

CHAPTER 5

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

An Initial Study for the NCSD's proposed Sphere of Influence was prepared by the Local Agency Formation Commission and was circulated between July 1, 2003 and July 31, 2003 with the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this program EIR. The Initial Study identified issue areas which in combination with comments received during the circulation of the NOP have resulted in the evaluation of the following issues in this EIR.

- 5-1. Land Use and Planning
- 5-2. Population and Housing
- 5-3. Geology
- 5-4. Water
- 5-5. Air Quality
- 5-6. Transportation-Circulation
- 5-7. Biology
- 5-8. Energy and Mineral Resources
- 5-9. Hazards
- 5-10. Noise
- 5-11. Public Services
- 5-12. Utilities and Service Systems
- 5-13. Aesthetics
- 5-14. Cultural Resources
- 5-15. Recreation

The discussion of each environmental issue within this section adheres to the following format:

- A. **Existing Conditions** - The existing environment within and in the vicinity of the project site is discussed from both a local and regional perspective.
- B. **Thresholds of Significance** - Any relevant thresholds of significance as identified by CEQA or other relevant standards are noted.
- C. **Project Impacts** - The nature and extent of project impacts relative to the issue areas noted above are analyzed. These analyses address direct (or primary) effects of the proposed project as well as its indirect (or secondary) effects. Where applicable, impacts are identified as short- or long-term.
- D. **Cumulative Impacts** - The analysis of cumulative impacts within each issue area involves an identification of those incremental impacts of the project that are added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time. The analysis of cumulative impacts within each resource issue is based upon a list of projects which are in various stages of project planning or development and are expected to contribute to cumulative impacts in the vicinity of the proposed project (see Section N.C. Cumulative Projects of this EIR for additional details concerning these cumulative projects).
- E. **Mitigation Measures** - Measures to reduce or eliminate project impacts are provided with an identification of the timing of and the responsibility for implementation of these measures.
- F. **Residual Impacts** - After evaluation of the identified project impacts, proposed mitigation measures and cumulative impacts, the residual (or remaining) significant impacts are identified. Within these analyses, the residual impacts are classified according to the following criteria:

Class I Impact - Significant adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. Although mitigation measures may be proposed, these measures are not sufficient to reduce project impacts to a level of insignificance. These significant, unavoidable adverse impacts require the adoption of a Statement of Overriding Considerations by the Local Agency Formation Commission of San Luis Obispo, as Lead Agency, if the proposed project is approved.

Class II Impacts - Potentially significant adverse impacts which can be reduced to a level of insignificance or avoided entirely with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures.

Class III Impacts - Adverse impacts that are found not to be significant.

Class IV Impacts - Project impacts which are considered to be positive or of benefit to the site or the adjacent environment, or of no impact at all.