that are important to maintain California red-legged frog through the driest portions of the year would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and coordination between the USFWS and Caltrans during project planning will be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of year.
11. To control sedimentation during and after project implementation, Caltrans and the County will implement best management practices outlined in any authorizations or permits issued under the authorities of the Clean Water Act that it receives for the specific project. If best management practices are ineffective, Caltrans will attempt to remedy the situation immediately, in coordination with the USFWS.
12. If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes will be completely screened with wire mesh no larger than 0.2 inch to prevent California red-legged frog from entering the pump system. Water will be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that would allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the streambed will be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material will be removed from the streambed upon completion of the project.
13. Unless approved by the USFWS, water will not be impounded in a manner that may attract California red-legged frogs.
14. A USFWS-approved biologist will permanently remove any individuals of nonnative species, such as American bullfrogs, signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*), red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*), and centrarchid fishes (*Centrarchidae*) from the project area to the maximum extent possible. The USFWS-approved biologist will be responsible for ensuring their activities are in compliance with the California Fish and Game Code.

15. If Caltrans and the County demonstrate that disturbed areas have been restored to conditions that allow them to function as habitat for the California red-legged frog, these areas will not be included in the amount of total habitat permanently disturbed.
16. To ensure that diseases are not conveyed between work sites by the USFWS-approved biologist, the fieldwork code of practice developed by the Declining Amphibian Task Force will be followed at all times.
17. The project area will be revegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials will be used to the extent practicable. Invasive exotic plants will be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure will be implemented in all areas disturbed by activities with the project, unless the USFWS, Caltrans, and the County have determined that it is not feasible or practical.
18. Caltrans and the County will not use herbicides as the primary method used to control invasive exotic plants. However, if Caltrans and the County determine the use of herbicides is the only feasible method for controlling invasive plants at a specific location, the following additional measures to protect California red-legged frog will be implemented:
    a) Caltrans and the County will not use herbicides during the breeding season for California red-legged frog.
    b) Caltrans and the County will conduct surveys for California red-legged frog immediately prior to the start of herbicide use. If found, California red-legged frog will be relocated to suitable habitat far enough from the project area that no direct contact with herbicide would occur.
    c) Giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and other invasive plants will be cut and hauled out by hand and painted with glyphosate-based products, such as Aquamaster or Rodeo.
    d) Licensed and experienced Caltrans staff or a licensed and experienced contractor will use a hand-held sprayer for foliar application of Aquamaster or Rodeo where large monoculture stands occur.
    e) All precautions will be taken to ensure that no herbicide is applied to native vegetation.
    f) Foliar applications of herbicide will not occur when wind speeds are in excess of 3 miles per hour.
    g) No herbicides will be applied within 24 hours of forecasted rain.
    h) Application of herbicides will be completed by qualified Caltrans staff, County staff, or contractors to ensure that overspray is minimized, that application is made in accordance with the label recommendations, and that required and reasonable safety measures are implemented. A safe dye will be added to the mixture to visually denote treated sites. Application of herbicides will be consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs Endangered Species Protection Program bulletins.

i) All herbicides, fuels, lubricants, and equipment will be stored, poured, or refilled at least 60 feet from riparian habitat or water bodies in a location where a spill would not drain directly toward aquatic habitat. Caltrans and the County will ensure that contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. Prior to the onset of work, Caltrans and the County will ensure that a plan is in place for a prompt and effective response to accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

BR-18 Biological monitoring specified by Mitigation Measure BR-17 will include observations, monitoring, and appropriate response (e.g., relocating individuals out of harms way) for western pond turtle, coastal horned lizard, coast range newt, and any other special-status wildlife species.

BR-19 During bridge demolition, appropriate measures, such as tarps or nets, will be used to trap any demolition-related debris to keep it out of Arroyo Grande Creek.

Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Prior to construction, an archaeologist will provide a pre-construction archaeological briefing to all construction crews prior to initiating ground disturbing activities. The briefing will provide guidance on historical and archaeological resources and appropriate procedures to follow if such finds are inadvertently exposed during the project.

CR-2 During construction, a qualified archaeologist and representative(s) of the Salinan Tribe will monitor initial ground disturbance activities within the project impact area(s) considered to be archaeologically sensitive.

CR-3 During construction, if previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed, work will be halted in that portion of the project area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological surveys will be needed if the project limits are extended beyond the present survey limits.

CR-4 During construction, as specified by California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, if human remains are found on the project site, the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, will immediately notify the San Luis Obispo County Coroner's office, and the County Environmental office by telephone. No further excavation or disturbance of the discovery or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains (as determined by an Archaeologist and/or Native American monitor) will occur until the Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code 5097.98.

Geology and Soils

GS-1 The contractor will restore all previously vegetated areas that are cleared during project activities through revegetation with appropriate indigenous native species.

GS-2 A qualified paleontologist will design and implement a paleontological mitigation plan for any project-related ground-disturbing activities. The plan shall consider the depth of excavation, type of disturbance and underlying formations to determine the appropriate monitoring level required. The plan shall include measures for stabilizing and preserving resources, if discovered.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Mitigation Measures

HZ-1 During construction, removal of asbestos-containing material and lead-based paint during bridge demolition will be managed in accordance with an Asbestos Work Plan and a Lead Compliance Plan to ensure no significant effects from demolition and disposal activities.

HZ-2 Any staging or equipment/vehicle parking areas will be free of combustible vegetation and work crews will have shovels and fire extinguishers on site during all construction activities.

HZ-3 The contractor will be responsible for appropriate handling, storage, management, and disposal of all waste, including hazardous and potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to dewatering fluids, materials containing lead-based paint or asbestos, contaminants in soil, treated wood, asphalt, and bridge demolition debris.

HZ-4 The contractor will be responsible for providing notifications to all parties potentially affected by the construction detour pursuant to the project Public Outreach Plan (e.g., adjoining and affected residents, bus services, postal services, fire departments, schools, and emergency responders). Advance notification will be provided as needed to keep potentially affected parties informed of the detour route, schedule, and any modifications for the duration of the construction period.