FINAL
INITIAL STUDY

FOR THE

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT GROUNDWATER QUALITY PROTECTION PROGRAM SEPTIC TO SEWER PROJECT

Prepared for:

Mission Springs Water District
66575 Second Street
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

Prepared by:

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June 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Comment Letters and Responses to Comments

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Final Initial Study (Appendices Under a Separate Cover)

COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

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MEMORANDUM

May 22, 2026

From: Kaitlyn Dodson-Hamilton

To: Mr. Eric Weck, Engineering Manager

Subject: Completion of the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Mission Springs Water District Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic to Sewer Project (SCH No. 2026040663)

Mission Springs Water District (MSWD or District) received 2 written comment letters on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Mission Springs Water District Street Improvements for the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility Project. CEQA requires a Negative Declaration to consist of the Initial Study; copies of the comments; any responses to comments as compiled on the following pages; and any other Project-related material prepared to address issues evaluated in the Initial Study.

For this Project, the original Initial Study (IS) will be utilized as one component of the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) package. The attached responses to comments, combined with the Initial Study and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, constitute the Final MND package that will be used by the District to consider the environmental effects of implementing the proposed Project.

The following parties submitted comments. The comments in this letter are addressed in the attached Responses to Comments:

1. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
2. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Because mitigation measures are required for this Project to reduce potentially significant impacts to a less than significant level, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) attached to this package is required to be adopted as part of this Final MND package. The MMRP has been incorporated by reference to this package for approval and implementation.

The District consideration of the proposed Project and adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration will occur at a hearing scheduled on June 15, 2026.

Do not hesitate to give me a call if you have any questions regarding the contents of this package.



Kaitlyn Dodson-Hamilton
Attachments

Comment Letter #1

From: **Flores, Victor F@DOT** Victor.F.Flores@dot.ca.gov
Subject: Mission Springs Water District Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic to Sewer Project - 2026040663
Date: April 29, 2026 at 4:05 PM
To: Eric Weck eweck@mswd.org

VF

IRONSCALES couldn't recognize this email as this is the first time you received an email from this sender Victor.F.Flores@dot.ca.gov

Hi Eric,

1-1 The Caltrans Local Development Review Branch has completed the review of the Mission Springs Water District Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic to Sewer Project.

The project documentation indicates that the bore beneath I-10 has already been completed; however, it is unclear whether an encroachment permit was previously obtained and remains valid for the proposed work, or if a new permit will be required. Please reach out to the Caltrans Office of Encroachment Permits for further coordination.

1-2 Regarding TRA-1, if the proposed project would require lane and/or roadway closures on State highways or ramps, please coordinate with the Caltrans Office of Encroachment Permits to obtain the necessary approvals.

1-3 Be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto Caltrans' right-of-way requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit.

For information regarding the Encroachment Permit application and submittal requirements, contact:

Caltrans Office of Encroachment Permits
464 West 4th Street, Basement, MS 619
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400
(909) 383-4526
D8.E-permits@dot.ca.gov
https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep
Important Note: All new permit applications must now be submitted through our new CEPS Online Portal at: https://ceps.dot.ca.gov/

LDR's point of contact role will conclude upon the completion of the development entitlement process. Once project is entitled, the Encroachment Permit Office will serve as the primary point of contact moving forward.

1-4 Thank you again for including Caltrans in the review process. Should you have any questions regarding this response, or for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please email LDR-D8@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Victor Flores
Associate Transportation Planner
Local Development Review Branch
D8 Division of Transportation Planning
(909) 925-7520
Victor.F.Flores@dot.ca.gov

RESPONSE TO COMMENT
LETTER #2
CALTRANS

1-1 The comment is introductory in nature, and also notes that the boring under the I-10 has already occurred, and requests that if a new encroachment permit is required, coordination with Caltrans should be initiated. The comment is noted and the District will coordinate with Caltrans should an encroachment permit be necessary for future Project activities. At this time, the District does not anticipate any further CalTrans right-of-way (ROW) encroachment, as the sewer pipeline within the ROW identified in the IS/MND has been installed and all applicable permits secured by the project proponent.

1-2 The comment requests coordination with Caltrans for any road closures on State highways or ramps as part of construction. A review of the roadways that would be impacted as part of construction of the proposed Project indicates that no State highways or ramps would be impacted.

1-3 The comment conveys that activities that would require a Caltrans encroachment permit, and provides contact information thereof. The comment is noted and will be made available to the District decision-makers for consideration prior to a decision on the proposed Project. The contact information provided in this comment will be retained in the Project file.

1-4 This is a conclusory comment. The District thanks Caltrans for the comments and for the commenter's time. The contact information provided in this comment will be retained in the Project file.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
wildlife.ca.gov

Comment Letter #2

May 14, 2026
Sent via email

Eric Weck
Engineering Manager
Mission Springs Water District
66575 Second Street
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240
eweck@mswd.org

Subject: Mission Springs Water District Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic to Sewer Project (PROJECT)
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH# 2026040663

Dear Eric Weck:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received a Notice of Intent to Adopt an MND from the Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) for the Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.[1]

2-1 Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

2-2 CDFW is California's **Trustee Agency** for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State. (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a).) CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish,

[1]CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT
LETTER #2
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

2-1 The comment provides an introduction to the comment letter. The comment is noted and will be made available to the District decision-makers for consideration prior to a decision on the proposed Project. The District acknowledges the role of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) as a commenter on this Project.

2-2 The comment details CDFW's status as a Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources, and as a Responsible Agency. The District acknowledges the CDFW's role as a Trustee Agency, and as Responsible Agency under CEQA for this Project, and understands that authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code for some Project-related activities may be required.

wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (*Id.*, § 1802.) Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on Projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

2-2 cont'd CDFW is also submitting comments as a **Responsible Agency** under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.) CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration regulatory authority. (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.) Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.), the Project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: Mission Springs Water District

Objective: The Project proposes installation of a sewer pipeline including sewer main lines and laterals within roadways and existing rights-of-ways, and abatement of septic tanks, within MSWD's service area. The Project would involve the construction of 146,200 linear feet of 8-inch sewer pipeline. Construction is planned to connect 2,600 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate over 2,040 on-site septic systems. In addition, the Project includes installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals.

Location: The Project's linear alignment covers several sewer improvement subareas including A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor, as described below, which are within the Cities of Desert Hot Springs and Palm Springs and unincorporated Riverside County, all within the County of Riverside, California. 2-3

Area A, Latitude/Longitude: 33°58'50.67"N, 116°32'3.06"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figures 2 and 3. These roadways are Augusta Avenue, La Costa Court, Annandale Avenue, Cochran Court, Desert Air Court, Oakmont Boulevard, Barnes Court, Egan Court, Leonard Court, Ray Court, Leith Avenue, Little Court, Cotton Court, Inglewood Avenue, Hoylake Road, Cascades Drive, Smith Court, Burke Court, Boros Court, Brae Burn Avenue, Spyglass Avenue, Ekwanok Drive, Warwick Drive, Picard Court, Vardon Court, Kirkwood Court, Turnesa Court, Diegel Court, Capiland Drive, Congressional Road, Apawamis Road, Siwanoy Drive, Sanderling Court, Pinehurst Circle, Troon Court, Middlecoff Court, Brookline Avenue, Lido Court, Jones Court, Devicenzo Court, Doral Drive, Clubhouse Boulevard, and Lema Court. The project site is generally located within Section 23, Township 2 South, Range 4 West of the USGS 7.5-Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs and

County of Riverside.

Area D-3, Latitude/Longitude: 33°58'26.24"N, 116°30'12.04"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figures 4 and 5. These roadways are Cactus Drive, 12th Street, San Juan Drive, and San Marcus Road. The project site is generally located within Section 30, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area G, Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'21.77"N, 116°29'21.22"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figures 6 and 7. These roadways are Verbena Drive, Ambrosio Drive, Pomelo Drive, Foxdale Drive, Tamar Drive, Sumac Drive, Desert View Drive, and Parma Drive. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area H, Latitude/Longitude: 33°56'51.73"N, 116°28'53.60"W. The pipelines will be installed within the following roadways shown in the MND in Figures 8 and 9. These roadways are Tunitas Road, Suerte Way, Oro Loma Street, Ortega Drive, Pequena Drive, Cerrita Way, Loma Vista Road, Key Way, Monterey Road, Agua Cayendo Road, Cuando Way, Oris Drive, Cielo Azul Way, Miracle Hill Road, Eliseo Road, and Hacienda Avenue. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

2-3 cont'd

Area I, Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'10.17"N, 116°28'36.67"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figures 10 and 11. These roadways are Monterico Road, Desert View Avenue, Arena Blanca Road, Alameda Road, Pequena Drive, Loma Vista Road, Hidalgo Street, Hermano Way, Inaja Street, and Quinta Way. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area J-2, Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'24.43"N, 116°28'25.98"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figure 12. These roadways are Mountain View Road, Highland Avenue, Skyline Drive, Calle Amapola, Avenida Serena, Redbud Road, Calle Blanco, Avenida Hermosa, Via Domingo, Hacienda Road, Acacia Avenue, Beech Avenue, Catalpa Avenue, Deodar Avenue, Calle Bonita, Calle Calmoso, Calle Descanso, Avenida Alta Loma, and Monterico Road. The project site is generally located within Section 33, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area K, Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'27.69"N, 116°27'58.33"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figures 13 and 14. These roadways are Juniper

2-3 The comment provides a description of the Project. The Project description summary outlined in this comment is accurate.

Drive, Fernwood Drive, Elm Avenue, Deodar Avenue, Catalpa Avenue, Birch Road, Beech Avenue, Hacienda Avenue, Redbud Road, Skyline Drive, and Spruce Street. The project site is generally located within Section 33, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This subarea occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

2-3 cont'd

I-10 and North Indian Canyon Drive Corridor Area (Area I-10 Corridor), Latitude/Longitude: 33°54'16.41"N, 116°32'33.88"W. The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown in the MND in Figure 15. These roadways are Garnet Avenue, Indian Canyon Drive, 20th Avenue, 19th Avenue, Orr Way, McLane Street, Ruppert Street, and Newhall Street. The project site is generally located within Section 14, Township 3 South, Range 4 East of the USGS 7.5-Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. Note that this area is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs and City of Palm Springs.

Timeframe: The MND indicates that Project construction is anticipated to occur over a period of about 20 years, with one subarea to be constructed approximately every 30 months.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (i.e., biological resources). CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist MSWD in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. The MND has not adequately identified and disclosed the Project's impacts (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative) on biological resources and whether those impacts are reduced to less than significant.

2-4

CDFW's comments and recommendations on the MND are explained in greater detail below and summarized here. CDFW is concerned that the MND does not adequately identify or mitigate the Project's significant, or potentially significant impacts to biological resources. CDFW requests that additional information and analyses be added to a revised MND, along with avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures that avoid or reduce impacts to less than significant.

<u>Existing Environmental Setting</u>

Compliance with CEQA is predicated on a complete and accurate description of the environmental setting that may be affected by the proposed Project. CDFW is concerned that the assessment of the existing environmental setting has not been adequately analyzed in the MND. CDFW is concerned that without a complete and accurate description of the existing environmental setting, the MND may provide an incomplete analysis of Project-related environmental impacts.

2-5

2-4 The comment details that CDFW has presented comments and recommendations related to fish and wildlife resources, and notes that the commenter believes that the MND has not adequately identified and disclosed the Project's impacts on biological resources. The comment is noted and will be made available to the District decision-makers for consideration prior to a decision on the proposed Project. The District further addresses CDFW's comments and concerns in the forthcoming responses.

2-5 The comment first discusses the existing setting, and raises concerns that the environmental setting has not been described accurately, making the analysis inadequate. However, the commenter does not address the deficiencies to the environmental setting, such that the District can elaborate or address this comment in greater detail. The District is noting that the Project consists of the following:

MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. The septic abatement would occur within existing developed properties, predominantly existing residential uses, and as a result the environmental setting of the project area consists predominantly of disturbed area, except in the small individual case of the I-10 corridor, wherein there is a pipeline that would be installed through an area of native desert.

The District has presented the environmental setting and surrounding land uses and setting in the Project Description of the IS/MND. Further, the Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) prepared for the proposed Project states the following:

The Project Area is situated in the geographically based ecological classification known as the Upper Coachella Valley and Hills of the Sonoran Basin and Range in southern California (Griffith et al. 2016). The goal of regional ecological classifications is to reduce variability based on spatial covariance in climate, geology, topography, climax vegetation, hydrology, and soils. The Upper Coachella Valley and Hills ecoregion is a transitional desert region with some affinities to the Mojave Basin and Range ecoregion to the north and is surrounded by mountains, except to the south where it descends toward the agricultural lands and the Salton Sea (Griffith et al. 2016).

The Desert Hot Springs area is situated in the northwestern end of the Coachella Valley and is bordered on the north and northeast by the Little San Bernardino Mountains, on the east/southeast by the Seven Palms Valley and Edom Hills and on the west by the San Bernardino Mountain foothills. The topography of the Project Area consists of an urban

landscape that slopes downward from northeast to southwest, built over naturally occurring alluvial fans and bajadas. The elevation of the Project Area ranges from approximately 1,055 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southern limits of the Project Area to 1,520 feet amsl near the northeastern-most limits.

The Project Area is within a hot desert climate (BWh), characterized by year-round high temperatures, low humidity, and considerable variation in the occurrence, intensity, and distribution of precipitation. Average annual maximum temperatures within the Project Area peak at 108.5 degrees Fahrenheit (° F) in July and fall to an average annual minimum temperature of 37° F in December and January (Palm Springs Airport temperature data average over 27 years, 1998-2025; NOAA 2025). Average total annual precipitation is approximately 3.73 inches and reaches a peak in January (0.87 inches) (Palm Springs Airport precipitation data average over 27 years, 1998- 2025; NOAA 2025). Precipitation is lowest in the month of June (0.00 inches average (NOAA 2025)).

Hydrologically, the eastern portions of the Project Area are situated within the Miracle Hill Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 719.43) and the western portions are within the Mission Creek Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 719.42). The Miracle Hill and Mission Creek HSAs comprise 44,525-acre and 73,871-acre drainage areas respectively; both within the larger Whitewater River Watershed (HUC 18100201). The Whitewater River is the major hydrogeomorphic feature within the Whitewater River Watershed and is one of the main tributaries to the Salton Sea. The nearest tributary to the Whitewater River is Morongo Wash, which is southwest-adjacent to Area A at its closest point to the Project Area.

Soils within the Project Area are comprised mostly of Carsitas Series soils including Carsitas gravelly sand, 0 to 9 percent slopes, Carsitas gravelly sand, 9 to 30 percent slopes, Carsitas cobbly sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes and Carsitas fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes (USDA 2025). Carsitas family soils consist of gravelly sand that is comprised of gravelly alluvium derived from granite. This soil type is excessively drained, with a low to very low runoff class and does not have a hydric soil rating.

The Project is also located within the City of Palm Springs and Unincorporated Riverside County. Here is what I suggest this paragraph reads as:

The City of Desert Hot Springs is a desert community situated north of the City of Palms Springs, along the southern foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains, which consists of a mix of urban landscapes and undeveloped desert scrub habitats. The project area is entirely within a disturbed environment, with only minor areas of the project footprint containing native desert species (such as any areas outside of road ROW). The mix of land uses that occur within the project area includes nearly all of the land uses that could be found within the City of Desert Hot Springs; and further, within the City of Palm Springs, the land use is generally Industrial (IND) in nature, with some areas designated for Open Space Desert (OS-D), and a small area designated for Medium Density

Residential (MDR). Within Unincorporated Riverside County, the predominant land uses are Medium Density Residential, Commercial Retail, Open Space Recreation, Conservation, and Medium High Density Residential. Within all "lettered" Sub Areas, the predominant land uses are residential in nature. Habitat within the surrounding undeveloped areas consist mostly of Creosote bush scrub (Larrea tridentata) Shrubland Alliance plant communities.

The above is an accurate description of the environmental setting, and it should be noted that the Project is slated to occur over a 20-year period. The BRA was prepared on a site specific level to identify potential biological constraints, but the mitigation actions were prepared at a Programmatic level to address the progression of the Project's 20-year implementation. Thus, while some mitigation measures have been modified to address CDFW's comments 2-6 through 2-10, the District has demonstrated in the IS/MND and throughout these responses to comments that the Environmental Setting is clear, and that impacts have been forecasted appropriately.

The MND lacks a complete assessment of potential impacts to burrowing owl and to streams and associated fish and wildlife resources subject to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq. A complete and accurate assessment of the environmental setting and Project-related impacts to biological resources is needed to both identify appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures and demonstrate that these measures reduce Project impacts to less than significant.

2-5 cont'd

Mitigation Measures

CEQA requires that an MND include mitigation measures to avoid or reduce significant impacts. CDFW is concerned that the mitigation measures proposed in the MND are not adequate to avoid or reduce impacts to biological resources to below a level of significance. To support MSWD in ensuring that Project impacts to biological resources are reduced to less than significant, CDFW recommends adding mitigation measures associated with CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program and nesting birds, as well as revising the mitigation measure for burrowing owl.

1) Burrowing Owl

On October 10, 2024, the Fish and Game Commission determined that western burrowing owl warrants protection as a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.). During the candidacy period, western burrowing owl will be afforded the same protection as threatened and endangered species under CESA. If Project activities, including relocation, could result in take, appropriate CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081) should be obtained prior to commencement of Project activities.

2-6

Take of individual burrowing owls and their nests or eggs is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86, and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill." Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 afford protective measures as follows: section 3503 states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.).

With regard to the CVMSHCP, per its associated Permits from CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (collectively the Wildlife Agencies) and the Implementing Agreement, Authorized Take incidental to Covered Activities must be consistent with, and in compliance with, local, state, and federal laws including, but not limited to, California Fish and Game Code sections 3503 and 3503.5 and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Therefore, all Covered Activities within the Plan Area, whether they are within or outside Conservation Areas, must undertake measures to avoid the take of individuals, nests, and eggs of nesting birds and birds of prey. The CVMSHCP includes a general conservation measure that applies to all bird species, including, but not limited to, all Covered birds and birds of prey, to avoid impacts to habitat during the nesting season (CVMSHCP Section 9.7). Per IA Section 13.13, MSWD is obligated to implement the applicable requirements of the Wildlife Agencies' Permits, the Implementing Agreement, and the CVMSHCP for its Covered Activities, including ensuring compliance with state and federal laws that protect nesting birds and birds of prey. The CDFW Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) Permit #2835-2008-001-06 does not provide Take Authorization for burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs.

2-6 cont'd

Page 4 of the Project's Biological Resources Assessment (Biological Assessment), dated January 2026, states "Burrowing owl could occur within the Project Area due to the proximity of documented occurrences and the species' ability to tolerate human disturbance. Field survey results for burrowing owl were negative, with very few potentially suitable burrows observed. Their potential to occur within the Project Area is low also due to limited marginal habitat as a result of development and habitat fragmentation." However, Page 21 of the Biological Assessment indicates that "BUOW have been documented adjacent to Areas A, G, I-10 and K." CDFW notes that suitable nesting and foraging habitat for burrowing owl exist within and adjacent to the Project's linear alignment including, but not limited to, areas within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area, the Willow Hole Conservation Area, vacant and developed areas associated with the I-10 and North Indian Canyon Drive Corridor Area, and other vacant and disturbed lots throughout the Project area. In addition, burrowing owls frequently move into disturbed areas prior to and during construction activities since they are adapted to highly modified habitats (Chipman et al. 2008[2]; Coulombe 1971[3]).

Although general field surveys were conducted for the MND, no focused surveys were conducted for burrowing owl. Because the MND lacks the findings of recent focused surveys for burrowing owl, the number and locations of suitable and occupied burrows within the Project site are unknown. CDFW recommends focused surveys consistent with the timing and frequency of surveys described in Appendix D of the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl*

[2] Chipman, E. D., N. E. McIntyre, R. E. Strauss, M. C. Wallace, J. D. Ray, and C. W. Boal. 2008. Effects of human land use on western burrowing owl foraging and activity budgets. Journal of Raptor Research 42(2): 87-98.
[3] Coulombe, H. N. 1971. Behavior and population ecology of the Burrowing Owl, Speotyto cunicularia, in the Imperial Valley of California. Condor 73:162–176.

2-6 The comment pertains to the analysis in the IS/MND of burrowing owl (BUOW), and indicates that the commenter believes the mitigation identified to protect burrowing owl is not sufficient to fully protect this species from impacts resulting from the proposed project. As stated above under response to comment 2-5, the BRA was prepared on a site specific level to identify potential biological constraints, but the mitigation actions were prepared at a Programmatic level to address the progression of the Project's 20-year implementation. Thus, the requirement for protocol level surveys prior to construction has been identified.

Mitigation,[4] or other protocol agreed upon by CDFW, are conducted prior to initiation of Project activities. Recent focused surveys, conducted prior to Project construction, are needed to provide adequate time to coordinate with CDFW on appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures if burrowing owls are detected and support the Project in avoiding or reducing impacts to burrowing owl to a level less than significant.

2-6 cont'd The MND includes Mitigation Measure BIO-8 for burrowing owl, but the measure lacks a requirement to conduct pre-construction surveys. Pre-construction surveys for burrowing owl conducted close to Project start ensure that any burrowing owls that may have moved onto the site between the time of focused surveys and start of construction activities are detected and that appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures are implemented. Without requirements for pre-construction surveys in Mitigation Measure BIO-8, CDFW considers the measure to be inadequate in scope and timing to avoid or reduce impacts to burrowing owl to a level less than significant.

To support MSWD in avoiding or reducing impacts to burrowing owl to a level less than significant, CDFW recommends MSWD revise Mitigation Measure BIO-8 with the following additions in **bold** and removals in ~~strikethrough~~:

Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Burrowing Owl Focused and Pre-Construction Surveys

Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. ~~The burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version) prior to any construction activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.~~ 2-7 **Suitable burrowing owl habitat has been confirmed within the Project site and surrounding area; therefore, focused burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist within all suitable habitat prior to all vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities throughout the Project's subareas and phased timeline. CDFW strongly recommends that focused surveys are conducted in accordance with the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (2012 or most recent version)[5].** If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. **CDFW recommends that the** ~~The~~ information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation,

[4] California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 2012. Staff report on burrowing owl mitigation. State of California, Natural Resources Agency. Available for download at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843&inline
[5] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. State of California, Natural Resources Agency. Available for download at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843.

2-7 The comment details the changes to MM BIO-8 to address the suggested changes from response to comment 2-6. The comment is noted and will be made available to the District decision-makers for consideration prior to a decision on the proposed Project. The District appreciates CDFW's feedback on the potential impacts to burrowing owl. The District appreciates CDFW's recommended changes to MM BIO-8, as it pertains to Burrowing Owl. As such, the District concurs with intent of CDFW's modifications to MM BIO-8, and proposes the following modified measure (modifications are underlined), which is hereby incorporated by reference into the Final IS/MND.

BIO-1 *Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. ~~The burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version) prior to any construction activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.~~ Suitable burrowing owl habitat has been confirmed within the Project site and surrounding area; therefore, focused burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within all suitable habitat prior to all vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities throughout the Project's subareas and phased timeline. CDFW strongly recommends that focused surveys are conducted in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version).[1] If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground- disturbing activities. CDFW recommends that the information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, ~~appropriate NCCP (Fish and Game Code section 2835)~~ or CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.*

Preconstruction burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to the start of Project-related activities and again within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. Preconstruction surveys should be repeated when there is a pause in construction of more than 30 days. Preconstruction surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist, and CDFW strongly recommends that

[1] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. State of California, Natural Resources Agency. Available for download at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843.

preconstruction surveys follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. If the preconstruction surveys confirm occupied burrowing owl habitat, Project activities shall be immediately halted and the qualified biologist shall coordinate with CDFW and USFWS. Project activities shall not begin until consultation with CDFW and USFWS is completed.

The above measure replaces MMs BIO-1 through BIO-3 with one single measure, and as a result these measures are henceforth omitted from the Final IS/MND, and are not provided above as text with strikeout. The above modification constitutes a modification to a mitigation measure that does not require recirculation pursuant to CEQA Section 15073.5(c). A written finding shall be adopted in the resolution proposed for adoption of this IS/MND that finds that the above measure is equivalent or more effective in mitigation or avoiding potential significant effects and that it in itself will not cause any potentially significant effect on the environment pursuant to CEQA Section 15074.1. The above measure would be equal to or more effective than that which was incorporated into the Initial Study.

including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, ~~appropriate NCCP (Fish and Game Code section 2835) or~~ CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.

2-7 cont'd

Preconstruction burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to the start of Project-related activities and again within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. Preconstruction surveys should be repeated when there is a pause in construction of more than 30 days. Preconstruction surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist, and CDFW strongly recommends that preconstruction surveys follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation*. If the preconstruction surveys confirm occupied burrowing owl habitat, Project activities shall be immediately halted and the qualified biologist shall coordinate with CDFW and USFWS. Project activities shall not begin until consultation with CDFW and USFWS is completed.

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, section 15097(f), CDFW has prepared a draft mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) in Attachment 1 for revised MM BIO-8 and MM BIO-10, as well as CDFW-recommended MM BIO-[A].

2) CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Program

Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires an entity to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may do one or more of the following: substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake; substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream or lake. Note that "any river, stream or lake" includes those that are episodic (i.e., those that are dry for periods of time) as well as those that are perennial (i.e., those that flow year-round). This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. It may also apply to work undertaken within the flood plain of a body of water.

2-8

The MND includes Mitigation Measure BIO-9, which indicates "for the Little Morongo Creek at Augusta Avenue, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) shall be notified

2-8 The comment pertains to CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration, and acknowledges that the IS/MND includes a **MM BIO-9,** which requires notification to CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 1602 as it pertains to the Project's potential to impact jurisdictional features. The commenter believes that additional streams subject to Fish and Game Code Section 1602 could be impacted by the project. Respectfully, the District confirms that the BRA included site specific surveys of the entire project alignment to confirm whether the project would impact jurisdictional features. The referenced potential jurisdictional features in this comment along 19th and 20th Avenues do not exist because the land between 20th Avenue and 19th Avenue has been graded and is either developed or in the process of being developed, leaving no jurisdictional features remaining (refer to current aerial images from Google Earth). Thus, while the District acknowledges the need for compliance with Fish and Game Code Section 1602 for the features identified in the IS/MND, no other features have been identified that warrant modifications to **MM BIO-9.**

pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602." CDFW notes that additional streams subject to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq. beyond Little Morongo Creek at Augusta Avenue have the potential to be impacted by the Project. For example, proposed pipelines extending east to the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the I-10 Corridor Area may potentially impact streams that traverse developed and vacant areas along 19th Avenue and 20th Avenue. Additionally, page 7 of the MND indicates that "The project will utilize open cut trenching for a vast majority of the sewer reaches and septic abatement areas, with jack and bore techniques for certain small areas." CDFW notes that the entry and exit pits and frac-outs associated with jack and bore techniques have the potential to impact streams. Limited information is provided in the MND on where jack and bore techniques would be used. Due to Mitigation Measure BIO-9 limiting notification to CDFW for impacts to streams associated with only Little Morongo Creek at Augusta Avenue, CDFW considers the mitigation measure to be inadequate in scope to reduce impacts to biological resources to a level less than significant.

2-8 cont'd

CDFW recommends the MND is revised to include additional details on where jack and bore techniques will be used and discuss potential impacts to streams beyond Little Morongo Creek at Augusta Avenue. To support MSWD in avoiding or reducing impacts to streams to less than significant, CDFW recommends adding the following Mitigation Measure to a revised MND:

Mitigation Measure BIO-[A]: CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Program

Prior to construction and issuance of any grading permit, the Project Sponsor shall obtain written correspondence from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) stating that notification under section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code is not required for the Project, *or* the Project Sponsor should obtain a CDFW-executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, authorizing impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources associated with the Project.

3) Nesting Birds

It is the Project proponent's responsibility to comply with all applicable laws related to nesting birds and birds of prey. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 afford protective measures as follows: section 3503 states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as

2-9

amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.).

With regard to the CVMSHCP, per its associated Implementing Agreement and Permits from CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Wildlife Agencies), Take associated with Covered Activities will not be in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and will be consistent with Fish and Game Code sections 3503 and 3503.5; therefore, all Covered Activities within and outside Conservation Areas must undertake measures to avoid the take of individuals, nests, and eggs of nesting birds. The CVMSHCP includes a general conservation measure that applies to all bird species to avoid impacts to habitat for nesting birds during the nesting season (CVMSHCP Section 9.7). Per IA Section 13.2, MSWD is obligated to ensure the projects to which it confers Take Authorization under the CVMSHCP comply with all terms and requirements of the CVMSHCP, the Wildlife Agencies' Permits that create the CVMSHCP, and the Implementing Agreement, including compliance with laws that protect nesting birds.

2-9 cont'd

The MND indicates on page 61, "In general, impacts to all bird species (common and special status) can be avoided by conducting work outside of the nesting season, which is generally February 1st through August 31st." CDFW recommends to the greatest extent feasible that Project activities, including ground disturbing and vegetation removal activities, are conducted outside of the peak nesting bird season. CDFW also recommends the completion of nesting bird surveys *regardless* of the time of year to ensure that impacts to nesting birds and their nests and eggs are avoided. The timing of the nesting season varies greatly depending on several factors, such as bird species, weather conditions in any given year, and long-term climate changes (e.g., drought, warming, etc.). In response to warming, birds have been reported to breed earlier, thereby reducing temperatures that nests are exposed to during breeding and tracking shifts in availability of resources (Socolar et al., 2017[6]). CDFW staff have observed that climate change conditions may result in the nesting bird season occurring earlier and later in the year than historical nesting season dates. CDFW recommends that disturbance of occupied nests of resident and migratory birds and raptors within the Project site and surrounding area be avoided any time birds are nesting on-site. CDFW therefore recommends the completion of nesting bird surveys *regardless of the time of year* to ensure compliance with all applicable laws pertaining to nesting and migratory birds.

To support MSWD in avoiding or reducing impacts to nesting birds to a level less than significant, CDFW recommends Mitigation Measure BIO-10 is revised with the following additions in **bold** and removals in ~~strikethrough~~:

Mitigation Measure BIO-10: Nesting Birds

[6] Socolar JB, Epanchin PN, Beissinger SR and Tingley MW (2017). Phenological shifts conserve thermal niches. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 114(49): 12976-12981.

2-9 The comment pertains to the analysis in the IS/MND of nesting birds, and indicates that the Initial Study suggests that nesting bird surveys occur only during nesting season, but the commenter recommends that surveys be conducted regardless of the time of year. The suggested changes to MM BIO-10 are addressed in response to comment 2-10, below.

To the greatest extent feasible, the Project will avoid construction and any ground-disturbing activities during the peak nesting season (January 15 through September 15). Regardless of the time of year, ~~a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds~~ **nesting bird surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved**~~.~~ A qualified **avian** biologist ~~shall conduct the pre-activity survey~~ within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall
2-10 be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. **Nest buffers are species specific and** ~~The buffer~~ shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds~~, unless a~~**. A** smaller **or larger** buffer ~~is specifically~~ **may be** determined by **the**~~a~~ qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species **and based on nest and buffer monitoring results**. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and ~~an~~ **adequacy of the** established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).)
2-11 Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). The CNNDB field survey form can be filled out and submitted online at the following link: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Submitting-Data. The types of information reported to CNDDB can be found at the following link: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Plants-and-Animals.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEES

2-12 The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of environmental document filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental

2-10 The District appreciates CDFW's recommended modifications to MM BIO-10, as it pertains to nesting birds. As these modifications retain the same intent of MM BIO-10, i.e. to protect nesting birds from adverse impacts as a result of project implementation, the District concurs with intent of CDFW's modifications to Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-10 proposed in this comment, and proposes the following modified measure (modifications are underlined), which is hereby incorporated by reference into the Final IS/MND.

BIO-10 Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. Nest buffers are species specific and ~~The buffer~~ shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds~~, unless a~~. A smaller or larger buffer ~~is specifically~~ may be determined by the ~~a~~ qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species and based on nest and buffer monitoring results. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and ~~an~~ adequacy of the established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.

The above modification constitutes a modification to a mitigation measure that does not require recirculation pursuant to CEQA Section 15073.5(c). A written finding shall be adopted in the resolution proposed for adoption of this IS/MND that finds that the above measure is equivalent or more effective in mitigation or avoiding potential significant effects and that it in itself will not cause any potentially significant effect on the environment pursuant to CEQA Section 15074.1. The above measure would be equal to or more effective than that which was incorporated into the Initial Study.

2-11 The comment requests that special status species and natural communities detected during the project be reported to California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). The District will report any special status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to CNDDB. The link to CNDDB field survey form provided will be retained in the Project file, as will the email address that is provided in this comment. Additionally, the link pertaining to the types of information reported to CNDDB will be retained in the Project file.

2-12 The comment pertains to the payment of environmental filing fees related to CDFW. The District understands the assessment of CDFW filing fees, and understands that MSWD will be responsible for the payment of a filing fee upon filing the Notice of Determination for this Project.

2-12 cont'd review by CDFW. Payment of the environmental document filing fee is required in order for the underlying Project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

CONCLUSION

2-13 CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the MND to assist MSWD in identifying and mitigating Project impacts to biological resources. CDFW concludes that the MND does not adequately identify or mitigate the Project's significant, or potentially significant, impacts to biological resources. CDFW recommends that revised and additional mitigation measures and analysis as described in this letter be added to a revised MND.

CDFW personnel are available for consultation regarding biological resources and strategies to avoid and minimize impacts. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Jacob Skaggs, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist, at jacob.skaggs@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Kim Freeburn
84F92FFEEFD24C8...

Kim Freeburn
Environmental Program Manager

Attachment 1: MMRP for CDFW-Proposed Mitigation Measures

ec:

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2-13 This is a conclusory comment. The District thanks CDFW for the comments and for the commenter's time. The contact information provided in this comment will be retained in the Project file.

ATTACHMENT 1: MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM (MMRP)

Mitigation Measures	Timing and Methods	Responsible Parties
Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Burrowing Owl Focused and Pre-Construction Surveys **Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. Suitable burrowing owl habitat has been confirmed within the Project site and surrounding area; therefore, focused burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist within all suitable habitat prior to all vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities throughout the Project's subareas and phased timeline. CDFW strongly recommends that focused surveys are conducted in accordance with the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (2012 or most recent version)[7]. If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. CDFW recommends that the information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl**	**Timing: Focused surveys:** Consistent with timing in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation and prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. **Pre-construction surveys:** No less than 14 days prior to start of Project-related activities and again within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance and when there is a pause in construction of more than 30 days. **Methods:** See Mitigation Measure.	**Implementation**: Mission Springs Water District **Monitoring and Reporting**: Mission Springs Water District

2-14

[7] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. State of California, Natural Resources Agency. Available for download at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843.

2-14 cont'd

habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. **Preconstruction burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to the start of Project-related activities and again within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. Preconstruction surveys should be repeated when there is a pause in construction of more than 30 days. Preconstruction surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist, and CDFW strongly recommends that preconstruction surveys follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation*. If the preconstruction surveys confirm occupied burrowing owl habitat, Project activities shall be immediately halted and the qualified biologist shall coordinate with CDFW and USFWS. Project activities shall not begin until consultation with CDFW and USFWS is completed.**		
Mitigation Measure BIO-[A]: CDFW Lake and Streambed Alteration Program **Prior to construction and issuance of any grading permit, the Project Sponsor shall obtain written correspondence from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) stating that notification under section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code is not required for the Project, *or* the Project Sponsor should obtain a CDFW-executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, authorizing impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources associated with the Project.**	**Timing:** Prior to construction and issuance of any grading permit **Methods:** See Mitigation Measure	**Implementation**: Mission Springs Water District **Monitoring and Reporting**: Mission Springs Water District
Mitigation Measure BIO-10: Nesting Birds **To the greatest extent feasible, the Project will avoid construction and any ground-disturbing activities during the peak nesting season (January 15 through September 15). Regardless of the time of year, nesting bird surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved qualified avian biologist within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than**	**Timing:** No more than 3 days prior to vegetation removal or ground-disturbing activities. **Methods:** See Mitigation	**Implementation**: Mission Springs Water District **Monitoring and Reporting**: Mission Springs Water District

2-14 cont'd

three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. Nest buffers are species specific and shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds. A smaller or larger buffer may be determined by the qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species and based on nest and buffer monitoring results. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and adequacy of the established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.	Measure	

2-14 The District has addressed the mitigation measures requested to be incorporated into the Final IS/MND by CDFW in comments 2-5 and 2-6. The District has incorporated the proposed modifications to **MM BIO-8** to address CDFW's recommendations in comment 2-6 and 2-7. The District has incorporated the proposed modifications to **MM BIO-10** to address CDFW's recommendations in comment 2-9 and 2-10. The modifications to **MM BIO-9** proposed in comment 2-8 have not been incorporated into this IS/MND as the modifications were deemed not applicable or necessary to ensure protection of jurisdictional features. The items listed under Schedule and Responsible Party as they pertain to the MMs that will be incorporated into the Final IS/MND will be inputted into the MMRP, as applicable. The District appreciates CDFW's initiative in developing an MMRP for the proposed mitigation measures.

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
GROUNDWATER QUALITY PROTECTION PROGRAM SEPTIC TO SEWER PROJECT
MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM (MMRP)

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Aesthetics		
AES-1 The project shall implement at least the following measures, unless they conflict with the local jurisdiction's light requirements, in which case the local jurisdiction's requirements shall be enforced: • Use of low-pressure sodium lights where security needs require such lighting to minimize impacts of glare. • The height of lighting fixtures shall be lowered to the lowest level consistent with the purpose of the lighting to reduce unwanted illumination. • Directing light and shielding shall be used to minimize off-site illumination during both construction of the project. • No light shall be allowed to intrude into sensitive light receptor areas during both construction of the project. • Non-reflective materials and/or coatings shall be used on the exterior of all facilities if constructed in a publicly visible location (such as from a roadway or public facility).	The measure shall be incorporated into individual project design specifications, which shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction.	A copy of the construction contract including this aesthetic mitigation measure shall be retained in the project file(s). Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	Mission Springs Water District (MSWD)	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources		
BIO-1 Exclusion barriers (e.g., silt fences) will be installed at the edge of the construction footprint and along the outer perimeter of Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Environmentally Restricted Areas as defined by the project biologist prior to the commencement of construction activities to restrict special-status species from entering the construction area during construction. The design specifications of the exclusion fencing will be determined through consultation with the USFWS and/or CDFW, as appropriate. Clearance surveys will be conducted for special-status species after the exclusion fence is installed in compliance with USFWS and/or	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
CDFW requirements. The project biologist shall determine the frequency in which clearance surveys will be conducted to determine the efficacy of the exclusion fencing.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-2 All food-related trash items (e.g., wrappers, cans, bottles, food scraps) will be disposed of in closed containers and removed at least once a week from the construction site.	The survey(s) shall be conducted prior to construction. All actions pertaining to the discovery of burrowing owl shall occur prior to or during construction depending on the direction within the impact minimization plan.	A copy of the survey(s), and where required, the impact minimization plan, shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-3 Use of rodenticides and herbicides in the project footprint will be restricted at the direction of the project biologist. This measure is necessary to prevent poisoning of special-status species and the potential reduction or depletion of the prey populations of special–status wildlife species. Where pesticides must be used, they must be used in full accordance with use instructions for the particular chemical and at the direction of the project biologist.	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification. Additionally, this measure shall be implemented ongoing during operation.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file. During operations, site inspections by the District shall be performed to ensure adherence to this measure.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-4 Prior to the commencement of construction, MSWD shall identify staging areas for construction equipment to be utilized during construction that will be located outside sensitive biological resources areas, including habitat for special-status species, jurisdictional waters, and wildlife movement corridors. During construction and operation, the contractor shall eliminate all nonessential lighting throughout the project area and avoid or limit the use of artificial light during the hours of dawn and dusk when many wildlife species are most active. The contractor shall ensure that construction lighting for project activities is shielded, cast downward, and does not spill over onto other properties or upward into the night sky. The contractor shall ensure use of LED lighting with a correlated color temperature of 3,000 Kelvins or less, proper disposal of hazardous waste, and recycling of lighting that contains toxic compounds with a qualified recycler.	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification. Additionally, this measure shall be implemented ongoing during operation.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file. During operations, site inspections by the District shall be performed to ensure adherence to this measure.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-5 Plastic mono-filament netting (erosion-control matting) or similar material will <u>not</u> be used in erosion control materials to prevent potential harm to wildlife. Materials such as coconut coir matting or tackified hydroseeding compounds will be used as substitutes.	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-6 All excavated, steep-sided holes or trenches more than 8 inches deep will be covered at the close of each working day with plywood or similar materials, or a minimum of one escape ramp constructed of earth fill for every 10 feet of trenching will be provided to prevent the entrapment of wildlife. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they will be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. All culverts or similar enclosed structures with a diameter of 4 inches or greater will be covered, screened, or stored more than 1 foot off the ground to prevent use by wildlife. Stored material will be cleared for common and special-status wildlife species before the pipe is subsequently used or moved.	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-7 Pre-Construction Consultations. Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to consult with a biologist to determine the need for site-specific biological surveys. Where an area under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella has been determined to require a site-specific survey by a biologist, in any case in which the project will affect undeveloped land, site surveys shall be conducted by a biologist. If sensitive species are identified as a result of the survey for which mitigation/compensation must be provided in accordance with regulatory requirements, all work must stop in the area until the following subsequent mitigation actions are taken: 1. MSWD shall provide compensation for sensitive habitat acreage lost by acquiring and protecting in perpetuity (through property or mitigation bank credit acquisition) habitat for the sensitive	The survey(s) shall be conducted prior to construction with sufficient time to allow for consultation where sensitive species are most anticipated to be encountered, if anticipated to be encountered at all. Where applicable, compensatory habitat shall be acquired prior to operation of the facility.	A copy of the survey(s) and any acquisition paperwork pertaining to compensatory habitat shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District, as well as by retaining the Incidental Take Permit (ITP). Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
species at a ratio of not less than 1:1 for habitat lost. The property acquisition shall include the presence of at least one animal or plant per animal or plant lost at the development site to compensate for the loss of individual sensitive species. 2. The final mitigation may differ from the above values based on negotiations between the project proponent and USFWS and CDFW for any incidental take permits for listed species. MSWD shall retain a copy of the incidental take permit as verification that the mitigation of significant biological resource impacts at a project site with sensitive biological resources has been accomplished. 3. Preconstruction botanical surveys for special-status plant communities and special- status plant species will be conducted when needed in areas that were not previously surveyed because of access or timing issues or project design changes. Pre-construction surveys for special-status plant communities and special-status plant species will be conducted before the start of ground-disturbing activities during the appropriate blooming period(s) for the species.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure		Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources			
BIO-8	Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. ~~The burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version) prior to any construction activities, including vegetation or ground disturbing activities.~~ Suitable burrowing owl habitat has been confirmed within the Project site and surrounding area; therefore, focused burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within all suitable habitat	The preconstruction survey shall be conducted in advance of construction, and this measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
prior to all vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities throughout the Project's subareas and phased timeline. CDFW strongly recommends that focused surveys are conducted in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version).[1] If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground- disturbing activities. CDFW recommends that the information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, ~~appropriate NCCP (Fish and Game Code section 2835)~~ or CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.		

[1] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. State of California, Natural Resources Agency. Available for download at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Preconstruction burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to the start of Project-related activities and again within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. Preconstruction surveys should be repeated when there is a pause in construction of more than 30 days. Preconstruction surveys shall be performed by a CDFW-approved qualified biologist, and CDFW strongly recommends that preconstruction surveys follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. If the preconstruction surveys confirm occupied burrowing owl habitat, Project activities shall be immediately halted and the qualified biologist shall coordinate with CDFW and USFWS. Project activities shall not begin until consultation with CDFW and USFWS is completed.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study and Responses to comments	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources		
BIO-9 For the Little Morongo Creek crossing at Augusta Avenue, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) shall be notified pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602. If CDFW determines that the Project may substantially affect fish and wildlife resources, then CDFW shall issue a Streambed Alternation Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement shall include measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources. Through an Agreement from CDFW and/or other agencies (Corps, Regional Board [regulatory agencies]) with jurisdiction over impacts to jurisdictional waters, the District shall minimize discharge of fill to the extent feasible, and any discharge of fill not avoidable and all impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources shall be	If necessary, the regulatory permits shall be obtained prior to ground disturbance within the jurisdictional area and the conditions of the regulatory permits shall be implemented as defined in the regulatory permits.	A copy of the regulatory permits shall be retained in the project file(s), and verification that all conditions have been implemented shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
authorized and mitigated through compensatory mitigation in an Agreement. Mitigation shall be provided by restoration of temporary impacts, enhancement of existing resources, or for permanent impacts as follows: purchasing into CDFW, Corps, or Regional Board authorized mitigation bank; or by selecting a site near the Project site and enhancing it with a native riparian habitat or invasive species removal in accordance with a habitat mitigation plan approved by regulatory agencies; or by acquiring sufficient compensating habitat to meet regulatory agency requirements. Impacts to jurisdictional waters shall be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 ratio, with the ultimate compensatory mitigation ratio being determined through negotiation with regulatory agency, and never at a rate of less than 1:1. The ratio will rise based on the type of habitat, habitat quality, and presence of sensitive or listed plants or animals in the affected area. This ratio will be determined by the regulatory agency, and must be deemed sufficient by the regulatory agency issuing the permit to compensate for/offset the impacts to the jurisdictional waters and supported species and habitats therein. A Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Proposal shall be prepared by a biologist or regulatory specialist and reviewed and approved by the appropriate regulatory agencies. These agencies (Corps, Regional Board, CDFW and any other applicable regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the proposed facility improvement) can impose greater mitigation requirements in their permits, but the District will utilize the ratios outlined above as the minimum required to offset or compensate for impacts to jurisdictional waters, riparian areas or other wetlands.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources BIO-10 Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. Nest buffers are species specific and ~~The buffer~~ shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds~~, unless a~~. A smaller or larger buffer ~~is specifically~~ may be determined by the ~~a~~ qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species and based on nest and buffer monitoring results. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and ~~an~~ adequacy of the established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.	A copy of the field survey documenting no nesting birds shall be completed prior to initiating construction within the nesting season.	The District shall document the dates of construction. If construction is proposed to occur within the nesting season, a copy of the field survey documenting the absence of nesting birds shall be retained in the project file. Any coordination with CDFW pertaining to nesting birds shall also be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study and Responses to comments	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Biological Resources		
BIO-11 The project shall be required to comply with the provisions of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan requirements for projects adjacent to Conservation Areas, where construction occurs adjacent to Conservation Areas (the nearest Conservation Area is along the southern border of Area A and the northern border of Area K and J-2 (Upper Mission Creek Covered/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area) and the eastern border of Area I-10. 1) Drainage – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area. 2) Toxics – Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate byproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area. 3) Lighting – For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual. 4) Noise – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA Leq hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as	The provisions of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan shall be incorporated into the project design prior to project implementation.	District personnel shall document that each requirement of the CVMSHCP has been complied with within the project design. A copy of the design documenting the this shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual. 5) Invasives – Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112 [of the CVMSHCP]. The plants listed in Table 4-113 [of the CVMSHCP] shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Cultural Resources CUL-1 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the District's onsite inspector. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.	Any response to exposed resources shall occur during construction. Any reports documenting management and findings for accidentally exposed resources shall be completed within one year of the discovery.	A copy of the documentation of findings where applicable shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by District inspection personnel. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Cultural Resources CUL-2 Due to the heightened cultural sensitivity of the proposed project area, a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines) shall be present for excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils) in the archaeologically sensitive areas (specifically within Areas H and I). A sufficient number of archaeological monitors shall be present each work day to ensure that simultaneously occurring ground disturbing activities receive thorough levels of monitoring coverage. A Monitoring and Treatment Plan that is reflective of the project mitigation shall be completed by the archaeological consultant and submitted to the District and shall be approved by the District prior to implementation. Any and all findings will be subject to the protocol detailed within the Monitoring and Treatment Plan.	The monitoring agreement with the archaeologist shall be entered into prior to construction. The Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be developed prior to construction, and shall be agreed upon prior to construction involving ground disturbance. Any response to exposed resources shall occur during construction. This measure shall be included in the construction contract. The monitor, as specified in this measure, shall be present during the remainder of construction following any resource discovery.	A copy of the Monitoring and Treatment Plan thereof shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by District inspection personnel that verify the cultural resources monitoring and treatment plan is being implemented by the contractor as required in this measure. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Cultural Resources CUL-3 If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations shall be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a Phase II archaeological testing program. These procedures should include, at a minimum, the following: • Hand excavations in the immediate vicinity of unearthed cultural remains to remove all artifacts; • Immediate notification of the Riverside County Coroner and consultation with the NAHC and local Native American groups if human remains or potential human remains are discovered, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and	This measure shall be implemented during construction and included as part of the construction contract. Treatment of resources shall occur during and post construction as applicable.	A copy of all cultural resource reports and of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Any correspondence with SCCIC, EIC, NHMLAC, and/or SBCM shall be retained in the project file, including verification of receipt of applicable reports. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Public Resources Code §5097.98; • Cataloguing, laboratory analysis, and permanent curation of the recovered artifacts; • Compilation of archaeological site records and/or site record updates, as appropriate, to document any archaeological discoveries in the California Historical Resources Inventory; • Preparation of a final report as a comprehensive record of the research procedures and study findings.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Geology and Soils GEO-1 For each site-specific project that is less than one acre in size requiring ground disturbing activities such as grading, the implementing agencies shall identify and implement BMPs to minimize soil erosion and loss of topsoil comparable to that which would be required under a SWPPP (BMPs may include, but are not limited to hay bales, wattles, detention basins, silt fences, coir rolls, etc.) to ensure that the discharge of the storm runoff from the construction site does not cause erosion downstream of the discharge point. If any substantial erosion or sedimentation occurs as a result of discharging storm water from a project construction site, any erosion or sedimentation damage shall be restored to pre-discharge conditions.	The BMPs identified pursuant to this measure, and the requirement that substantial erosion or sedimentation be restored to pre-discharge conditions shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction.	A copy of the construction contract including this geology/soils mitigation measure shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure		Implementation Schedule	Verification
Geology and Soils			
GEO-2	All earth-moving operations reaching beyond the disturbed surface soils (generally five to six feet in depth within the existing roadbed) shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays and shall collect samples of sediments that are likely to contain fossil remains of small vertebrates or invertebrates. However, the monitor must have the power to temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens. Collected samples of sediment shall be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage. A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when submitted to the MSWD and the USACE, would signify completion of the statutory compliance process regarding paleontological resources.	Review by a qualified paleontologist shall occur prior to the commencement of construction, and if necessary, the report shall be drafted prior to construction. Any response to exposed resources shall occur during construction. Any reports documenting management and findings for accidentally exposed resources shall be completed within one year of the discovery.	The District shall be notified within 24-hours of accidental exposure of any paleontological resources. A copy of correspondence with the qualified paleontologist, and if applicable, the paleontology report, as well District and retained in the project file. A copy of the final report shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure		Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
HAZ-1	For project facilities that handle hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste, the HMBP prepared and submitted to the CUPA shall incorporate BMPs designed to minimize the potential for accidental release of such chemicals and shall meet the standards	The provision of this measure shall be identified in the project Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and implemented during construction.	A copy of the SWPPP shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by MSWD inspection personnel that verify the SWPPP

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
required by California law for HMBPs. The facility managers shall implement these measures to reduce the potential for accidental releases of hazardous materials or wastes. The HMBP shall be approved prior to operation of the given facility.		BMPs have been implemented as required in this measure. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
HAZ-1 For project facilities that handle hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste, the HMBP prepared and submitted to the CUPA shall incorporate BMPs designed to minimize the potential for accidental release of such chemicals and shall meet the standards required by California law for HMBPs. The facility managers shall implement these measures to reduce the potential for accidental releases of hazardous materials or wastes. The HMBP shall be approved prior to operation of the given facility.	The HMBP shall be completed prior to operation of an individual facility. The facility managers shall implement the measures identified in the HMBP to reduce the potential for accidental releases of hazardous materials or wastes and shall be implemented ongoing during operation.	A copy of the HMBP shall be retained in the project file and shall be submitted to the City or County for their records. This Plan shall be retained at the project site and made available to employees working at the facility. Site inspections shall be performed by the District to ensure compliance with the best management practices outlined in the Business Plan.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
HAZ-2 The HMBP shall assess the potential accidental release scenarios and identify the equipment and response capabilities required to provide immediate containment, control, and collection of any released hazardous material. Prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy, each facility shall ensure that necessary equipment has been installed and training of personnel has occurred to obtain sufficient	The HMBP shall be completed prior to operation of an individual facility.	A copy of the HMBP shall be retained in the project file. The HMBP shall be retained at the project site and made available to employees working at the facility. Site inspections shall be performed to ensure adequate equipment has been provided and

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
resources to control and prevent the spread of any accidentally released hazardous or toxic materials.		personnel have been adequately trained in accordance with the HMBP.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials HAZ-3 All hazardous materials that become waste during both operation and construction of project infrastructure shall be delivered to a licensed treatment, disposal, or recycling facility and be disposed of in accordance with State and Federal law.	This measure shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification, and shall be implemented ongoing during operation.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by MSWD. Field notes from inspections shall be retained in the project file. During operations, site inspections by MSWD shall be performed to ensure adherence to this measure. Documentation of hazardous materials disposal shall be retained in the project file for both operation and construction.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials HAZ-4 Before determining that an area contaminated as a result of an accidental release during project operation or construction is fully remediated, specific thresholds of acceptable clean-up shall be established and sufficient samples shall be taken and tested within	This measure shall be implemented following an accidental spill of any hazardous materials.	A copy of the specific threshold used for a spill shall be retained in the project file, and a copy of the sample test data verifying clean-up of the site shall also be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
the contaminated area to verify that these clean-up thresholds have been met in compliance with State and Federal law.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
HAZ-5 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the local CUPA and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into SWPPP prepared for each future facility developed under the project, or where an SWPPP is not required due Project size, shall be incorporated as a BMP. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.	This measure shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction, and shall be included as a measure in the SWPPP.	A copy of the SWPPP and construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the MSWD. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Hydrology and Water Quality		
HYD-1 Prior to the commencement of construction of any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella that will disturb less than one acre (i.e., that is not subject to the California Construction Stormwater General Permit), the Implementing Agency shall require implementation of and construction contractor(s) shall	This measure shall be implemented during construction and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Field notes from

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
select best management practices (BMPs) to achieve a reduction in pollutants from stormwater discharge to the maximum extent practicable during construction, and to control urban runoff after each individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella is in operation. Examples of BMP(s) that would achieve a reduction in pollutants include, but are not limited to: • The use of silt fences or coir rolls; • The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins; • The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff; • The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site; • The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads; • The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and • Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.		inspections shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Public Services		
PS-1 The project construction equipment shall be fenced or otherwise have access controlled at the close of each work day. Furthermore, the project shall include security lighting to deter illegal trespass to attractive nuisances as part of construction. The security lighting	This measure shall be incorporated into the final site design, and shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specifi-	A copy of the construction contract including this mitigation measure shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementa-

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
shall be shielded from adjacent sensitive receptors in accordance with the jurisdiction within which construction occurs Municipal Code.	cation and implemented by the contractor during construction.	tion shall be based on field inspections by the District.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Transportation TRAN-1 <u>Prepare and Implement Construction Transportation Management Plan (TMP)</u> A construction TMP shall be developed and implemented by the implementing agency, in coordination with the respective jurisdictions, the City of Desert Hot Springs, County of Riverside Transportation Department, and/or other relevant parties during construction of the proposed project. The TMP shall conform to Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines and shall include but is not limited to: <u>Construction Traffic Routes and Staging Locations:</u> The TMP shall identify construction staging site locations and potential road closures, alternate routes for detours, and planned truck routes for construction-related vehicle trips, including but not limited to haul trucks, material delivery trucks, and equipment delivery trucks. It shall also identify alternative safe routes and policies to maintain safety along bicycle and pedestrian routes during construction. Construction vehicle routes shall avoid local residential streets and avoid peak morning and evening commute hours to the maximum extent practicable. Staging locations, alternate detour routes, and construction vehicle routes shall avoid other active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites to the maximum extent practicable.	The Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be compiled and approved prior to the initiation of construction. The provisions of the Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be implemented during construction.	Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by MSWD inspection personnel that verify adequate traffic management resources are being used by the contractor as required in this measure. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Damage Repair: The TMP shall include the following requirements to minimize damage to the existing roadway network: • A list of precautionary measures to protect the existing roadway network, including but not limited to pavements, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and drainage structures, shall be outlined. The construction contractor(s) shall be required to implement these measures throughout the duration of construction of the proposed sewer pipeline. • The roadway network along the proposed sewer pipeline alignment(s) shall be surveyed prior to the start of project construction activities, and existing roadway conditions shall be summarized in a brief report. • Any damage to the roadway network that occurs as a result of project construction activities shall be noted, and MSWD or its contractors shall repair all damage. Coordination with Emergency Services: The TMP shall include requirements to notify local emergency response providers, including relevant police and sheriff departments, ambulance services, and paramedic services at least one week prior to the start of work within public ROW if lane and/or road closures are required. To the extent practicable, the duration of disruptions/closures to roadways and critical access points for emergency services shall be minimized. Coordination with Active Transportation Facilities: The TMP shall require coordination with owners/operators of any affected active transportation facilities to minimize the duration of disruptions/closures to bike paths, pedestrian trails, and adjacent access points. Coordination with Riverside Transit Agency (RTA): If the proposed project affects access to existing transit stops, the TMP shall also include temporary, alternative transit stops and directional signage, as determined in coordination with RTA.		

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Coordination with Caltrans: If the proposed project requires lane and/or road closures of State highways or State highway ramps, the TMP shall require coordination with Caltrans to ensure the TMP conforms with Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines. Coordination with Nearby Construction Sites: The TMP shall identify all active construction projects within 0.25 mile of project construction sites and require coordination with the applicants and/or contractors of these projects during all phases of construction regarding the following: • All temporary lane and/or roadway closures shall be coordinated to limit overlap of roadway closures; • All major deliveries and haul truck trips shall be coordinated to limit the occurrence of simultaneous deliveries and haul truck trips; and • MSWD, its contractor(s), or its representative(s) shall meet on a regular basis with the applicant(s), contractor(s) or their representative(s) of active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites during construction to address any outstanding issues related to construction vehicles. Transportation Control and Safety: The TMP shall provide for roadway vehicle control measures including flag persons, warning signs, lights, barricades, cones, and/or detour routes to provide safe passage of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and access by emergency responders. Plan Approval: The TMP shall be reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW for review and approval.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Tribal Cultural Resources TCR-1 Native American Cultural Monitor: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, MSWD shall develop an agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians-Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the appropriate number of Native American Cultural Monitor(s). The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall attend the pre-construction meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall be on site during ground disturbing activities on undisturbed soils and disturbance of section G, H, and I including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading and trenching. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.	The Tribal Monitoring Services Agreement shall be entered into prior to construction. Any response to exposed resources shall occur during construction. This measure shall be included in the construction contract. If a tribal cultural resources monitoring and treatment plan is ultimately required to be prepared, the plan shall be prepared during construction, prior to any further ground disturbance in the area that the resource is found. The monitor, as specified in this measure, shall be present during the remainder of construction following any resource discovery.	A copy of the Tribal Monitoring Services Agreement and Plan thereof shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by District inspection personnel that verify the cultural resources monitoring and treatment plan is being implemented by the contractor as required in this measure. Field notes documenting verification shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Tribal Cultural Resources TCR-2 Inadvertent Discoveries: MSWD or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If during ground disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed: All ground disturbance activities within 50 feet of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and a meeting shall be convened between the Native American tribal representative and MSWD to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting with the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the consulting Tribe(s), as to the appropriate treatment (documentation, recovery, avoidance etc.) for the cultural resource. A Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist shall be retained if deemed necessary	This measure shall be implemented during construction if human remains or funerary objects are exposed during construction. The stipulations set forth by this measure shall be included in the construction contract.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. The District shall retain all records of the discovery and management actions taken in regard to human remains or funerary objects in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
by the parties involved. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Tribal Cultural Resources TCR-3 Reburial Protocol: Prior to issuance of grading permits: the developer/applicant shall come to an agreement with the consulting tribes indicating an area on-site which will be used, if needed, for reburial of any artifacts that have been identified during the duration of the project and cannot be avoided. The location has to be kept confidential and in an area that will not be disturbed in the future.	This measure shall be implemented during construction if tribal cultural resources are exposed during construction. The stipulations set forth by this measure shall be included in the construction contract.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. The District shall retain all records of the discovery and management actions taken in regard to artifacts in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Tribal Cultural Resources TCR-4 Human Remains: Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, in the event of discovery of any human remains on the project site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains, until the County Coroner has examined the remains. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of Native American, the coroner shall contact the NAHC within 24-hours, and the NAHC will be responsible for identifying the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) and	This measure shall be implemented during construction if human remains are exposed during construction. The stipulations set forth by this measure shall be included in the construction contract.	A copy of the construction contract shall be retained in the project file. The District shall retain all records of the discovery and management actions taken in regard to human remains in the project file.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
contacting them for ongoing consultation and resolution. The project will be subject to these requirements during all construction and excavation activities. Compliance with the California Health and Safety Code will ensure that should there be a discovery of any human remains during project construction activities, impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.		

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Utilities and Service Systems		
UTIL-1 The contract with demolition and construction contractors for a given Replenish Big Bear Program project shall include the requirement that all materials that can feasibly be recycled shall be salvaged and recycled. This includes but is not limited to wood, metals, concrete, road base, soil and asphalt. The contractors for a given Replenish Big Bear Program project shall submit a recycling plan to the implementing agency for review and approval prior to issuance of permits for the construction of demolition/construction activities.	This measure shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction.	A copy of the construction contract including this mitigation measure shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Documentation of recycling shall be completed by the contractor and retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Schedule	Verification
Utilities and Service Systems		
UTIL-2 The contract with demolition and construction contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall include the requirement that all soils that are planned to be exported from the site that can be recycled shall be recycled	This measure shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction.	A copy of the construction contract including this mitigation measure shall be retained in the project file. Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Documentation of soils recycling

Mitigation Measure		Implementation Schedule	Verification
	for re-use; alternatively, soils shall be reused on site to balance soil import/export.		shall be completed by the contractor and retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

Mitigation Measure		Implementation Schedule	Verification
Wildfire			
WF-1	Prior to initiating construction of proposed sewer pipeline and laterals within public ROW, MSWD shall prepare and implement a traffic control plan that contains comprehensive strategies for maintaining emergency access during construction. Strategies shall include, but are not limited to, maintaining steel trench plates at the construction sites to restore access across open trenches, flag persons and related assets to manage the flow of traffic, and identification of alternate routing around construction zones, where necessary. In addition, police, fire, and other emergency service providers (local agencies, Caltrans, and other service providers) shall be notified of the timing, location, and duration of the construction activities and the location of detours and lane closures. MSWD shall ensure that the traffic control plan and other construction activities are consistent with the County of Riverside Emergency Operations Plan, and are reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW.	This measure shall be included in the construction contract as a contract specification and implemented by the contractor during construction. The TMP shall be developed prior to initiation of construction.	A copy of the TMP and construction contract shall be retained in the project file(s). Verification of implementation shall be based on field inspections by the District. Additionally, correspondence with Caltrans, and/or the corresponding County or City traffic management division shall be retained in the project file.

Source	Responsible Party	Status / Date / Initials
Initial Study	MSWD	

FINAL INITIAL STUDY

INITIAL STUDY

FOR THE

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT GROUNDWATER QUALITY PROTECTION PROGRAM SEPTIC TO SEWER PROJECT

Prepared for:

Mission Springs Water District
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Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

Prepared by:

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April 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Environmental Checklist 1

Project Description 1

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected 25

Determination 26

Evaluation of Environmental Impacts 27
I. Aesthetics 29
II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources 33
III. Air Quality 36
IV. Biological Resources 54
V. Cultural Resources 76
VI. Energy 88
VII. Geology and Soils 90
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions 100
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials 104
X. Hydrology and Water Quality 124
XI. Land Use and Planning 139
XII. Mineral Resources 141
XIII. Noise 144
XIV. Population and Housing 163
XV. Public Services 165
XVI. Recreation 172
XVII. Transportation 174
XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources 185
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems 189
XX. Wildfire 195
XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance 199

Summary of Mitigation Measures 203

References 214

APPENDICES (Provided as Separate Individual Files)

Appendix 1 Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment
Appendix 2 Biological Resources Assessment
Appendix 3 Cultural Resources Assessment
Appendix 4 Soils Maps
Appendix 5 Paleontological Resources Report
Appendix 6 Noise Impact Analysis

FIGURES

Figure 1	APE Map	10
Figure 2	Area A Sewer Improvements	11
Figure 3	Area A Sewer Improvements	12
Figure 4	Area D-3 Sewer Improvements	13
Figure 5	Area D-3 Sewer Improvements	14
Figure 6	Area G Sewer Improvements	15
Figure 7	Area G Sewer Improvements	16
Figure 8	Area H Sewer Improvements	17
Figure 9	Area H Sewer Improvements	18
Figure 10	Area I Sewer Improvements	19
Figure 11	Area I Sewer Improvements	20
Figure 12	Area K Sewer Improvements	21
Figure 13	Area K Sewer Improvements	22
Figure 14	Area J-2 Sewer Improvements	23
Figure 15	Area I-10 Corridor	24
Figure I-1	Scenic Highways Map	32
Figure II-1	Agricultural Map	35
Figure IV-1	Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Map	95
Figure IV-2	Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Areas Near I-10 Corridor	96
Figure IV-3	Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Map	97
Figure VII-1	Seismic Hazards	98
Figure VII-2	Surface Sediments Map	99
Figure IX-1	Wildfire Hazards	112
Figure IX-2	Area A GeoTracker	113
Figure IX-3	Area D-3 GeoTracker	114
Figure IX-4	Area I-10 GeoTracker	115
Figure IX-5	Area G GeoTracker	116
Figure IX-6	Areas H, I, J-2, K GeoTracker	117
Figure IX-7	GeoTracker Info Area G	118
Figure IX-8	GeoTracker Info Area I-10 (1)	119
Figure IX-9	GeoTracker Info Area I-10 (2)	120
Figure IX-10	Palm Springs International Airport Compatibility Map	121
Figure IX-11	CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer State Responsibility Areas	122
Figure IX-12	CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer Local Responsibility Areas	123
Figure X-1	Groundwater Resources Map	134
Figure X-2	Flood Hazard Map	135
Figure X-3	FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Areas A and D-3	136
Figure X-4	FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Areas H, I, J-2, K	137

Figure X-5 FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Area I-10 138

Figure XII-1 Mineral Resources 143

Figure XIII-1 Noise Measurement Locations 160
Figure XIII-2 Noise Sensitive Receptors 161
Figure XIII-3 Construction Locations 162

Figure XV-1 Schools Map 171

Figure XVII-1 Desert Hot Springs Roadways Plan 179
Figure XVII-2 Desert Hot Springs Bicycle Plan 180
Figure XVII-3 Desert Hot Springs Pedestrian Plan 181
Figure XVII-4 Desert Hot Springs Transit Plan 182
Figure XVII-5 Palm Springs Circulation Plan 183
Figure XVII-6 Palm Springs Bikeways and Recreational Trails 184

EXHIBIT

Exhibit XIII-1 Typical Noise Levels 145

TABLES

Table III-1 Maximum Daily Regional Emissions Thresholds 39
Table III-2 Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) 42
Table III-3 Construction Activities 43
Table III-4 Construction Equipment 44
Table III-5 Regional Construction Emissions Summary 45
Table III-6 Maximum Daily Localized Construction Thresholds 49
Table III-7 Construction Localized Significance Summary 49

Table V-1 Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Scope of the Records Search . 79

Table VII-1 Soil Units in Project Footprint 93

Table VIII-1 Emissions (Metric Tons CO_2e) 102

Table XIII-1 Significance Criteria Summary 147
Table XIII-2 Ambient Noise Level Measurements 148
Table XIII-3 Construction Reference Noise Levels 151
Table XIII-4 Daytime Construction Equipment Noise Level Summary 153
Table XIII-5 Construction Noise Level Compliance 153
Table XIII-6 Daytime Construction Noise Level Summary 155
Table XIII-7 Nighttime Noise Level Compliance 156
Table XIII-8 Nighttime Construction Noise Increases 157
Table XIII-9 Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment 158

Table III-2 Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (repeated) 175

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACROYNMS

°F	Fahrenheit
AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
ACBCI	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
AF	acre feet
AF	Acre Feet
AFY	acre feet per year
AKA	also known as
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effect
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARB	Air Resources Board
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
BACMs	Best Available Control Measures
bgs	belowground surface
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BPELS	Building and Professions Code Sections
BPELSG	Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists
BRA	Biological Resources Assessment
BUOW	Burrowing Owl
BWh	hot desert climate
C	Commercial
C-BP	Commercial Business Park
C-H	Commercial Highway
C&D	construction and demolition
C_2Cl_4	perchloroethylene
C_2H_4O	acetaldehyde
C_4H_6	1,3-butadiene
C_6H_6	benzene
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendment
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAR	California Climate Action Registry

CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CGP	Construction General Permit
CH_2O	formaldehyde
CH_4	methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
COA	Conditions of Approval
COCs	constituents of concern
COH	coefficient of haze
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CRECs	controlled recognized environmental conditions
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRMP	Cultural Resource Management Plan
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CVWD	Coachella Valley Water District
CWA	Clean Water Act
CY	cubic yard
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DDW	Division of Drinking Water
DOI	Department of the Interior
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
DWA	Desert Water Agency
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EAP	Energy Action Plan
EC	elemental carbon
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Orders
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FE	Federally Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FGC	Fish & Game Code
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FICON	Federal Interagency Committee on Noise
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FT	Federal Threatened
FTA	Federal Transit Association

GCC	Global Climate Change
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
gpm	gallons per minute
GQPP	Groundwater Quality Protection Program
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plans
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
HMBP	Hazardous Materials Business Plan
hP	horse power
HREC	historical recognized environmental conditions
HSA	Hydrologic Sub-Area
HSC	Health and Safety Code
I	Industrial
I-10	Interstate 10
I-L	Industrial Light
in/sec	inches per second
IWA	Indio Water Authority
km	kilometers
kWh	kilowatt hour
lbs./day	Pounds Per Day
Leq	equivalent continuous sound level
LF	lineal feet
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
LSA	Lake or Streambed Alteration
LST	Localized Significance Thresholds
LUCI	Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCL	maximum contamination level
MDR	Medium Density Residential
MGD	million gallon per day
MICR	maximum individual cancer risk
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MM	Mitigation Measure
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MPH	miles per hour
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
MSHCP	Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan
MSWD	Mission Springs Water District
MT	Metric Ton
$MTCO_2e/yr$	Metric Tons of CO_2 equivalent per year
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NBP	Nesting Bird Plan

NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
No.	Number
NO2 or NOx	Nitrogen Dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NVA	Noise and Vibration Analysis
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O3	Ozone
OPR	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
OS	Open Space
Pb	Lead
PFCs	perfluorocarbons
PM 10	Fine Particulate Matter
PM 2.5	Fine Particulate Matter
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resource Code
PV	Photovoltaic
R	Refrigerants
R-RD	Residential Rural Desert
RCFD	Riverside County Fire Department
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RECs	recognized environmental conditions
ROG	reactive organic gases
ROW	Rights-of-Way
RTA	Riverside Transit Authority
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RWQCB	Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board
RWRF	Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCE	Southern California Edison
SEAs	Significant Ecological Areas
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SGMP	Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan
SLF	Sacred Land File
SO2	Sulfur Dioxide
SOI	Secretary of Interior
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SSMP	Sewer System Management Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resources
TGA	Trip Generation Assessment
TGE	Trip Generation Evaluation
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Office
TMP	Transportation Management Plan
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VdB	vibration-velocity decibel
VES	Vapor Encroachment Screen
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds
vph	vehicles per hour
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan
YSMN	Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
ZNE	Zero Net Energy

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title	Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic to Sewer Project
Lead Agency Name	Mission Springs Water District
Address	66575 Second Street, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240
Contact Person	Brian E. Macy, General Manager
Phone Number	(760) 329-6448
Email	bmacy@mswd.org

Project Location

The Mission Springs Water District (MSWD or District) service area is located in southern California within the northwestern portion of the Coachella Valley. The proposed project will install sewer main lines and laterals within roadways and existing rights-of-way, and abatement of septic tanks, within MSWD's service area. Specifically, several sewer improvement sub-areas were identified to target septic tank abatements; these areas include: A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor as shown on the Area of Potential Effect (APE) Map provided as **Figure 1.**

Area A (**Figures 2 and 3**)

Latitude/Longitude: 33°58'50.67"N, 116°32'3.06"W

The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 2 and 3**. These roadways are: Augusta Avenue, La Costa Court, Annandale Avenue, Cochran Court, Desert Air Court, Oakmont Boulevard, Barnes Court, Egan Court, Leonard Court, Ray Court, Leith Avenue, Little Court, Cotton Court, Inglewood Avenue, Hoylake Road, Cascades Drive, Smith Court, Burke Court, Boros Court, Brae Burn Avenue, Spyglass Avenue, Ekwanok Drive, Warwick Drive, Picard Court, Vardon Court, Kirkwood Court, Turnesa Court, Diegel Court, Capiland Drive, Congressional Road, Apawamis Road, Siwanoy Drive, Sanderling Court, Pinehurst Circle, Troon Court, Middlecoff Court, Brookline Avenue, Lido Court, Jones Court, Devicenzo Court, Doral Drive, Clubhouse Boulevard, and Lema Court. The project site is generally located within Section 23, Township 2 South, Range 4 West of the USGS 7.5 Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs and County of Riverside.

Area D-3 (**Figures 4 and 5**)

Latitude/Longitude: 33°58'26.24"N, 116°30'12.04"W

The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 4 and 5**. These roadways are: Cactus Drive, 12th Street, San Juan Drive, and San Marcus Road. The project site is generally located within Section 30, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area G (**Figures 6 and 7**)

Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'21.77"N, 116°29'21.22"W

The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 6 and 7**. These roadways are: Verbena Drive, Ambrosio Drive, Pomelo Drive, Foxdale Drive, Tamar Drive, Sumac Drive, Desert View

Drive and Parma Drive. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area H (**Figures 8 and 9**)
Latitude/Longitude: 33°56'51.73"N, 116°28'53.60"W
The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 8 and 9**. These roadways are: Tunitas Road, Suerte Way, Oro Loma Street, Ortega Drive, Pequena Drive, Cerrita Way, Loma Vista Road, Key Way, Monterey Road, Agua Cayendo Road, Cuando Way, Oris Drive, Cielo Azul Way, Miracle Hill Road, Eliseo Road, and Hacienda Avenue. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area I (**Figures 10 and 11**)
Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'10.17"N, 116°28'36.67"W
The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 10 and 11**. These roadways are: Monterico Road, Desert View Avenue, Arena Blanca Road, Alameda Road, Pequena Drive, Loma Vista Road, Hidalgo Street, Hermano Way, Inaja Street, and Quinta Way. The project site is generally located within Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area J-2 (**Figure 12**)
Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'24.43"N, 116°28'25.98"W
The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figure 12**. These roadways are: Mountain View Road, Highland Avenue, Skyline Drive, Calle Amapola, Avenida Serena, Redbud Road, Calle Blanco, Avenida Hermosa, Via Domingo, Hacienda Road, Acacia Avenue, Beech Avenue, Catalpa Avenue, Deodar Avenue, Calle Bonita, Calle Calmoso, Calle Descanso, Avenida Alta Loma, and Monterico Road. The project site is generally located within Section 33, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

Area K (**Figures 13 and 14**)
Latitude/Longitude: 33°57'27.69"N, 116°27'58.33"W
The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figures 13 and 14**. These roadways are: Juniper Drive, Fernwood Drive, Elm Avenue, Deodar Avenue, Catalpa Avenue, Birch Road, Beech Avenue, Hacienda Avenue, Redbud Road, Skyline Drive, and Spruce Street. The project site is generally located within Section 33, Township 2 South, Range 5 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Seven Palms Valley, CA topographical quadrangle. This Sub Area occurs within the City of Desert Hot Springs.

I-10 and North Indian Canyon Drive Corridor Area (Area I-10 Corridor) (**Figure 15)**
Latitude/Longitude: 33°54'16.41"N, 116°32'33.88"W
The pipelines will be installed within the roadways shown on **Figure 12**. These roadways are: Garnet Avenue, Indian Canyon Drive, 20th Avenue, 19th Avenue, Orr Way, McLane Street, Ruppert Street, and Newhall Street. The project site is generally located within Section 14, Township 3 South, Range 4 East of the USGS 7.5 Minute Desert Hot Springs, CA topographical quadrangle. Note that this area is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs and City of Palm Springs.

Project Sponsor Name	Mission Springs Water District
Address	66575 Second Street, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240
Land Use Designation	N/A (Sewer Installation within rights-of-way [ROW])
Zoning Classification	N/A (Sewer Installation within rights-of-way [ROW])

Project Description

Introduction

Mission Springs Water District (MSWD or District) provides water and sewer services to the communities of Desert Hot Springs, West Garnet, North Palm Springs, and various portions of unincorporated Riverside County. MSWD, as the Lead Agency pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is proposing to install approximately 146,200 linear feet (LF) of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This would also protect hot mineral water, which is the economic basis of the community's spa industry.

In February 1999, MSWD adopted the MSWD Sewer Improvement Project, which was intended to convert approximately 5,000 existing septic disposal treatment systems to a sewer conveyance and treatment system. The project was approved to develop about 62.8 miles of sewer line and a one million gallon per day (MGD) expansion of the District's Horton Wastewater Treatment Plant. In March of 2011, MSWD adopted an Addendum to the MSWD Sewer Improvement Project titled "Addendum No. 1 for AD-12 Sewer Improvement Project," which would enable the District to install about 57 miles of sewer pipelines and wastewater collection within the District's service area. The proposed Groundwater Quality Protection Program (GQPP) Septic to Sewer Project is an extension of the original project from 1999, but because over 25 years have passed since the original project was adopted and several of the original sewer improvement areas have been completed, a follow-on Initial Study is being prepared to address the potential impacts from the installation of the proposed 27.6 miles (approximately 146,200 Linear Feet [LF]) of sewer pipeline. Note that the proposed GQPP Sub Areas that remain a part of this proposed Update project are as follows: A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor as shown on the area of potential effect APE Map provided as **Figure 1.**

The District developed the GQPP to protect and preserve the quality of its most valuable natural resource which is, groundwater. The overall GQPP is designed to protect groundwater quality from degradation by discharges from septic tank leach-fields. The GQPP would remove more than 2,040 septic tanks for connection to MSWD's sewer system. The proposed sewer improvements focus on GQPP Sub Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and the I-10 corridor. Construction is planned to connect 2,600 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate over 2,040 on-site septic systems. In addition, the project includes installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed improvements would also increase wastewater effluent available for treatment to tertiary levels and for reuse as recycled water in the future.

Project Description

MSWD proposes to construct 146,200 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within GQPP Sub Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, as well as a new Sub Area "I-10 Corridor" shown on the APE Map provided as **Figure 1**. What follows is a description of each of the individual areas that MSWD is considering converting existing septic uses to be connected to MSWD's sewer collection system.

Area A **(Figures 2 and 3**)
MSWD proposes to construct 40,000 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area A of District's service area, within an area of approximately 337 acres. **Figures 2 and 3** depict Sub Area A and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area A would install sewer mains to connect an anticipated 879 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 836 on-site septic systems. In addition, Area A also proposes the installation of 879 new 4-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area A (**Figures 2 and 3**).

Construction Timing: 60 months required to construct. Note, as funding becomes available, Area A will be phased for construction. As of now, there may be up to 5 phases of construction, with each phase lasting approximately 30 months (overlapping with subsequent phases) which equates to approximately 5 years total. As funding becomes available, each phase will be constructed; as such, there is no guarantee that each phase will be completed in overlapping fashion.

Area D-3 (**Figures 4 and 5**)
MSWD proposes to construct 4,500 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area D-3 of District's service area, within an area of approximately 33 acres. **Figures 4 and 5** depict Sub Area D-3 and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area D-3 would install sewer mains connect an anticipated 102 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 82 on-site septic systems. In addition, Area D-3 proposes the installation of 102 new service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area D-3 (**Figures 4 and 5**).

Construction Timing: 6 months required to construct.

Area G (**Figures 6 and 7**)
MSWD proposes to construct 9,700 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area G of District's service area, within an area of approximately 119.2 acres. **Figures 6 and 7** depict Sub Area G and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area G would install sewer mains to connect an anticipated 196 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 124 on-site septic systems, and install 196 new 4-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area G (**Figures 6 and 7**). The proposed project involves installation at one location that is not located within a defined roadway, but is along a compacted dirt pathway that extends south of Desert View Avenue at Foxdale Drive on the eastern side of Cabot Yerxa Elementary School.

Construction Timing:12 months required to construct.

Area H (**Figures 8 and 9**)
MSWD proposes to construct 16,200 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area H of District's service area, within an area of approximately 130 acres. **Figures 8 and 9** depict Sub Area H and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area H would install sewer mains to connect an anticipated 342 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 217 on-site septic systems, and install 342 new 4-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area H (**Figures 8 and 9**).

Construction Timing: 22 months required to construct.

Area I (**Figures 10 and 11**)
MSWD proposes to construct 14,400 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area I of District's service area, within an area of approximately 92.2 acres. **Figures 10 and 11** depict Sub Area I and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area I would install sewer mains to connect an anticipated 33 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 251 on-site septic systems, and install 334 new 4-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area I (**Figures 10 and 11**). The proposed project involves installation of pipeline at one location that is not within a roadway to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. This pipeline will skirt the boundaries of the homes within Sub Area I.

Construction Timing: 20 months required to construct.

Area J-2 (**Figure 12**)
MSWD proposes to construct 15,700 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area J-2 of District's service area, within an area of approximately 96.3 acres. **Figure 12** depict Sub Area J-2 and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area J-2 would install the sewer mains to connect an anticipated 319 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 252 on-site septic systems, and install 319 new service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area J-2 (**Figure 12**).

Construction Timing: 22 months required to construct.

Area K (**Figures 13 and 14**)
MSWD proposes to construct 12,500 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8-inch in size within Sub Area K of District's service area, within an area of approximately 77 acres. **Figures 13 and 14** depict Sub Area K and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for Sub Area K would install the sewer mains to connect an anticipated 248 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 193 on-site septic systems, and install 248 new 4-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area K (**Figures 13 and 14**).

Construction Timing:12 months required to construct.

Area I-10 Corridor (**Figure 15)**

MSWD proposes to construct 33,200 LF of new sewer pipeline that would be 8, 10, 12, 15, 18 and 21 -inch in size within Sub Area I-10 Corridor of District's service area, within an area of approximately 1,120 acres. **Figure 15** depicts Sub Area I-10 Corridor and the proposed pipeline alignments. Construction of the new sewer mains for the I-10 Sub Area Corridor would install the sewer mains to connect an anticipated 54 parcels to the MSWD sewer system and abate an estimated 42 on-site septic systems, and install an estimated 54 new 4-Inch and 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project would install sewer mains within a number of existing roadways as they align with Sub Area I-10 Corridor (**Figure 15**). The proposed project involves installation of sewer mains between Garnet Avenue to the east of Indian Canyon Drive, north to 20th Avenue, of which the boring under the I-10 has already been completed. Additionally, the development of this Sub Area requires installation of pipeline within dirt roadways (20th Avenue to the east of the proposed sewer connection from Garnet Avenue to the South and 19th Street from just east of Calle de los Romos to the Nancy Wright Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility [RWRF]),

Construction Timing: 48 months required to construct. (This project will likely be completed in phases as funding becomes available, much like Area A).

Construction Scenario

Construction of this project is anticipated to occur over a period of about 20 years, with one Sub Area to be constructed approximately every 30 months. It is assumed that an underground utility installation team can install approximately 200-400 lineal feet of sewer pipeline per day. In addition, a septic abatement team can complete up to five (5) septic tank abatements per day. A team consists of the following:

- Approximately 200-400 LF of pipeline installed per day
  - 1 Pavement Cutter
  - 2 Excavator
  - 1 Backhoe/Compactor
  - 1 Loader
  - 1 Dump/Haul Truck
  - 1 Paver
  - 1 Roller/Vibrator
  - 1 Water truck
  - 2 Worker Utility Trucks
  - 1 Forman Truck
  - Traffic Control Signage and Devices
  - 10 Dump/delivery trucks (50 miles round trip distance)
  - Employees (11 members per team)

- Approximately five (5) septic tanks abatements per day
  - 1 Excavator
  - 1 Backhoe
  - 1 Septic Truck (Operating 2 hours per day)
  - 1 Water truck
  - 2 Worker Utility Trucks

- 1 Forman Truck
- Traffic Control Signage and Devices
- 2 Dump/delivery trucks (50 miles round trip distance)
- Employees (6-8 members per team)

The emissions calculations are based upon the above assumptions for each sewer main installation and septic abatement team. For air emission calculations it is further assumed that one team will be installing sewer mains and 1 team will be completing septic abatements. The final activity associated with the sewer main installation is repaving of roads disturbed by the construction, in addition to returning the surfaces of compacted dirt road and shoulder areas within the ROW to the original condition. The final activity associated with the septic abatement is restoring native and landscaped areas disturbed by the construction to the original condition. Note re-paving will likely occur as quickly as possible when large enough areas are completed.

The project will utilize open cut trenching for a vast majority of the sewer reaches and septic abatement areas, with jack and bore techniques for certain small areas. The depth to the invert of the pipe will be approximately 8 feet deep in the open cut trench areas and approximately 12 to 15 feet deep under the existing drainage channel between Hidalgo Street and Quinta Way.

The actual schedule implemented will be dictated by the Contractor.

Surrounding land uses and setting:

The proposed project would occur over the various GQPP Sub Areas located throughout the City of Desert Hot Springs, City of Palm Springs, and Unincorporated Riverside County, overlapping within an area of about 2,000 acres. As a result, the mix of land uses that occur within the project area includes nearly all of the land uses that could be found within the City of Desert Hot Springs; and further, within the City of Palm Springs, the land use is generally Industrial (IND) in nature, with some areas designated for Open Space Desert (OS-D), and a small area designated for Medium Density Residential (MDR). Within Unincorporated Riverside County, the predominant land uses are Medium Density Residential, Commercial Retail, Open Space Recreation, Conservation, and Medium High Density Residential. Within all "lettered" Sub Areas, the predominant land uses are residential in nature.

Other agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

If listed species are involved, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) may have to issue incidental take permits or permits may be obtained under the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The Corps of Engineers, CDFW and Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) may need to participate in review of any discharge of fill into or alteration of a streambed. The proposed project may also require consultation under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), and thereby the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC). The whole of the project exceeds the threshold for a General Construction National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This requires notification to the State Water Board and preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

(SWPPP). The proposed project will require encroachment permits from City of Desert Hot Springs, the City of Palm Springs, and County of Riverside to construct the sewer mains within existing road rights-of-way.

Assembly Bill 52 Consultation

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and cultural affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?[1]

An AB 52 consultation letter was sent on July 24, 2025 to the only tribe that has requested consultation from the District: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The Tribe responded on July 25, 2025 requesting several items. The District provided the requested items to the Tribe at their request, as the materials (Initial Study, Cultural Resources Report) became available. The Tribe also requested a meeting with the District, which occurred on December 24, 2025. The result of this meeting was a request for specific mitigation language to be incorporated into the project as part of this Initial Study to ensure protection of Tribal Cultural Resources. These mitigation measures address (1) the requirement for a Native American cultural monitor to be present for construction, (2) protocol for inadvertent discoveries of tribal cultural resources, (3) reburial protocol, and (4) discovery of human remains. With the implementation of these mitigations, which require continued consultation with the Tribe, AB 52 consultation has concluded.

*Note that as part of the effort to prepare the "Identification And Evaluation Of Historic Properties Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic-To-Sewer Update Project" by CRM TECH (**Appendix 3**), and as part of the written request to the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a records search in the Commission's Sacred Lands File (SLF), five of the tribes have responded to the inquiry in writing, and three others have provided their comments by telephone. Among them, the Augustine Band, the Quechan Indian Tribe, and the Santa Rosa Band expressed no concerns over this undertaking. The Quechan Indian Tribe deferred to other tribes in closer proximity to the APE, while the Soboba Band and the Torres Martinez band deferred specifically to the Agua Caliente Band. The Agua Caliente Band also consider the APE a part of their traditional use area. In addition, the Agua Caliente Band reported that there were several tribal cultural resources adjacent to the APE. Therefore, the tribe requested to review all cultural resources documentation generated for this undertaking, including the records search results, which has since been provided as described in the first paragraph above.*

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band stated that they were unaware of any cultural resources in the APE, and the Yuhaaviatam found the area to be low in sensitivity for cultural resources. Both tribes, however, consider the project location to be a part of their traditional territory. The Twenty-Nine Palms Band requested that MSWD protect tribal cultural and cultural resources. Based on the fact that a Native

[1] Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

American monitor will be present during construction, and that the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians put forth protocol for treatment of such resources, MSWD believes that this request by the Twenty-Nine Palms Band has been met. Note that this tribe has not requested formal consultation under AB 52. The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN) indicated that it wished to engage in in government-to-government consultation pursuant to AB 52. However, the Tribe has not sent the initial formal consultation request pursuant to AB 52 to MSWD that would require consultation. Regardless, on January 9th, 2026, Mr. Eric Weck of MSWD reached out to the contact at YSMN that was contacted by CRM TECH (refer to ***Appendix 3****) to ascertain whether the Tribe wished to provide MSWD with an initial consultation request from the Tribe pursuant to PRC 21080.3.1(b). To date, MSWD has not received a response back, and therefore considers that no formal AB 52 consultation with the YSMN is required. However, as with the Twenty-Nine Palms Band, a Native American monitor will be present during construction, and MSWD will be required to implement mitigation that the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians put forth addressing protocol for treatment of tribal cultural resources.*

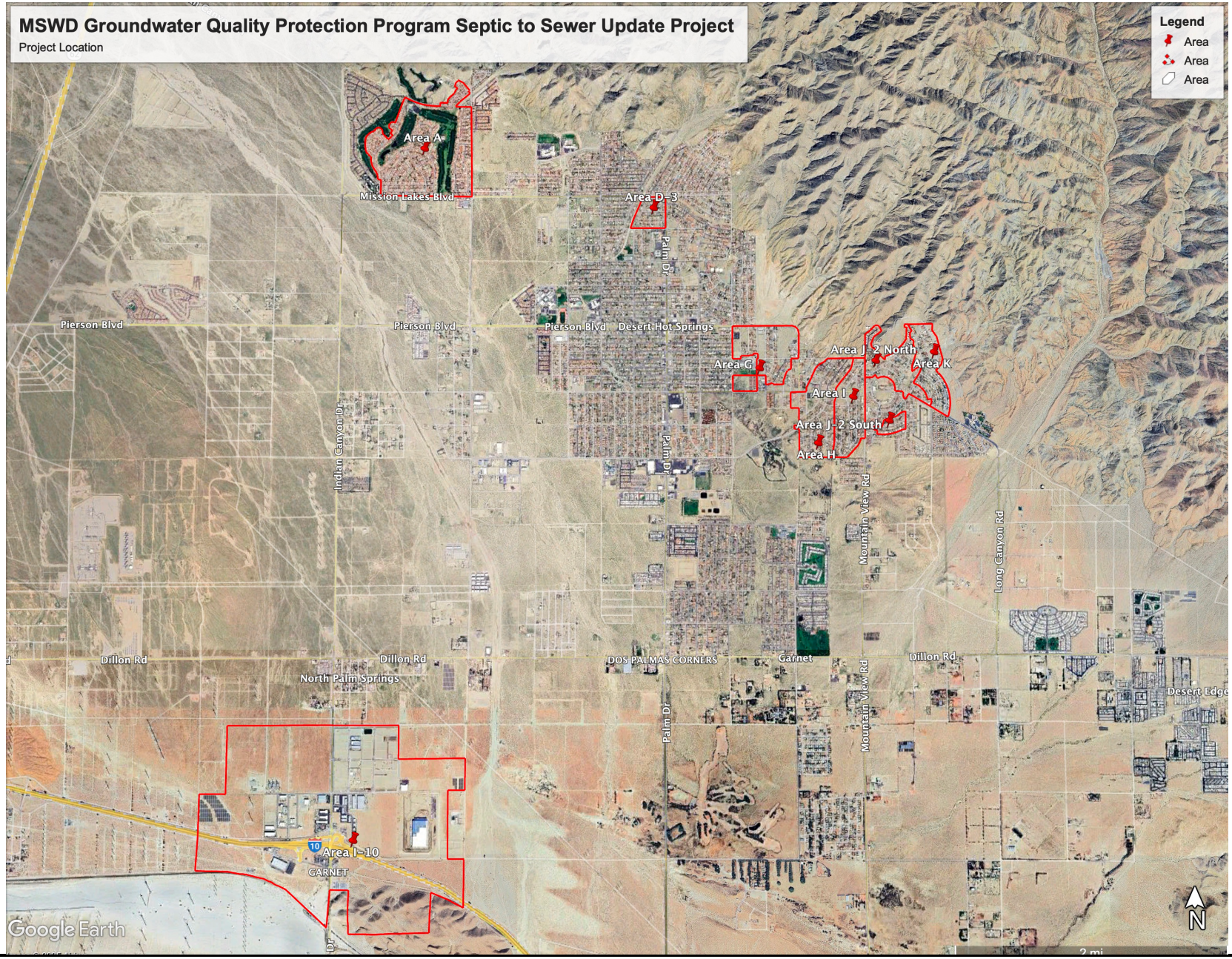

FIGURE 1

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Environmental Consultants

APE Map

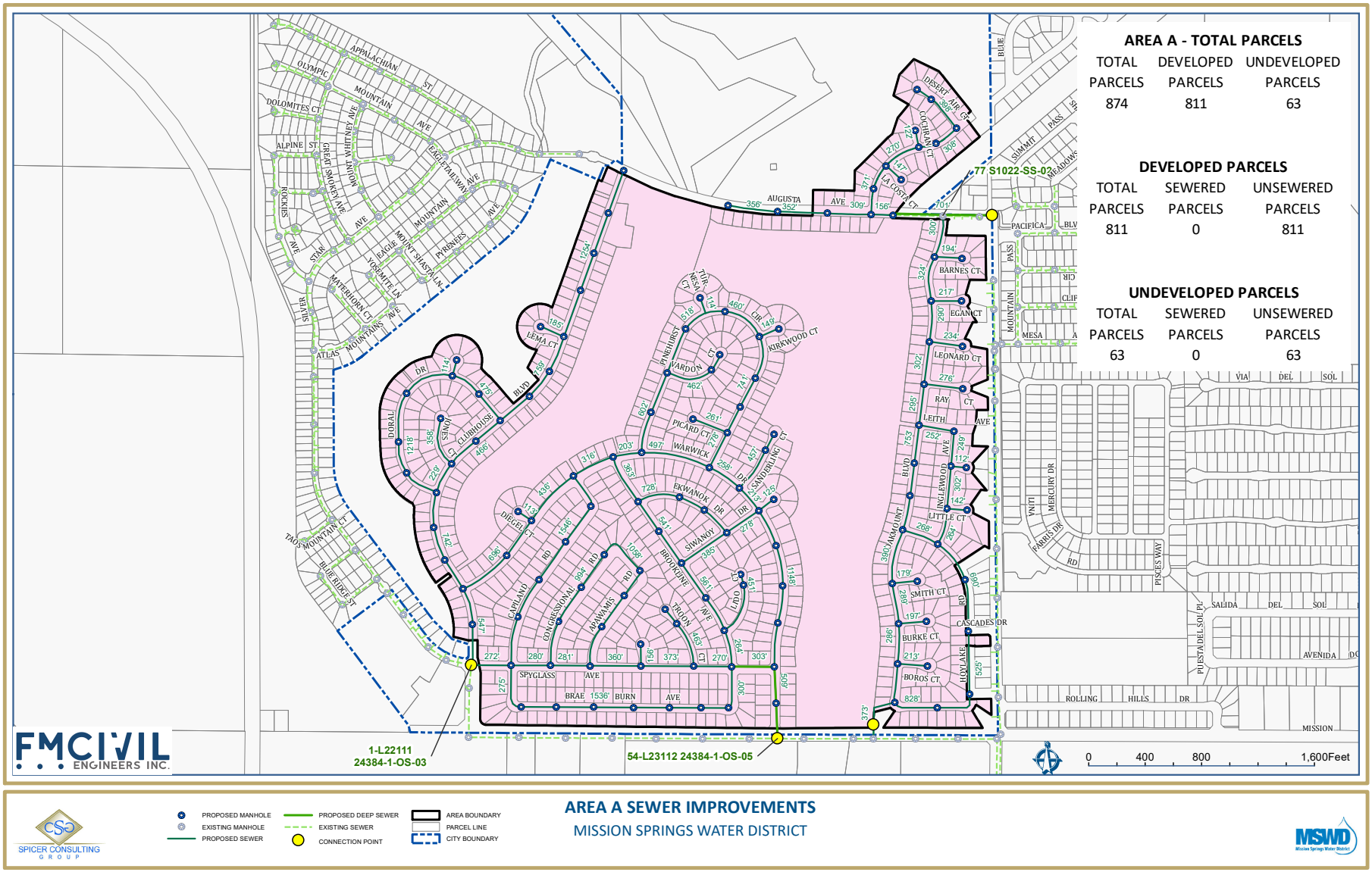

FIGURE 2

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Environmental Consultants

Area A Sewer Improvements



FIGURE 3

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Environmental Consultants

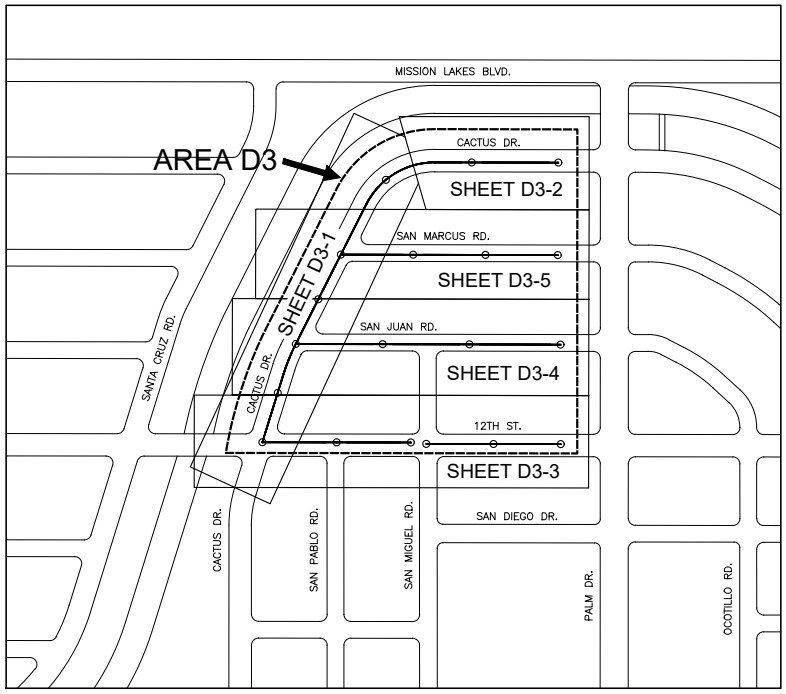
Area A Sewer Improvements



FIGURE 4

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultant

Area D-3 Sewer Improvements



AD-12 SERVICE AREA D-3 SEWER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

INDEX OF DRAWINGS

SEQUENCE NUMBER	SHEET NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	STATIONING
1	G-1	COVER SHEET	
2	G-2	GENERAL NOTES, LEGEND, AND SURVEY CONTROL	
3	G-3	INDEX MAP, SHEET INDEX, CONSTRUCITON NOTES, AND QUANITY ESTIMATE	
4	D3-1	AD-12 AREA D3 - CACTUS DRIVE	STA. 23+44.80 TO STA. 35+00.00
5	D3-2	AD-12 AREA D3 - CACTUS DRIVE	STA. 35+00.00 TO STA. 40+18.00
6	D3-3	AD-12 AREA D3 - 12TH STREET	STA. 10+00.00 TO STA. 24+80.00
7	D3-4	AD-12 AREA D3 - SAN JUAN ROAD	STA. 10+00.00 TO STA. 19+45.00
8	D3-5	AD-12 AREA D3 - SAN MARCUS ROAD	STA. 10+00.00 TO STA. 17+74.00
9	D3-6	SEWER LATERAL AND MANHOLE TABLES	

SEWER CONSTRUCTION NOTES AND QUANTITY ESTIMATE:

NO.	ITEM	QUANTITY	UNIT
1	CONSTRUCT 8" DIA. VCP WITH NATIVE BEDDING, CLASS D PER MSWD DWG S-02A & S-01.	4,402	LF
2	CONSTRUCT 8" DIA. VCP WITH SPECIAL BEDDING, CLASS B PER MSWD DWG S-02A & S-01	---	LF
3	ADJUST EXISTING WATER VALVE TO GRADE PER MSWD STD DWG W-02 & W-02A	---	EA
4	ADJUST EXISTING UTILITY VALVE TO GRADE PER UTILITY COMPANY SPECIFICTION	---	EA
5	REMOVE AND REPLACE EXISTING ASPHALT BERM TO MATCH EXISTING	576	LF
6	CONSTRUCT 4" DIA. VCP SEWER LATERAL PER MSWD DWG S-13, S-14 OR S-15	3,572	LF
7	CONSTRUCT 6" DIA. VCP SEWER LATERAL PER MSWD DWG S-13	---	LF
8	HOT TAP MANHOLE AND REFERENCE MSWD STD DWG NO S-10	---	EA
9	CONSTRUCT 8" DIA. VCP CLEANOUT PER MSWD DWG S-12	---	EA
10	CONSTRUCT 8" VCP STUB-OUT FOR FUTURE CONNECTION. PLUG END WITH REMOVABLE WATERTIGHT CAP AS MANUFACTURED BY PIPE MANUFACTURER AND APPROVED BY THE ENGINEER	0	EA
11	REMOVE EXISTING PLUG OR CAP AND CONNECT NEW SEWER PIPE TO EXISTING STUB	3	EA
12	CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY THE PIPE EXTENSION LENGTHS, ALIGNMENTS, AND ELEVATIONS. IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT AS SHOWN ON THE DRAWINGS, THE CONTRACTOR SHALL NOTIFY THE ENGINEER	3	EA
13	REMOVE AND REPLACE EXISTING PRIVATE ASPHALT PAVEMENT TO MATCH EXISTING	---	SF
14	CONSTRUCT 4' DIA. MANHOLE PER MSWD DWG S-3, S-4 & S-5	17	EA
15	CONSTRUCT 5' DIA. MANHOLE PER MSWD DWG S-3, S-4 & S-6	---	EA
16	CONSTRUCT TERMINUS MANHOLE W/ LATERALS PER MSWD DWG S-7	---	EA
17	REMOVE AND REPLACE EXISTING PRIVATE CONCRETE DRIVEWAY TO MATCH EXISTING	---	SF
18	REMOVE AND REPLACE EXISTING CONCRETE SIDEWALK TO MATCH EXISTING	144	SF
19	REMOVE AND REPLACE EXISTING CROSS GUTTER PER CITY STANDARD 211	---	SF
20	LIMIT OF ASPHALT PULVERIZATION AND AC PLACEMENT (0.25' AC)	166,420	SF
21	HOT TAP 4" VCP LATERAL PER MSWD DWG S-16	---	LF
22	ADJUST EXISTING SEWER MANHOLE TO GRADE PER MSWD STD DWG NO S-04	2	EA
23	LIMIT OF ASPHALT PULVERIZATION AND AC PLACEMENT (0.35' AC)	---	SF

DIGALERT — DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG — TWO WORKING DAYS BEFORE YOU DIG — DIAL 811 — A PUBLIC SERVICE BY UNDERGROUND SERVICE ALERT

MSWD Mission Springs Water District

#	REVISIONS	DATE	APP.
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
1	ISSUED FOR CLIENT REVIEW	08/16/24	

BENCHMARK: RIVERSIDE COUNTY BRASS BENCH MARK DISK STAMPED 833-68-68 IN MONUMENT WELL ON THE NORTHEAST SIDE OF PIERSON BOULEVARD, 180 EAST OF THE CENTERLINE OF LITTLE MORONGO ROAD, 47 SOUTH OF THE CENTERLINE OF PIERSON BOULEVARD AND 15 SOUTH OF THE SOUTH CURB AND 10 SOUTH OF PK#13064 AND 2 NORTH OF WITNESS POST
PUBLISHED ELEVATION 1102.860 NAVD 88

BASIS OF BEARING: CALIFORNIA COORDINATE SYSTEM (CCS83) ZONE 4 AND BASED LOCALLY ON CORS CONTROL STATIONS "NRMT", "P564" AND "MOCY" HAVING, US. SURVEY FEET. ALL BEARINGS ON THIS MAP ARE GRID. ALL DISTANCES SHOWN ARE GROUND DISTANCES. GRID DISTANCES MAY BE OBTAINED BY MULTIPLYING THE GROUND DISTANCE BY A COMBINATION FACTOR OF 0.99991744643.

PREPARED BY: AECOM, 7595 TECHNOLOGY WAY, SUITE 300, DENVER, CO 80237, TEL: (303) 694-2770

SCALE:	SCALE
PLOT DATE:	2024-08-20
DESIGN BY:	DESBY
DRAWN BY:	DRWBY
CHECKED BY:	CHKBY

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF: _____ DATE
MSWDREV MSWDDATE
EXP

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL BY: _____ DATE
BRIAN MACY, P.E., GENERAL MANAGER

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT
SEWER IMPROVEMENT PLANS
INDEX MAP, SHEET INDEX, CONSTRUCTION NOTES AND QUANTITY ESTIMATE

DWG. G-3
3 OF 9
PRIVATE REFERENCE #
MSWD REFERENCE # 11128

C:\Users\cchevarria\OneDrive - AECOM\Directory\PROJECT FOLDERS\Mission Springs\20-SHEETS\03 - G-3.dwg 08/20/2024 10:50

FIGURE 5

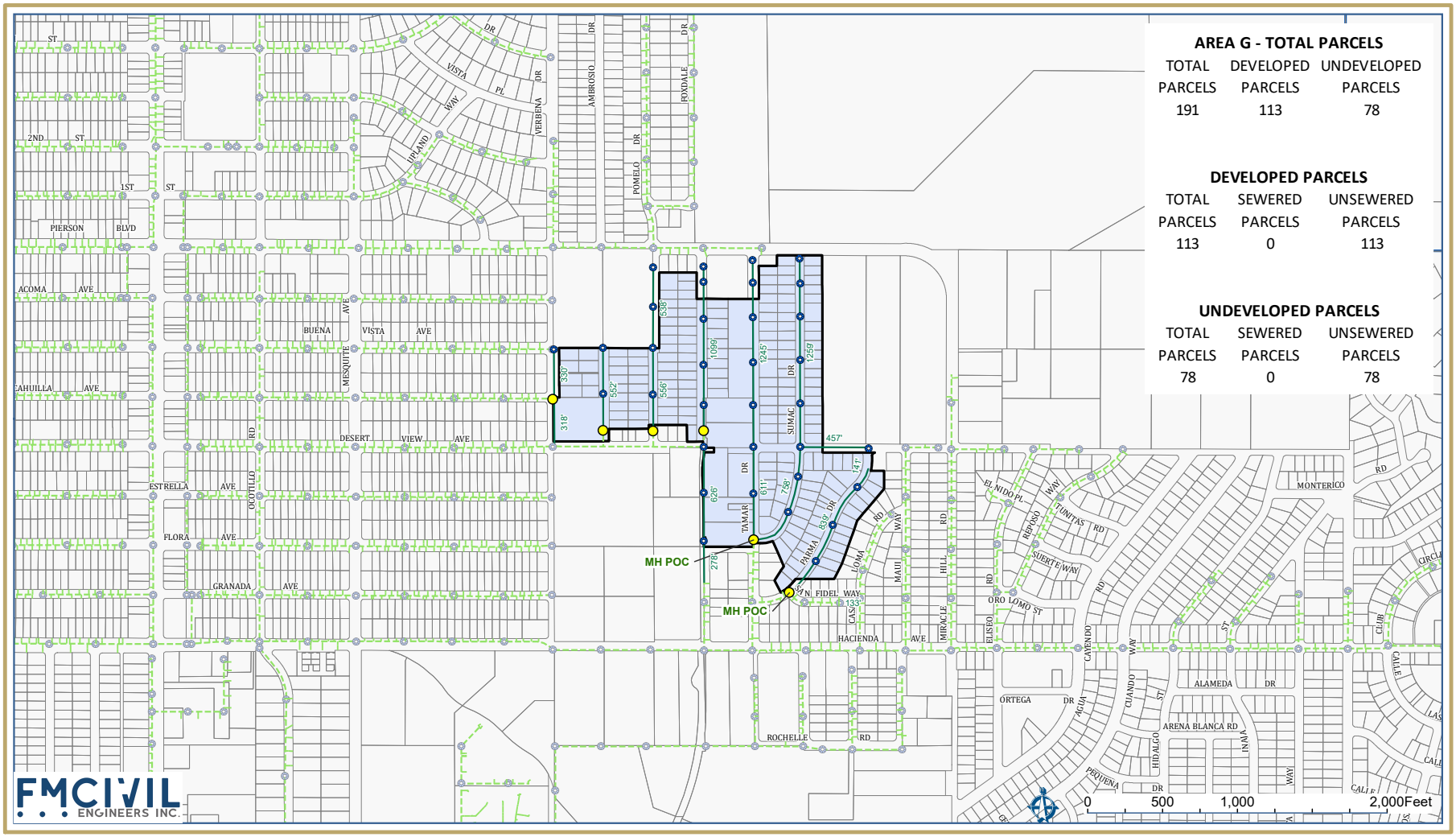


FIGURE 6

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Environmental Consultants

Area G Sewer Improvements

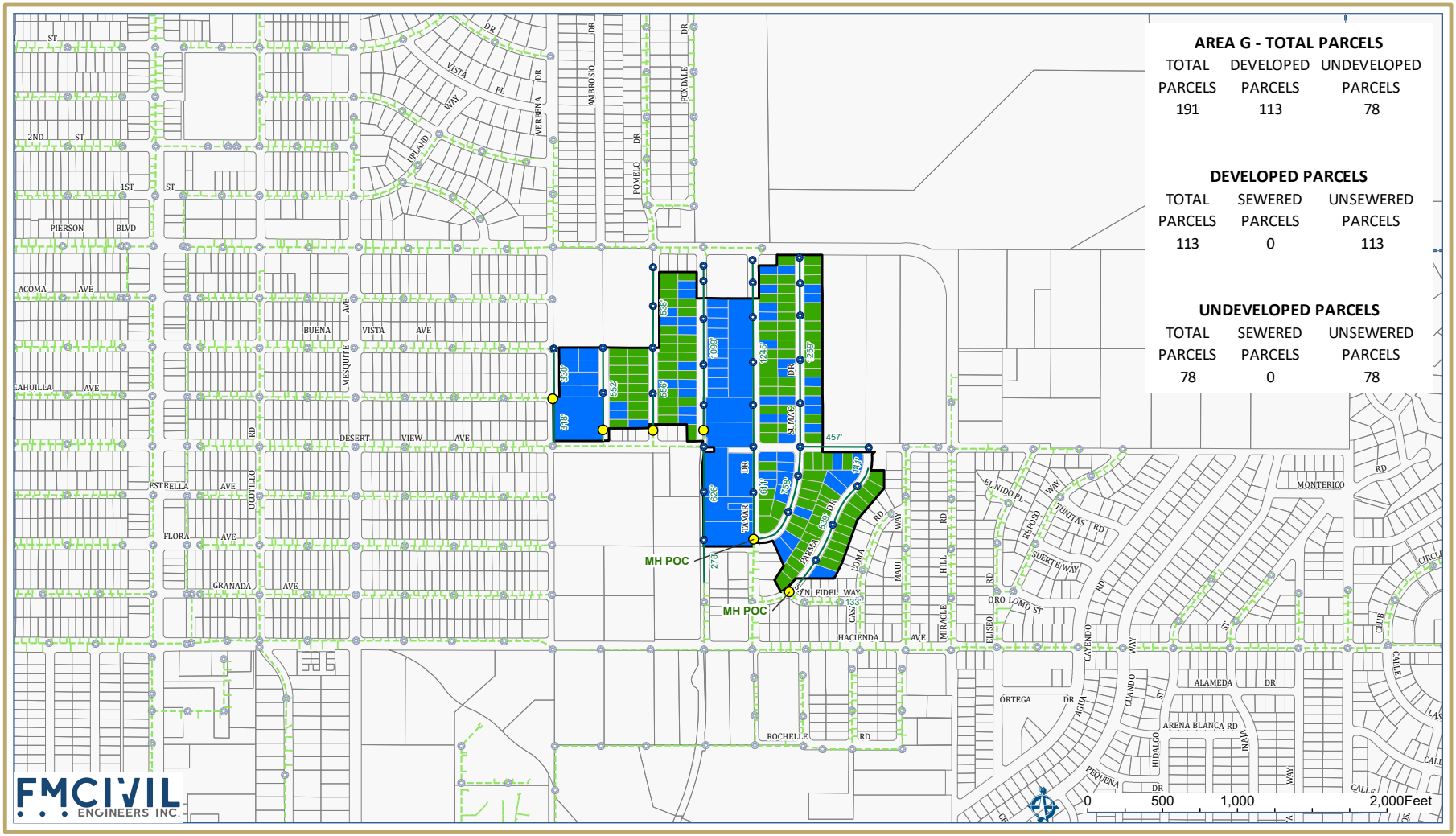

FIGURE 7

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Area G Sewer Improvements

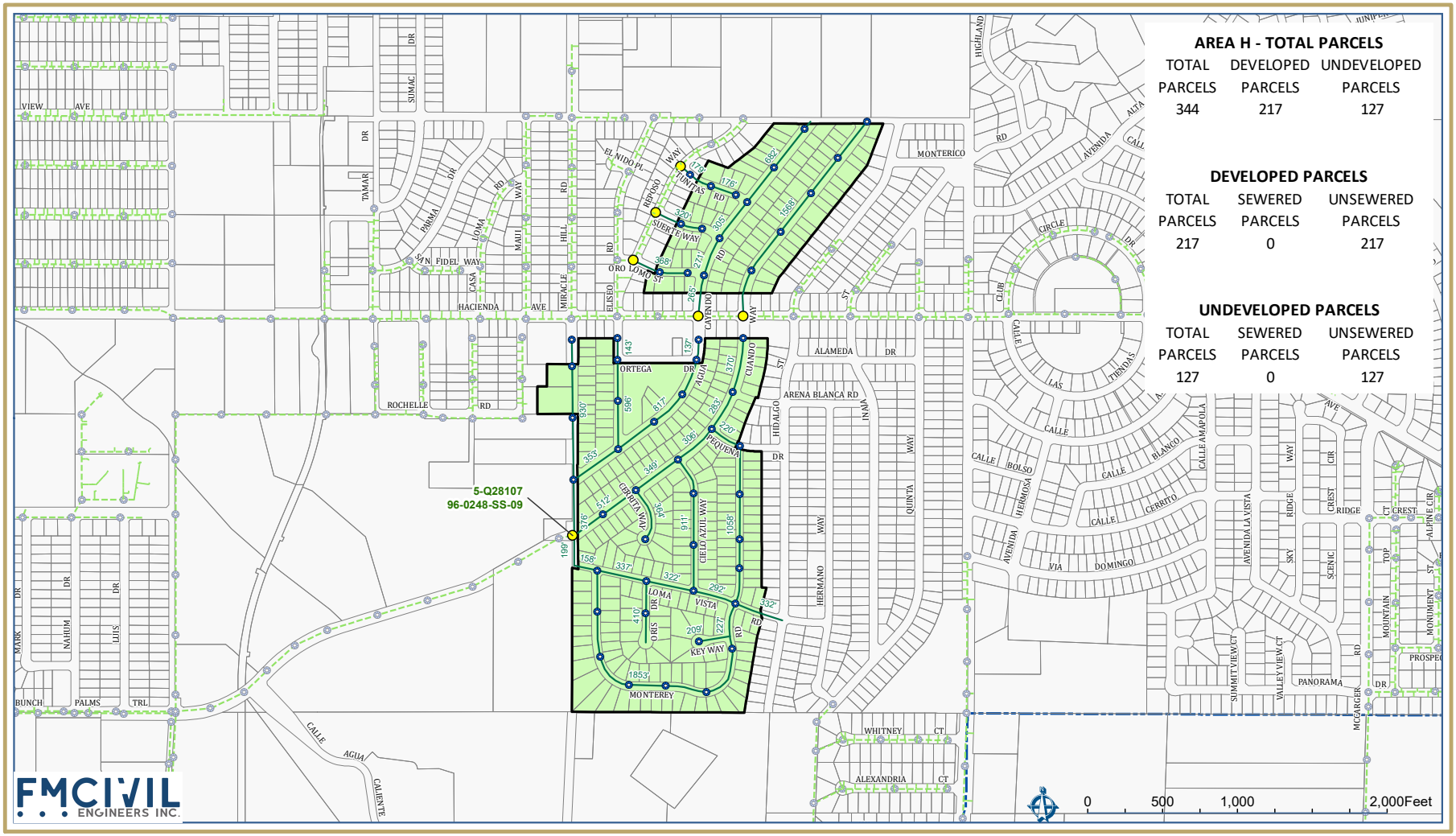

FIGURE 8

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Area H Sewer Improvements

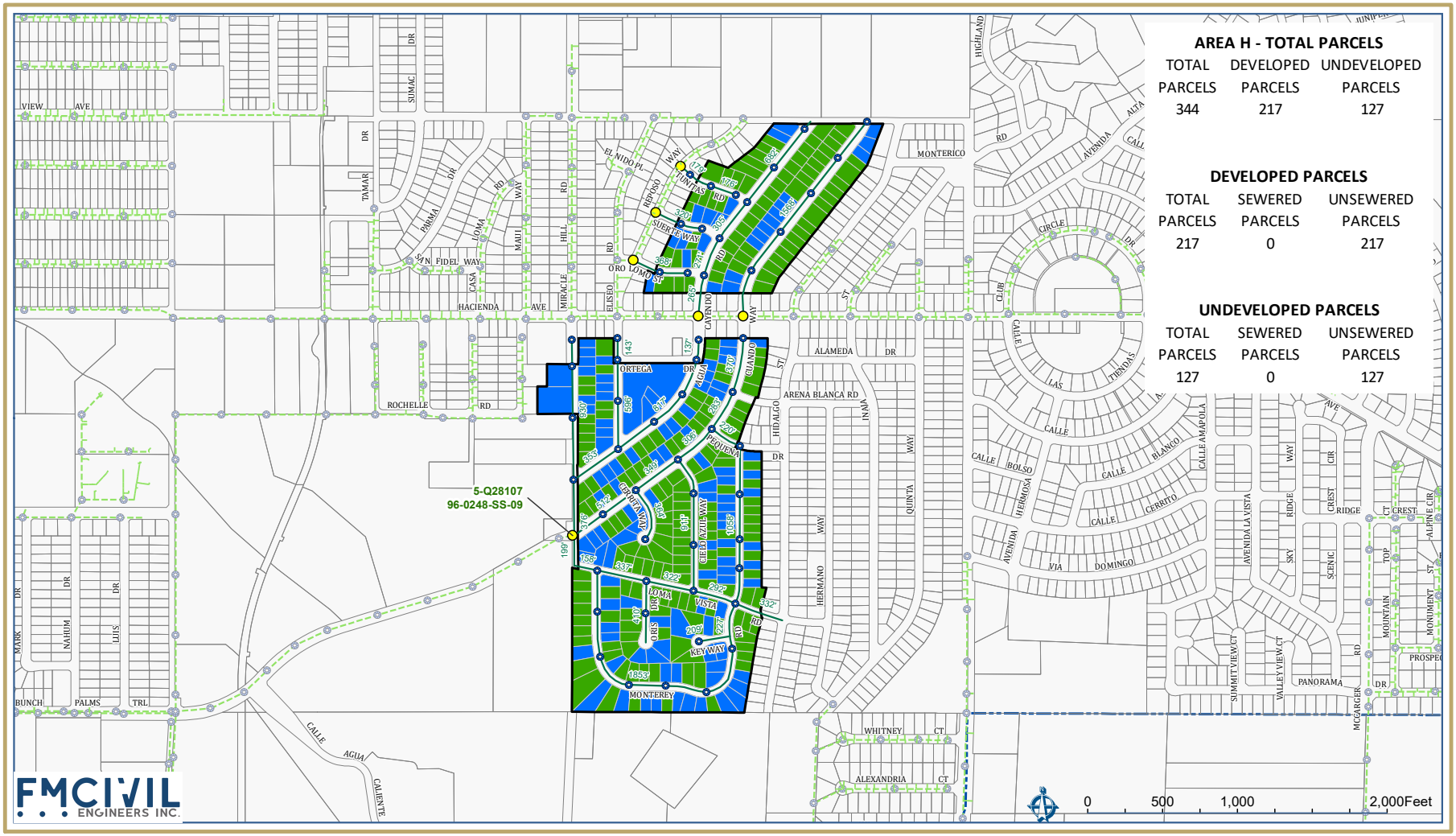

FIGURE 9

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Area H Sewer Improvements

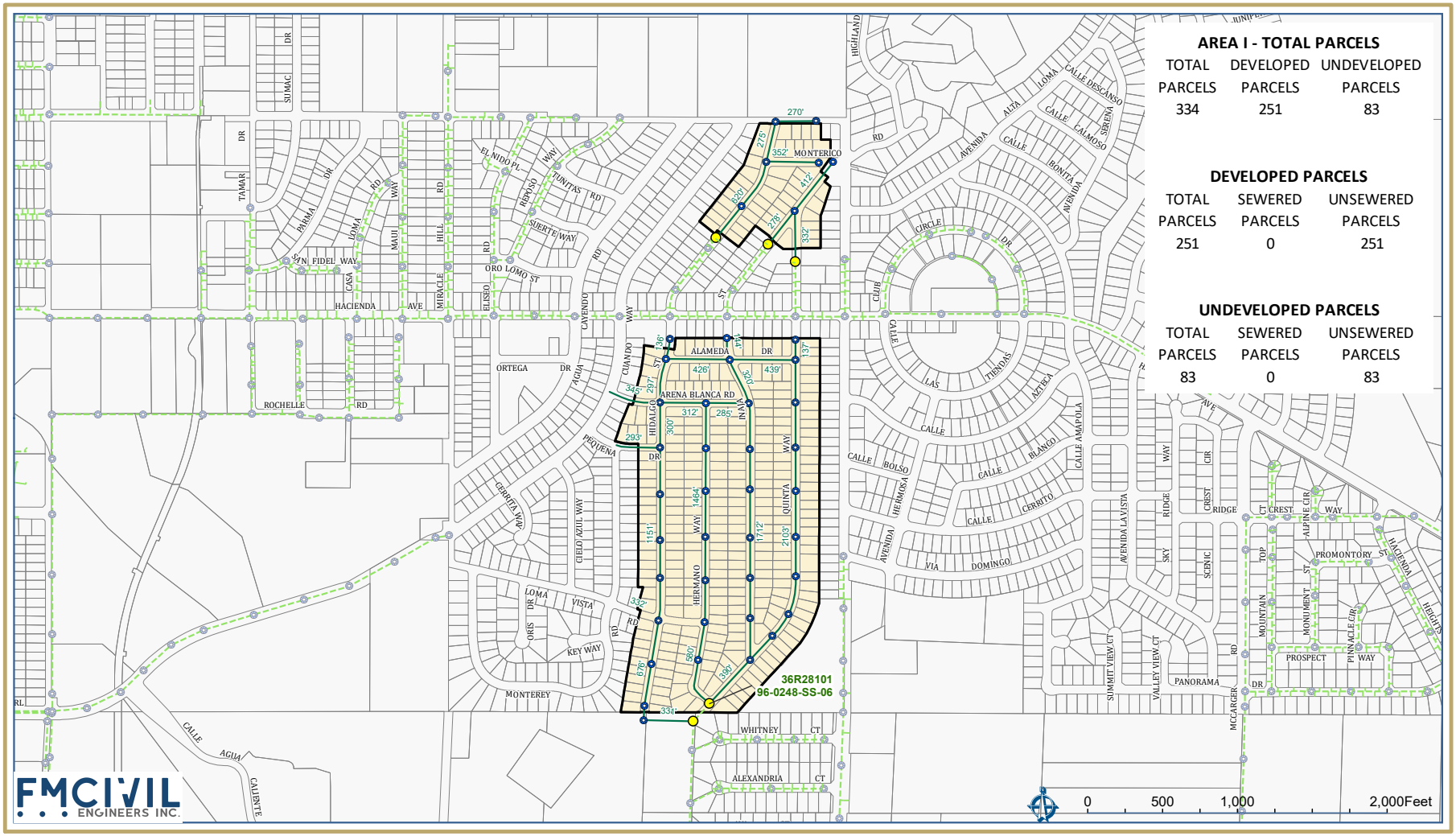

FIGURE 10

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Environmental Consultants

Area I Sewer Improvements



FIGURE 11

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Environmental Consultants

Area I Sewer Improvements

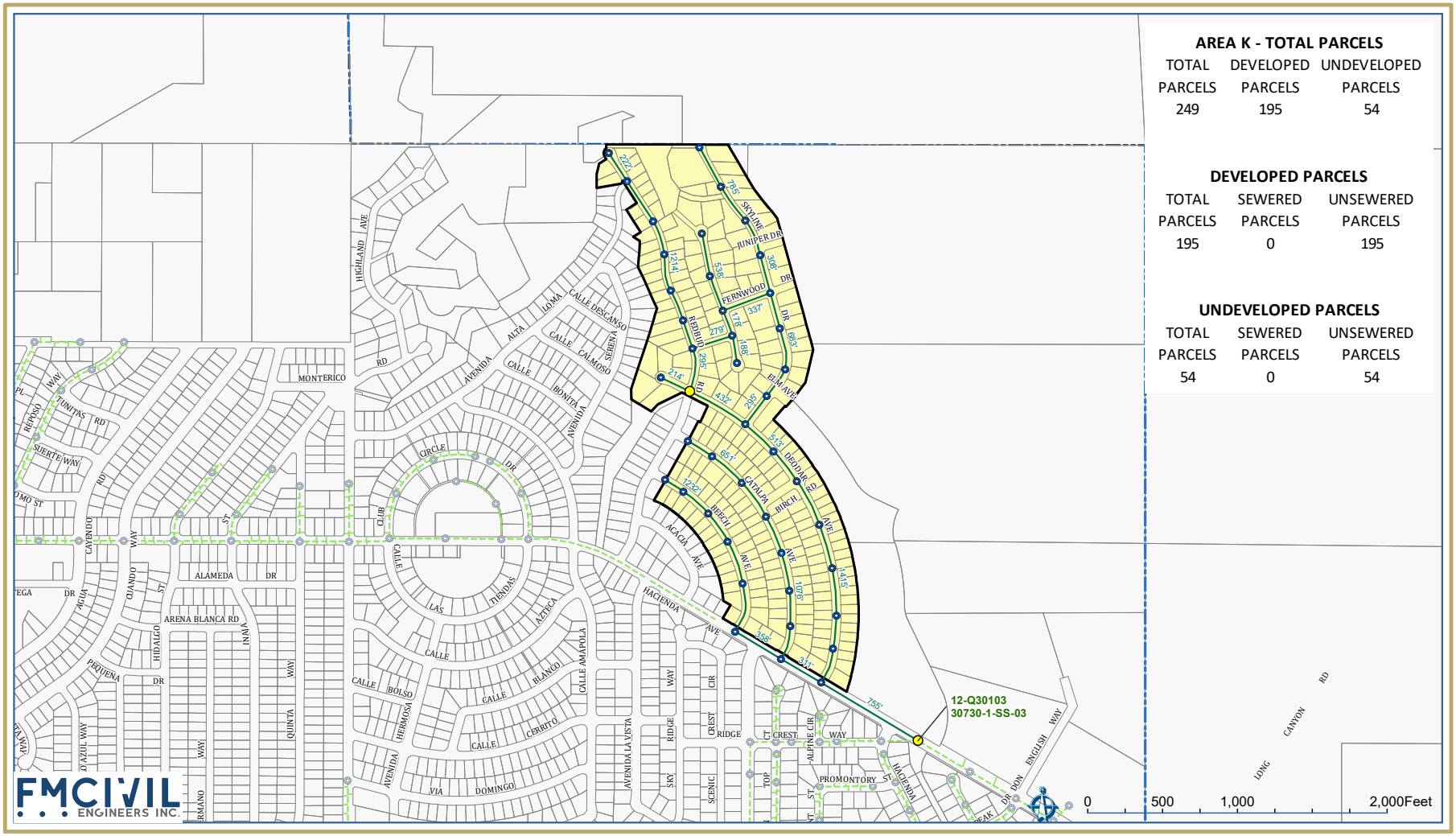

FIGURE 12

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Environmental Consultants

Area K Sewer Improvements

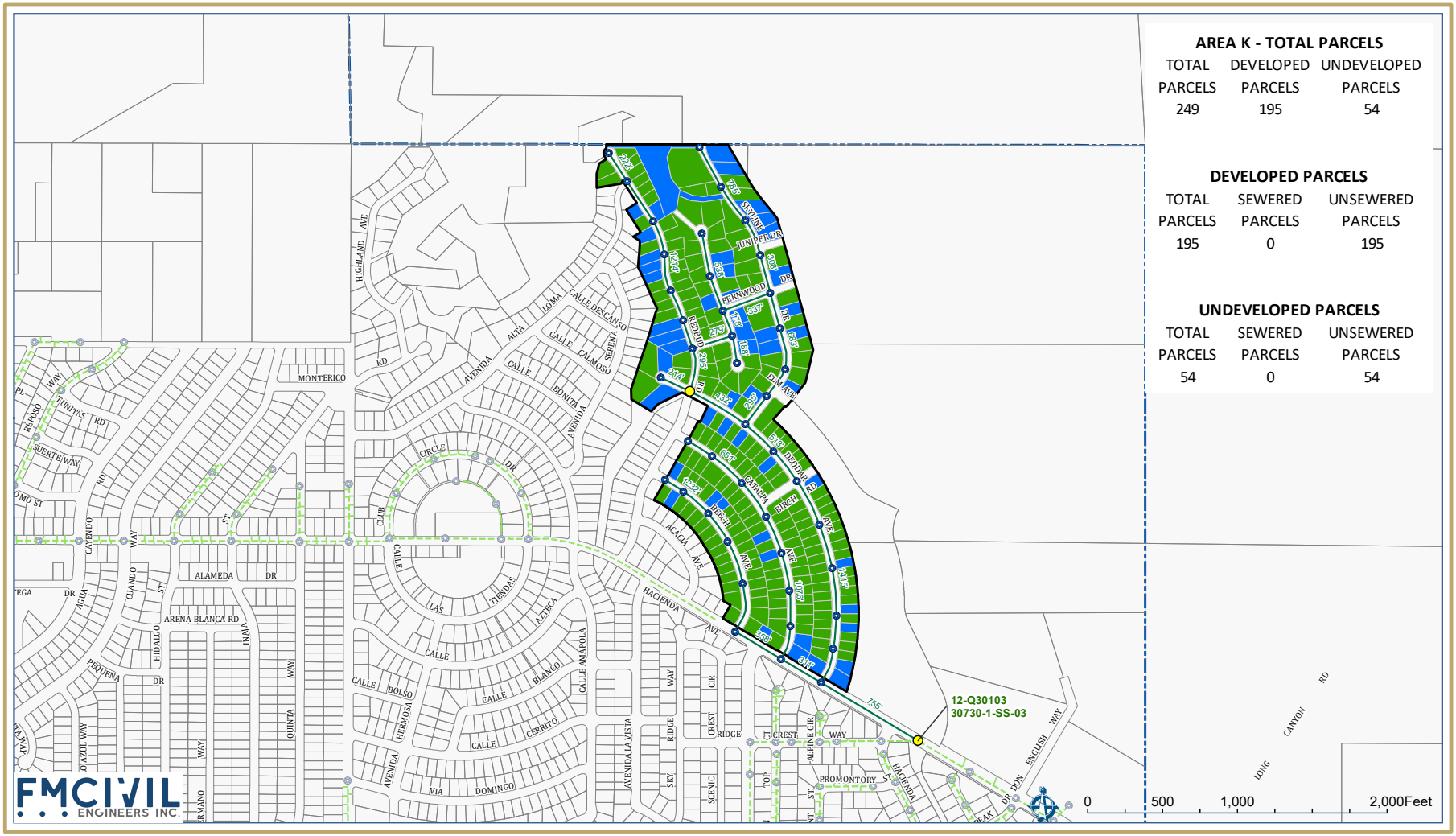

FIGURE 13

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Area K Sewer Improvements

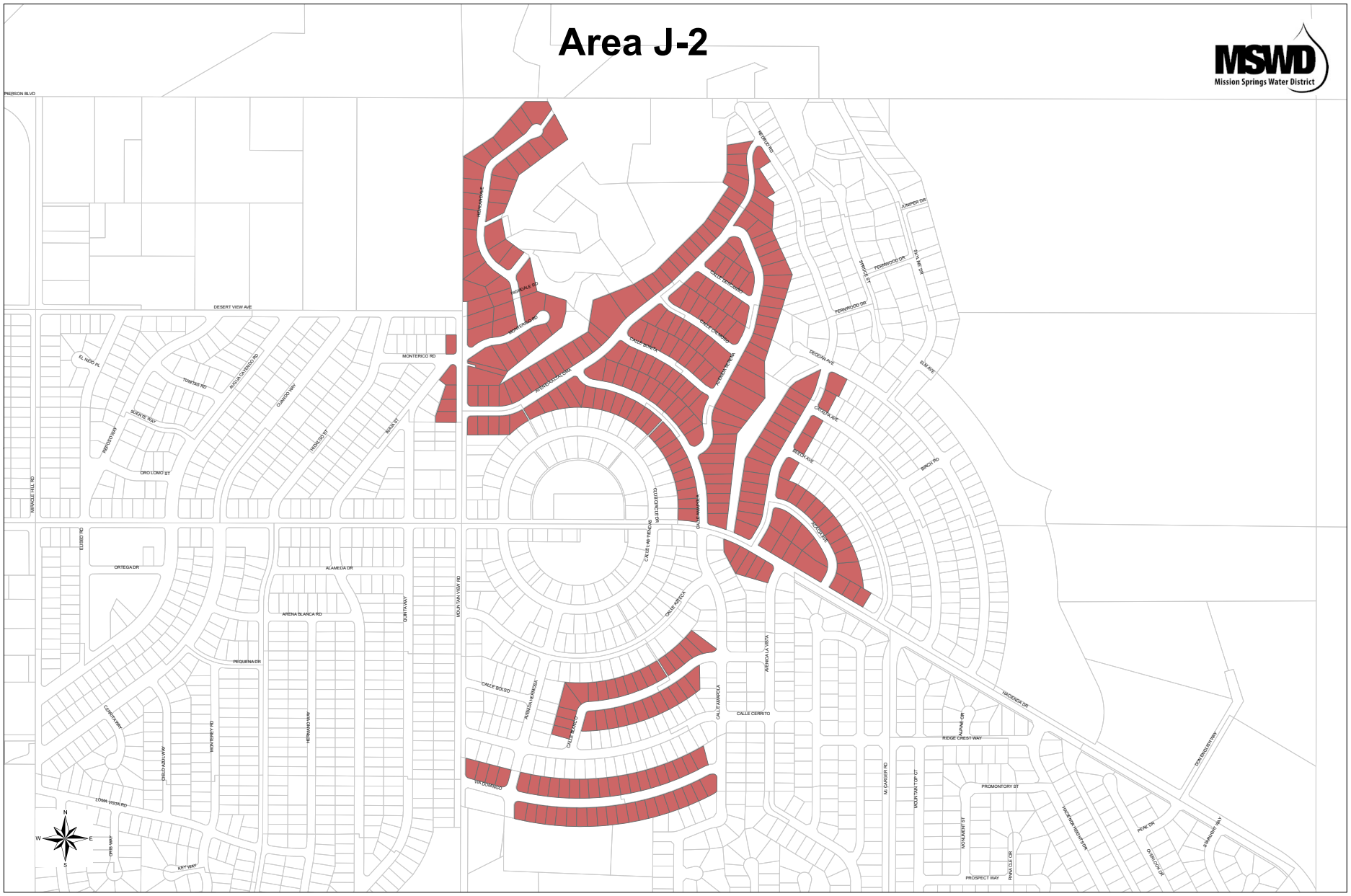

FIGURE 14

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Area J-2 Sewer Improvements

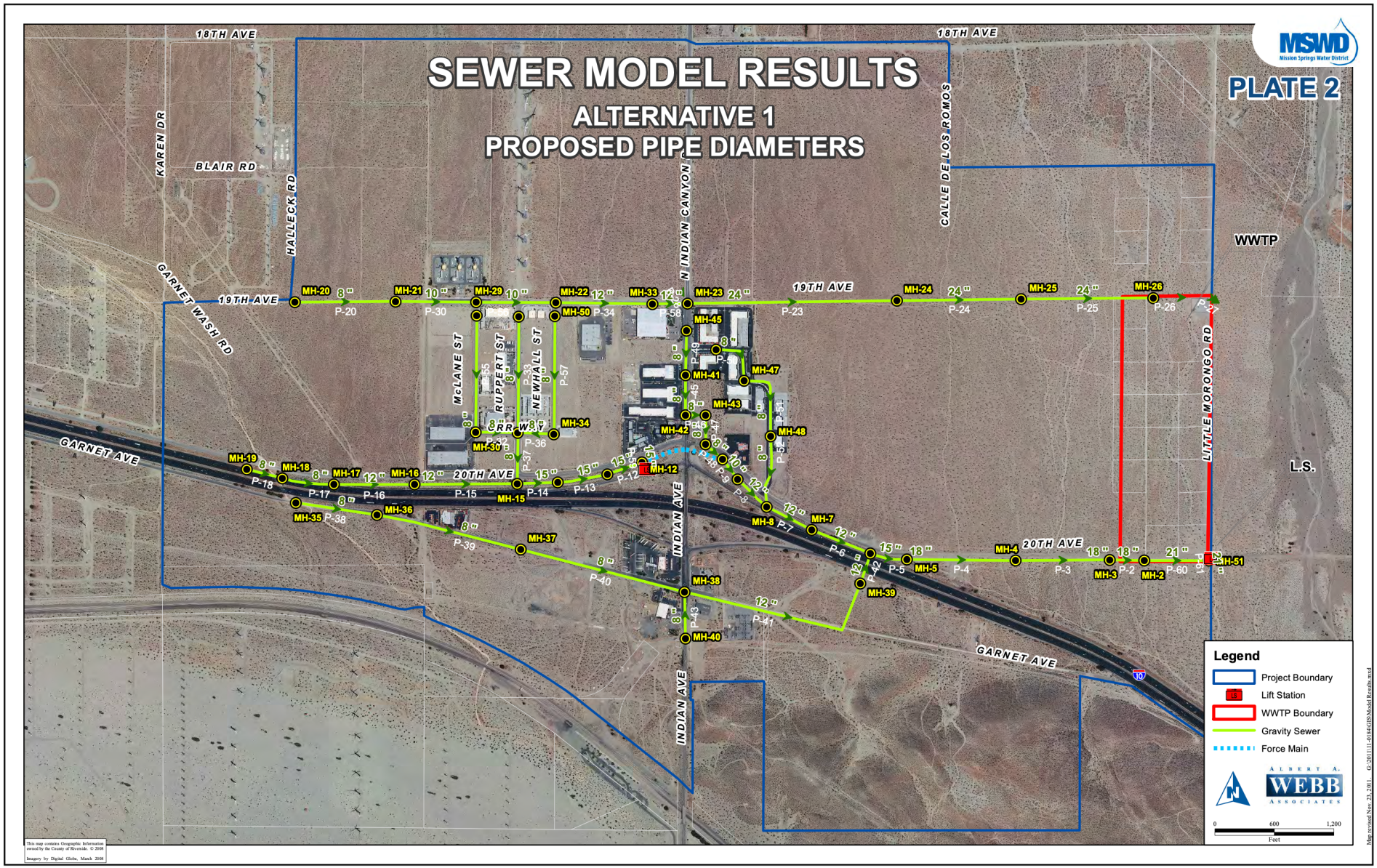

FIGURE 15

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Area I-10 Corridor

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION

(To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

☐	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.

Tom Dodson & Associates — Prepared by

03/03/26 — Date



Lead Agency (signature)

03/18/2026 — Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
I. AESTHETICS: 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 or 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *No Impact* – MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. The dominant landscape feature of the project footprint is the Little San Bernardino Mountains that are located to the north and east. Additionally, middle- and background views within the City of Desert Hot Springs include the San Bernardino Mountains to the west, and the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains to the southwest and south, which also provide dramatic and valuable viewsheds. The proposed project site is located throughout MSWD's service area, as shown on Figure 1 just south of the Little San Bernardino Mountains.

The presence of construction equipment and related construction materials would be visible from public vantage points, such as open space areas, sidewalks, and streets, but it would not adversely affect any scenic views or vistas. Construction of the sewer pipelines (henceforth covering pipelines and laterals) would not permanently affect views or scenic vistas as these features would be located belowground, most commonly within existing roadways. Furthermore, construction activities are routine within urban and suburban areas, and therefore do not typically constitute a significant aesthetic or scenic vista impact. Once constructed, the proposed pipelines would be underground and would not be visible; the roadways will be returned to their original condition, and repaved, the

areas of disturbance internal to the project sites would be re-covered with the same materials, and in other areas, would be constructed utilizing tunnel methods. Given that the project would not degrade views to nearby scenic vistas and that the RW pipeline installation will ultimately result in repaving sections of roadway and concrete, and revegetating of vegetated areas, the proposed project would not substantially alter the views in the project footprint over the long-term. Thus, implementation of the proposed Proposition 1 Recycled Water Project is not expected to cause any substantial adverse effects on any important scenic vistas. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways and compacted dirt right-of-way, and will also facilitate septic tank abatement as described in the Project Description. None of the roadways within which the proposed project will be installed are designated as a scenic highway by the State of California. The nearest officially designated State scenic highway is State Highway 62 located approximately 2.4 miles west of the nearest point within the project footprint. Highway 62 is the main corridor gateway to Joshua Tree National Park and the main arterial roadway for the communities of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twenty-Nine Palms. While portions of the project area may be visible from Highway 62, the construction activities would be at a great distance such that project activities would not be distinctly visible from Highway 62. Further, pipelines would be placed underground, and would not be visible once construction is complete. Additionally, the septic systems that would be abated are located belowground, and the ground level surface would be improved upon the completion of the abatement activities, thereby resulting in no permanent aboveground impacts. As a result, no impacts to the State Scenic Highway are anticipated. No rock outcroppings or historic buildings exist within the project footprint that would be adversely impacted by the proposed project, though as discussed in Table VII-1, Soil Units in Project Footprint, on the outskirts of Areas A, J-2 and K there are soils designated as rock outcrop, but these areas fall outside of the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed project. As the proposed project would be constructed mostly within existing disturbed rights-of-way, no trees will be impacted by installation of the proposed sewer pipeline and laterals. Based on the lack of any intrinsic onsite scenic resources, the proposed project will not cause substantial project-specific damage to any such resources. No impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue and no mitigation is required.

c. *No Impact* – The project site is located within urbanized areas within Unincorporated Riverside County, as well as the City of Desert Hot Springs, with limited area located in a lesser developed, but still urbanized portion of the City of Palm Springs. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways and compacted dirt right-of-way, and will also facilitate septic abatement as described in the Project Description. The proposed sewer pipelines would be placed underground and would not be visible once construction is complete. Additionally, the septic systems that would be abated are located belowground, and the ground level surface would be improved upon the completion of the abatement activities, thereby resulting in no permanent aboveground impacts. As the roadways in which the pipelines are installed will be repaved as each segment of pipeline installation is completed, and as the ground level surface at septic abatement locations will be improved upon abatement completion, construction and operation of the proposed project will have no potential to conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. No impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue and no mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated* – There will be no new lighting associated with the proposed project. The proposed sewer pipelines would be placed underground and would not be visible once construction is complete. Additionally, the septic systems that would be abated are located belowground, and the ground level surface would be improved upon the completion of the abatement activities, thereby resulting in no permanent aboveground impacts. No reflective materials or coatings are associated with this project. The construction activities are limited to daylight hours unless an emergency occurs. However, if nighttime construction is required for any of the sewer pipeline alignments, nighttime lighting at construction sites would contribute to ambient light and could adversely affect views in the area at night, which could result in a significant light and/or glare impact. Thus, mitigation (Mitigation Measure [**MM] AES-1**) is required to ensure that no lighting intrudes into sensitive areas and to ensure directing light and shielding is used to minimize off-site illumination.

AES-1 ***The project shall implement at least the following measures, unless they conflict with the local jurisdiction's light requirements, in which case the local jurisdiction's requirements shall be enforced:***

- ***Use of low-pressure sodium lights where security needs require such lighting to minimize impacts of glare.***
- ***The height of lighting fixtures shall be lowered to the lowest level consistent with the purpose of the lighting to reduce unwanted illumination.***
- ***Directing light and shielding shall be used to minimize off-site illumination during both construction of the project.***
- ***No light shall be allowed to intrude into sensitive light receptor areas during both construction of the project.***
- ***Non-reflective materials and/or coatings shall be used on the exterior of all facilities if constructed in a publicly visible location (such as from a roadway or public facility).***

Therefore, with no permanent aboveground features, it is not anticipated that the site would create any new permanent sources of light or glare during operation. However, the implementation of **MM AES-6** would ensure that light and glare impacts from the project are minimized to a level of less than significant.

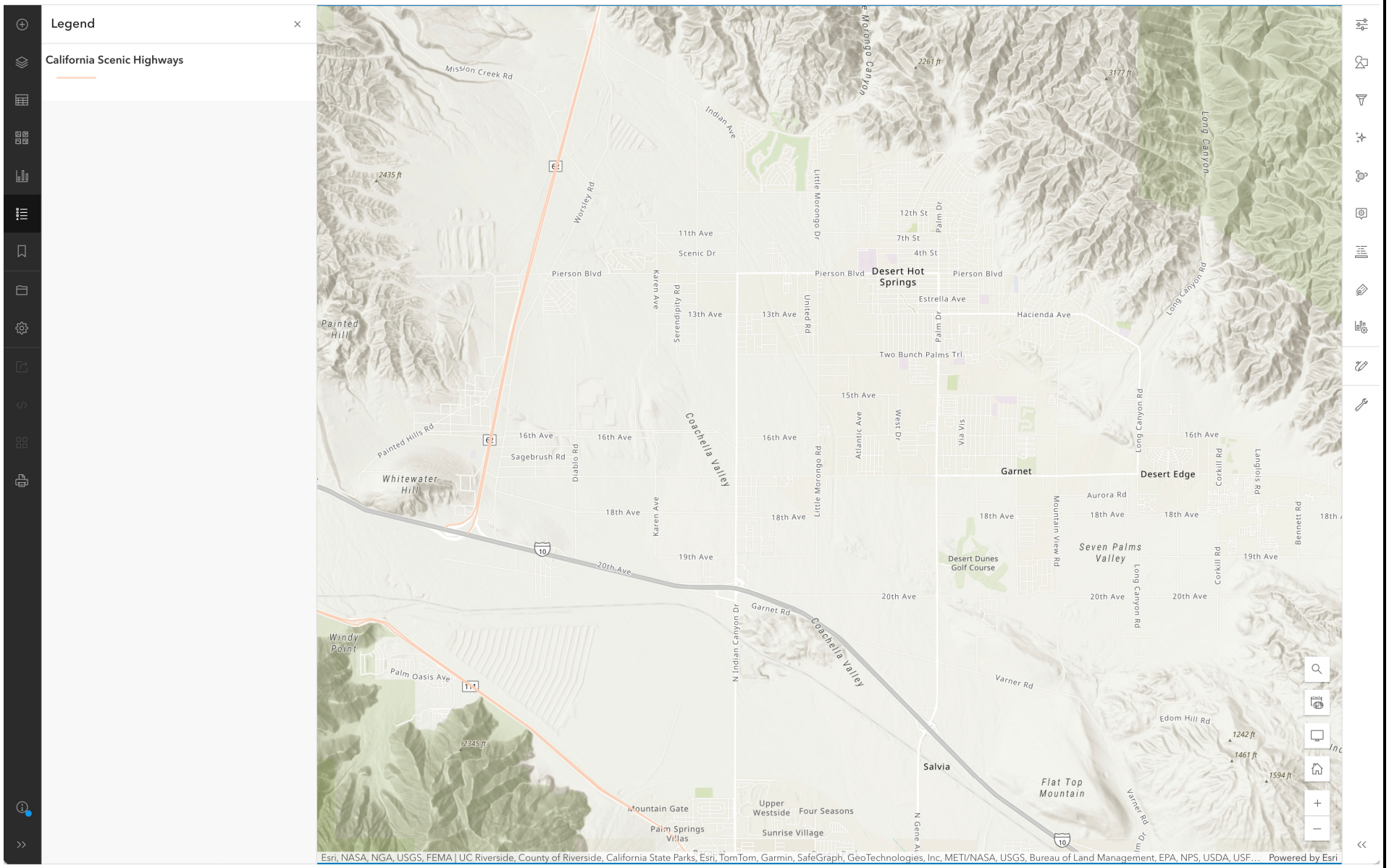

FIGURE I-1

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California Scenic Highways Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *No Impact* – The proposed project footprint is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs, with limited area within portion of the City of Palm Springs. The whole of the project area is urbanized,

with some vacant land that is located within areas with emerging development. Neither the project footprint nor the adjacent and surrounding properties are designated for agricultural use; no agricultural activities exist in the project area; and there is no potential for impact to any agricultural uses or values as a result of project implementation. According to the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland mapping and monitoring program of the California Resources Agency, no prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance exists within the vicinity of the proposed project (**Figure II-1**). As shown on **Figure II-1,** the only areas containing designated farmland are in the southeastern portions of the City of Desert Hot Springs. As a result, no adverse impact to any agricultural resources would occur from implementing the proposed Project. No mitigation is required.

b. *No Impact* – The project footprint is not now included in a Williamson Act contract or an Agricultural Preserve. Based on these facts, the proposed project will not cause a significant direct impact or conflict with the Williamson Act or an existing agricultural use. The project footprint is not currently being farmed and the land use designations support predominantly residential, industrial, commercial, and open space uses. Furthermore, the surrounding uses are not agricultural in nature. Furthermore, the City of Desert Hot Springs does not have any current land use designations or zoning classifications for agricultural use. According to the Riverside County Williamson Act Lands Map from the Williamson Act Program (2007), there are no sites within the project footprint are under a Williamson Act Land Conservation Contract. Therefore, no potential for indirect effects on agricultural resources or values would occur due to implementation of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project.

c. *No Impact* – There are no existing zoning ordinances that pertain to forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. The land use designations within the project footprint are predominantly residential, industrial, commercial, and open space uses. Furthermore, the surrounding uses are not related to forestry uses. Additionally, according to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, there are no land use designations that pertain to forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. While the City of Palm Springs contains a land use for Mountainous Open Space, Timberland Production is not a permitted use within the affected project area. Further, the portions of the project located in the City of Palm Springs do not support timberland resources or forest land. Therefore, the no potential for indirect effects to existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production would occur due to implementation of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project.

d. *No Impact* – As described in the preceding evaluation, there are no forest lands within the project footprint. No potential for loss of forest land would occur if the project is implemented. No mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – Because the project site and surrounding area do not support either agricultural or forestry uses and, furthermore, because the project site and environs are not designated for such uses, implementation of the proposed project would not cause or result in the conversion of farmland or forest land to alternative use. No adverse impact would occur. No mitigation is required.

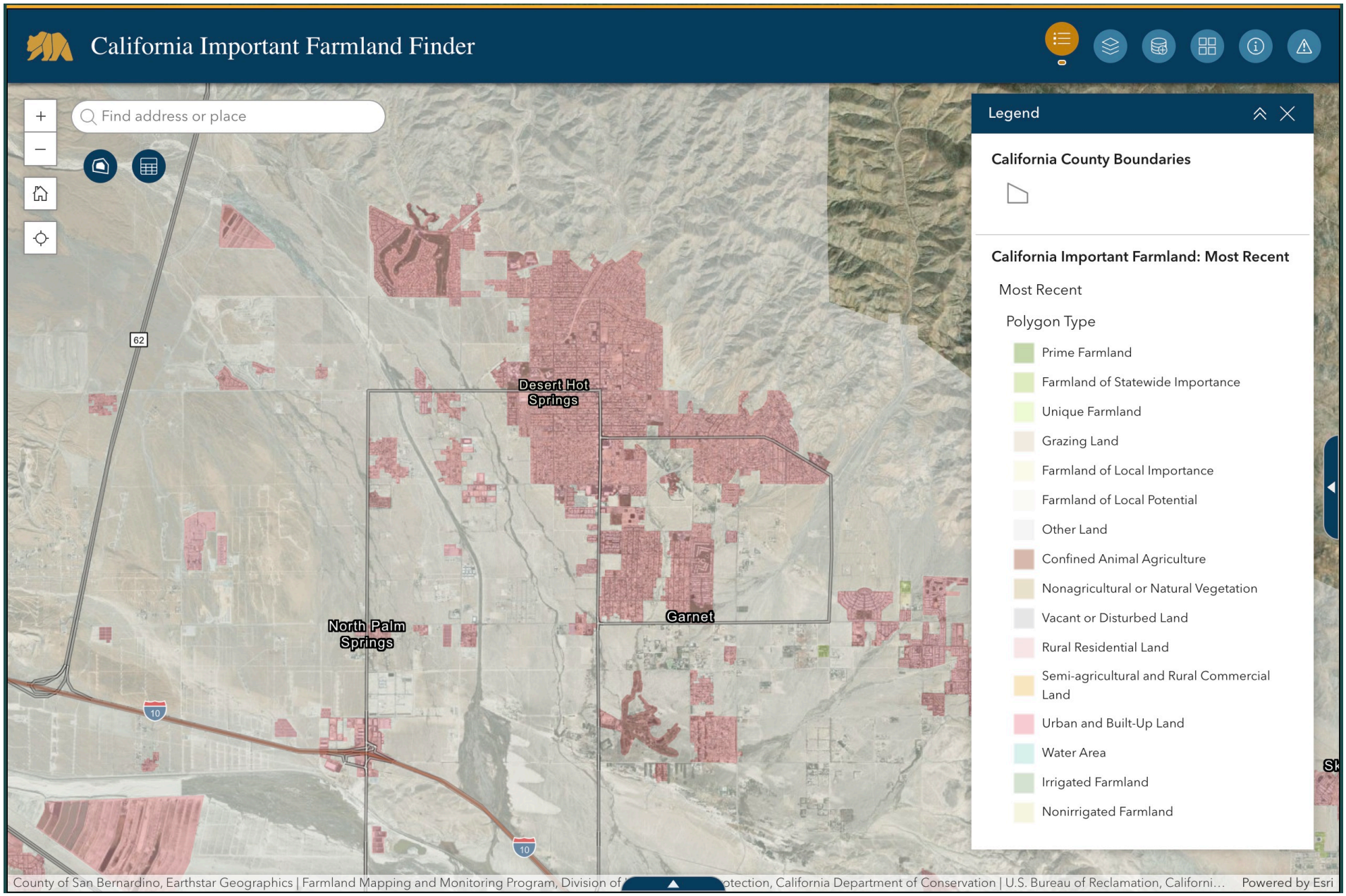

FIGURE II-1

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California Important Farmland Finder Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Mission Springs-306 Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Assessment* prepared by Urban Crossroads dated November 3, 2025. This technical study is provided as **Appendix 1** to this document.

Background

The project site is located within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) within the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD. The SSAB is aligned in a north-west-southwest orientation stretching from Banning Pass to the Mexican border. The regional climate, as well as the temperature, wind, humidity, precipitation, and amount of sunshine significantly influence the air quality in the Basin.

The climate of the Coachella Valley is a continental, desert-type climate, with hot summers, mild winters, and very little annual rainfall. Precipitation is less than six inches annually and occurs mostly in the winter months from active frontal systems and in the late summer months from thunderstorms. Almost all of the annual rainfall comes from the fringes of mid-latitude storms from late November to early April with summers often being completely dry. Temperatures exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), on the average, for four months each year, with daily highs near 110 °F during July and August. Summer nights are cooler with minimum temperatures in the mid-70s. During the winter season, daytime highs are quite mild, but the dry air is conducive to nocturnal radiational cooling, with early morning lows around 40 °F.

The Coachella Valley and adjacent areas are exposed to frequent gusty winds. The flat terrain of the valley and strong temperature differentials, created by intense solar heating, produce moderate winds and deep thermal convection. Wind speeds exceeding 31 miles per hour (mph) occur most frequently in April and May. On an annual basis, strong winds (greater than 31 mph) are observed 0.6 percent of the time and

speeds of less than 6.8 mph account for more than one-half of the observed winds. Prevailing winds are from the northwest through southwest, with secondary flows from the southeast. The strongest and most persistent winds typically occur immediately to the east of Banning Pass, which is noted as a wind power generation resource area. Aside from this locale, the wind conditions in the remainder of the Coachella Valley are geographically distinct. Stronger winds tend to occur closer to the foothills. Less frequently, widespread gusty winds occur over all areas of the Valley.

Portions of the SSAB experience surface inversions almost every day of the year. Inversions in the SSAB are attributed to strong surface heating, but are usually broken, allowing pollutants to disperse more easily. Weak surface inversions are caused by cooling of air in contact with the cold surface of the earth at night. In the valleys and low-lying areas, this condition is intensified by the addition of cold air flowing downslope from the hills and pooling on the valley floor. In addition, inversions in the SSAB caused by the presence of the Pacific high-pressure cell can cause the air mass aloft to sink. As the air descends, compressional heating warms the air to a temperature higher than the air below. This subsidence inversion can act as a nearly impenetrable lid to the vertical mixing of pollutants. These inversions can persist for one or more days, causing air stagnation and the buildup of pollutants. Subsidence inversions are common from November through June and are relatively absent from July through October.

Within the project area, there is a natural sand migration process, called "blowsand," that has direct and indirect effects on air quality. Blowsand produces particulate matter (PM10) in two ways: (1) by direct particle erosion and fragmentation as natural PM10, and (2) by secondary effects, as sand deposits on road surfaces.

Also, where water has already receded around the Salton Sea, the surface areas contain a salty mix of sediments that can change from a hardened salt crust to a fluffy soft layer of dust depending upon the season. Exposed sediments could elevate PM_{10} levels throughout the region. Almost 120,000 acres of Salton Sea lakebed could be exposed as inflows to the Sea decrease in future years. Local communities may be affected by 60,000 potentially dust-blowing acres, which will cause PM_{10} levels to rise.

Criteria Pollutants

Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established ambient air quality standards for common pollutants. These ambient air quality standards are levels of contaminants representing safe levels that avoid specific adverse health effects associated with each pollutant. The ambient air quality standards cover what are called "criteria" pollutants because the health and other effects of each pollutant are described in criteria documents. The six criteria pollutants are ozone (O_3) (precursor emissions include NO_X and reactive organic gases (ROG), CO, particulate matter (PM), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead. Areas that meet ambient air quality standards are classified as attainment areas, while areas that do not meet these standards are classified as nonattainment areas. The Riverside County portion of the SSAB is designated as a nonattainment area for the federal O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and is also a nonattainment area for the state standards for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) Trend

In 1984, as a result of public concern for exposure to airborne carcinogens, CARB adopted regulations to reduce the amount of TAC emissions resulting from mobile and area sources, such as cars, trucks, stationary products, and consumer products. According to the Ambient and Emission Trends of Toxic Air Contaminants in California journal article which was prepared for CARB, results show that between 1990-

2012, ambient concentration and emission trends for the seven TACs responsible for most of the known cancer risk associated with airborne exposure in California have declined significantly (between 1990 and 2012). The seven TACs studied include those that are derived from mobile sources: diesel particulate matter (DPM), benzene (C_6H_6), and 1,3-butadiene (C_4H_6); those that are derived from stationary sources: perchloroethylene (C_2Cl_4) and hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)); and those derived from photochemical reactions of emitted VOCs: formaldehyde (CH_2O) and acetaldehyde (C_2H_4O).[2] The decline in ambient concentration and emission trends of these TACs are a result of various regulations CARB has implemented to address cancer risk.

Sensitive Receptors

Some people are especially sensitive to air pollution and are given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. These groups of people include children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular illness. Structures that house these persons or places where they gather are defined as "sensitive receptors." These structures typically include uses such as residences, hotels, and hospitals where an individual can remain for 24 hours. Consistent with the localized significance threshold (LST) Methodology, the nearest land use where an individual could remain for 24 hours to the project site has been used to determine construction and operational air quality impacts for emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, since PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds are based on a 24-hour averaging time. Commercial and industrial facilities are not included in the definition of sensitive receptor because employees and patrons do not typically remain onsite for a full 24 hours but are typically onsite for eight hours or less. The LST Methodology states that "*LSTs based on shorter averaging periods, such as the NO_2 and CO LSTs, could also be applied to receptors such as industrial or commercial facilities since it is reasonable to assume that a worker at these sites could be present for periods of one to eight hours.*"

Receptors in the project study area are described below. All distances are measured from the project site boundary to the outdoor living areas (e.g., backyards) or at the building façade, whichever is closer to the project site. Receptors in the project study area are shown in **Figure III-1**.

- Receptor R1 represents the Wright RWRF, approximately 171 feet west of the project site.
- Receptor R2 represents the existing residence at 17851 Louise Street, approximately 4,022 feet northwest of the project site.
- Receptor R3 represents the existing residence at 64665 Thumb Drive, approximately 4,280 feet north of the project site.
- Receptor R4 represents the existing residence at 17280 Little Morongo Road, approximately 3,857 feet north of the project site.

Applicable Regulatory Requirements

SCAQMD Rules that are currently applicable during construction activity for this project include but are not limited to Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings).

SCAQMD Rule 403

This rule is intended to reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air as a result of anthropogenic (human-made) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent and reduce fugitive

[2] It should be noted that ambient DPM concentrations are not measured directly. Rather, a surrogate method using the coefficient of haze (COH) and elemental carbon (EC) is used to estimate DPM concentrations.

dust emissions. Rule 403 applies to any activity or human-made condition capable of generating fugitive dust and requires best available control measures to be applied to earth moving and grading activities.

Any operation or activity that might cause the emission of any smoke, fly ash, dust, fumes, vapors, gases, or other forms of air pollution, which can cause damage to human health, vegetation, or other forms of property, or can cause excessive soiling on any other parcel, shall conform to the requirements of the SCAQMD.

SCAQMD Rule 1113

This rule serves to limit the volatile organic compounds (VOC) content of architectural coatings used on projects in the SCAQMD. This rule applies to any person who supplies, sells, offers for sale, or manufactures any architectural coating for use on projects.

Methodology

The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) in conjunction with other California air districts, including SCAQMD, released CalEEMod 2022 in May 2022. CalEEMod periodically releases updates, as such the latest version available at the time of this report has been utilized in this analysis. The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant (VOCs, NO_X, SO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources; and quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. Accordingly, the latest version of CalEEMod has been used for this project to determine construction and operational air quality and GHG emissions.

Air Quality Regional Emissions Thresholds

The SCAQMD has developed regional significance thresholds for criteria pollutants, as summarized at Table III-1. The SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Significance Thresholds (March 2023) indicate that any projects in the SCAB with daily emissions that exceed any of the indicated thresholds should be considered as having an individually and cumulatively significant air quality impact.

Table III-1: Maximum Daily Regional Emissions Thresholds

Pollutant	Construction	Operations
NO_X	100 lbs./day	55 lbs./day
VOC	75 lbs./day	55 lbs./day
PM_{10}	150 lbs./day	150 lbs./day
$PM_{2.5}$	55 lbs./day	55 lbs./day
SO_X	150 lbs./day	150 lbs./day
CO	550 lbs./day	550 lbs./day

lbs./day – Pounds Per Day

Localized Emissions Significance Thresholds

The analysis follows the methodology outlined the SCAQMD Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology (LST Methodology). According to this methodology, the staff recommendation is to apply the LST mass rate lookup tables exclusively for projects that are less than or equal to five acres. The project specific thresholds used to assess localized air quality emission impacts, along with the rationale for their determination, are detailed in later in this memo

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is located within the SSAB, which is characterized by relatively poor air quality. The SCAQMD has jurisdiction over an approximately 10,743-square-mile area consisting of the four-county Basin and the Los Angeles County and Riverside County portions of what use to be referred to as the Southeast Desert Air Basin. In these areas, the SCAQMD is principally responsible for air pollution control, and works directly with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), county transportation commissions, local governments, as well as state and federal agencies to reduce emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources to meet state and federal ambient air quality standards.

Currently, certain state and federal air quality standards are exceeded in most parts of the SCAB. In response, the SCAQMD has adopted a series of AQMPs to meet the state and federal ambient air quality standards. AQMPs are updated regularly in order to more effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and to minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy.

In December 2022, the SCAQMD released the Final 2022 AQMP (2022 AQMP). The 2022 AQMP continues to evaluate current integrated strategies and control measures to meet the CAAQS, as well as explore new and innovative methods to reach its goals. Some of these approaches include utilizing incentive programs, recognizing existing co-benefit programs from other sectors, and developing a strategy with fair-share reductions at the Federal, State, and local levels. Similar to the 2016 AQMP, the 2022 AQMP incorporates scientific and technological information and planning assumptions, including the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, a planning document that supports the integration of land use and transportation to help the region meet the federal CAA requirements. The project's consistency with the AQMP will be determined using the 2022 AQMP as discussed below. SCAG adopted the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS), a planning document that supports the integration of land use and transportation to help the region meet the federal metropolitan planning organization (MPO) requirements under the Sustainable communities and Climate Protection Act. The proposed project would be developed in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations contained in those plans. It should be noted that although the 2024-2050 RTP was released after approval of the 2022 AQMP, the 2022 AQMP is reliant in part upon the general plan land use designations.

It should be noted that although SCAG has released an updated 2024-2050 RTP, the 2022 AQMP is based on the 2020-2045 RTP. Criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined in Chapter 12, Section 12.2 and Section 12.3 of the 1993 CEQA Handbook. These indicators are discussed below:.

Consistency Criterion No. 1

Potential to result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

The violations that under this criterion refer to are the CAAQS and NAAQS. CAAQS and NAAQS violations that would occur if regional or localized significance thresholds were exceeded.

Construction Impacts – Consistency Criterion 1

As evaluated, the project's regional and localized construction-source emissions would not exceed applicable regional significance threshold and LST thresholds. As such, a less than significant impact is expected.

Operational Impacts – Consistency Criterion 1

As evaluated, the project's regional and localized operation-source emissions would not exceed applicable regional significance threshold and LST thresholds. As such, a less than significant impact is expected.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the project is determined to be consistent with the first criterion.

Consistency Criterion No. 1

Potential to exceed the assumptions in the AQMP based on the years of project build-out phase.

Construction Impacts – Consistency Criterion 2

Peak day emissions generated by construction activities are largely independent of land use assignments, but rather are a function of development scope and maximum area of disturbance. Irrespective of the site's land use designation, development of the site to its maximum potential would likely occur, with disturbance of the entire site occurring during construction activities. As such, when considering that no emissions thresholds will be exceeded, a less than significant impact would result.

Operational Impacts – Consistency Criterion 2

Since the project's proposed land uses are consistent with the Mission Springs Water District and as the project's construction and operational-source air pollutant emissions would not exceed the regional or localized significance thresholds, the project is determined to be consistent with the second criterion.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the project is determined to be consistent with the second criterion.

AQMP Consistency Conclusion

The project would not result in or cause NAAQS or CAAQS violations. The project proposes to install 146,200 LF of sewer lines within roadways and existing rights-of-way within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. The project is therefore considered to be consistent with the AQMP. and as a result, the project would result in a less than significant impact under this issue.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Air pollution emissions associated with the proposed project would occur over both a short and long-term time period. Short-term emissions include fugitive dust from construction activities (i.e., site prep, demolition, grading) and exhaust emissions at the project site. Long-term emissions generated by future operation of the proposed sewer pipeline would not differ substantially from that which occurs at present as part of MSWD's wastewater collection operation, as the project is anticipated to transmit wastewater via gravity or in rare circumstances, through

existing pressurized force mains.

Construction Emissions

Construction Activities

Construction activities associated with the project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_X, SO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Construction-related emissions are expected from the following activities:

- Pipeline Installation
- Septic Tanks Abatements
- Linear, Paving

Construction Related Dust Emissions

Dust is typically a major concern during demolition and grading activities. Because such emissions are not amenable to collection and discharge through a controlled source, they are called "fugitive emissions." Fugitive dust emissions rates vary as a function of many parameters (soil silt, soil moisture, wind speed, area disturbed, number of vehicles, depth of disturbance or excavation, etc.). CalEEMod was utilized to calculate fugitive dust emissions resulting from these phases of activity.

Grading Activities

Grading quantities were conservatively assumed using provided pipeline measurements and as such, it is anticipated that approximately 16,716 CY of export is needed.

On-Road Trips

Construction generates on-road vehicle emissions from vehicle usage for workers and vendors commuting to and from the site. Information on the anticipated number of workers on-site was provided and modeled accordingly as shown on Table III-2. It should be noted that the worker, vendor and hauling trips shown on Table III-2 represents all proposed Areas of construction.

Table III-2: Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Construction Activity	Worker Trips Per Day	Vendor Trips Per Day	Hauling Trips Per Day
Pipeline Installation	26	2	11
Septic Tanks Abatements	20	2	2
Linear, Paving	3	0	0

Construction Duration

For purposes of analysis, construction of the project is expected to commence in March 2026 and would last through October 2042. The construction schedule utilized in the analysis represents a "worst-case" analysis scenario should construction occur any time after the respective dates since emission factors for construction decrease as time passes and the analysis year increases due to emission regulations becoming more stringent[3]. The duration of construction activity and associated

[3] As shown in the CalEEMod User's Guide Version 2022, Appendix G "Table G-11. Statewide Average Annual Offroad Equipment Emission Factors" as the analysis year increases, emission factors for the same equipment pieces decrease due to the natural turnover of older equipment being replaced by newer less polluting equipment and new regulatory requirements.

equipment represents a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet as required per *CEQA Guidelines*.

Table III-3: Construction Activities

Construction Activity	Start Date	End Date	Days
Area A (60 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	4/1/2026	9/28/2028	652
Septic Tanks Abatements	9/29/2028	4/1/2031	653
Linear, Paving	4/1/2026	9/28/2028	652
Area D-3 (6 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	4/2/2031	7/2/2031	66
Septic Tanks Abatements	7/3/2031	10/2/2031	66
Linear, Paving	4/2/2031	7/2/2031	66
Area G (12 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	10/3/2031	4/2/2032	131
Septic Tanks Abatements	4/5/2032	10/4/2032	131
Linear, Paving	10/3/2031	4/2/2032	131
Area H (22 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	10/5/2032	8/23/2033	231
Septic Tanks Abatements	8/24/2033	7/12/2034	231
Linear, Paving	10/5/2032	8/23/2033	231
Area I (20 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	7/13/2034	5/2/2035	210
Septic Tanks Abatements	5/4/2035	2/21/2036	210
Linear, Paving	7/13/2034	5/2/2035	210
Area J-2 (22 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	2/22/2036	1/9/2037	231
Septic Tanks Abatements	1/12/2037	11/30/2037	231
Linear, Paving	2/22/2036	1/9/2037	231
Area K (12 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	12/1/2037	6/1/2038	131
Septic Tanks Abatements	6/2/2038	12/1/2038	131
Linear, Paving	12/1/2037	6/1/2038	131
Area I-10 Corridor (48 Months)			
Pipeline Installation	12/2/2038	11/6/2040	504
Septic Tanks Abatements	11/7/2040	10/13/2042	504
Linear, Paving	12/2/2038	11/6/2040	504

Construction Equipment

The equipment modeled is based on information provided by MSWD as well as that which is presented in the Project Description. A detailed summary of construction equipment is provided on Table III-4.

Table III-4: Construction Equipment

Construction Activity	Equipment/Info	CalEEMod Equivalent	Quantity
Pipeline Installation	1 Pavement Cutter	Concrete/Industrial Saws	1
	2 Excavator	Excavators	2
	1 Backhoe/Compactor	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1
	1 Loader	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1
	1 Dump/Haul Truck	Modeled in Trips/VMT	1 trip
	1 Paver	Pavers	1
	1 Roller/Vibrator	Roller	1
	1 Water truck	Off-Highway Trucks	1
	2 Worker Utility Trucks	Modeled in Trips/VMT	2 trips
	1 Forman Truck	Modeled in Trips/VMT	1 trip
	Traffic Control Signage and Devices	Signal Boards	1
	10 Dump/delivery trucks (50 miles round trip distance)	Modeled in Trips/VMT	10 trips
	Employees (11 members per team)	Modeled in Trips/VMT	11 trips
	Bore/Drill Rigs[1]	Bore/Drill Rigs	1
Septic Tanks Abatements	1 Excavator	Excavators	1
	1 Backhoe	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1
	1 Septic Truck (Operating 2 hours per day)	Off-Highway Trucks	1
	1 Water truck	Off-Highway Trucks	1
	2 Worker Utility Trucks	Modeled in Trips/VMT	2 trips
	1 Forman Truck	Modeled in Trips/VMT	1 trip
	Traffic Control Signage and Devices	Signal Boards	1
	2 Dump/delivery trucks (50 miles round trip distance)	Modeled in Trips/VMT	2 trips
	Employees (6-8 members per team)	Modeled in Trips/VMT	8 trips
Linear, Paving	Paver	Pavers	1

Regional Construction Emissions Summary

The estimated maximum daily construction emissions are summarized in Table III-5. Under the assumed scenarios, emissions resulting from the project construction at either site would not exceed thresholds established by the SCAQMD for emissions of any criteria pollutant. project construction-source emissions impacts would therefore be less-than-significant. Detailed construction model outputs are presented in Appendix 1 to **Appendix 2.**

Table III-5: Regional Construction Emissions Summary

Year	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Summer						
2026	1.58	13.65	18.56	0.04	1.36	0.66
2027	1.54	13.20	18.39	0.04	1.32	0.63
2028	1.49	12.69	18.20	0.04	1.28	0.59
2029	0.80	4.75	8.08	0.02	0.51	0.22
2030	0.77	4.57	7.97	0.02	0.50	0.22
2031	2.10	16.01	25.52	0.07	1.70	0.74
2032	1.31	11.34	17.53	0.04	1.19	0.51
2033	1.28	11.09	17.40	0.04	1.16	0.49
2034	1.98	14.80	24.90	0.07	1.62	0.66
2035	1.22	10.66	17.17	0.04	1.12	0.45
2036	1.20	10.40	17.09	0.04	1.10	0.43
2037	0.69	3.52	7.45	0.02	0.45	0.17
2038	1.16	10.03	16.99	0.04	1.08	0.40
2039	1.23	10.92	19.33	0.05	1.09	0.40
2040	1.22	10.80	19.28	0.05	1.08	0.40
2041	0.66	3.14	7.33	0.02	0.44	0.16
2042	0.66	3.11	7.31	0.02	0.44	0.16
Winter						
2026	1.56	13.79	17.47	0.04	1.36	0.66
2027	1.51	13.34	17.38	0.04	1.32	0.63
2028	1.46	12.82	17.24	0.04	1.28	0.59
2029	0.78	4.78	7.46	0.02	0.51	0.22
2030	0.76	4.60	7.38	0.02	0.50	0.22
2031	2.82	20.58	31.52	0.09	2.20	0.95
2032	2.59	22.93	33.61	0.09	2.37	1.02
2033	1.26	11.22	16.72	0.04	1.16	0.49
2034	1.96	14.96	23.81	0.07	1.62	0.66
2035	1.21	10.76	16.56	0.04	1.12	0.45
2036	1.88	14.20	23.59	0.07	1.56	0.60
2037	2.33	20.53	32.92	0.09	2.16	0.82
2038	2.39	21.35	35.29	0.09	2.17	0.81
2039	1.21	11.02	18.79	0.05	1.09	0.40
2040	1.20	10.92	18.76	0.05	1.08	0.40
2041	0.66	3.17	6.98	0.02	0.44	0.16
2042	0.65	3.13	6.96	0.02	0.44	0.16
Maximum Daily Emissions	2.82	22.93	35.29	0.09	2.37	1.02
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Regional Operational Emissions

The proposed project primarily involves construction activity. No new trips would be anticipated to be generated by this use. Further, Long-term emissions generated by future operation of the proposed sewer pipeline would not differ substantially from that which occurs at present as part of MSWD's wastewater collection operation, as the project is anticipated to transmit wastewater via gravity or in rare circumstances, through existing pressurized force mains. The proposed project will install approximately 146,200 linear feet (LF) of sewer lines within roadways and existing rights-of-way within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system, which does not include any of the primary sources discussed previously. Therefore, there are no quantifiable daily operational emissions associated with the proposed project and no further analysis is required. Therefore, project operations would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant and impacts would be less than significant.

Conclusion

The project, as evaluated herein would not exceed the regional or localized air quality significance thresholds. The CAAQS designates the project site as nonattainment for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ while the NAAQS designates the project site as nonattainment for O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$.

The SCAQMD has published a report on how to address cumulative impacts from air pollution: White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution. In this report the SCAQMD clearly states (Page D-3):

"…the SCAQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or EIR. The only case where the significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts differ is the Hazard Index (HI) significance threshold for TAC emissions. The project specific (project increment) significance threshold is HI > 1.0 while the cumulative (facility-wide) is HI > 3.0. It should be noted that the HI is only one of three TAC emission significance thresholds considered (when applicable) in a CEQA analysis. The other two are the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) and the cancer burden, both of which use the same significance thresholds (MICR of 10 in 1 million and cancer burden of 0.5) for project specific and cumulative impacts.

Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant."

Therefore, this analysis assumes that individual projects that do not generate operational or construction emissions that exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which SSAB is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Alternatively, individual project-related construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable.

Construction Impacts: The project-specific evaluation of emissions presented in the preceding analysis demonstrates that proposed project construction-source air pollutant emissions would not result in exceedances of regional thresholds. Therefore, proposed project construction-source emissions would be considered less than significant on a project-specific and cumulative basis.
Operational Impacts: The project-specific evaluation of emissions presented in the preceding analysis demonstrates that proposed project operational-source air pollutant emissions would not result in exceedances of regional thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project operational-source emissions would be considered less than significant on a project-specific and cumulative basis.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The potential impact of project-generated air pollutant emissions at sensitive receptors has also been considered.

Localized Construction Emissions

The SCAQMD has established that impacts to air quality are significant if there is a potential to contribute or cause localized exceedances of the federal and/or state ambient air quality standards (NAAQS/CAAQS). Collectively, these are referred to as Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs).

The SCAQMD established LSTs in response to the SCAQMD Governing Board's Environmental Justice Initiative I-4. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that would not cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest residence or sensitive receptor. The SCAQMD states that lead agencies can use the LSTs as another indicator of significance in its air quality impact analyses.

LSTs were developed in response to environmental justice and health concerns raised by the public regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. To address the issue of localized significance, the SCAQMD adopted LSTs that show whether a project would cause or contribute to localized air quality impacts and thereby cause or contribute to potential localized adverse health effects. The analysis makes use of methodology included in the LST Methodology.

Based on SCAQMD's LST Methodology, emissions for concern during construction activities are on-site NOX, CO, PM2.5, and PM10. The LST Methodology clearly states that "off-site mobile emissions from the project should not be included in the emissions compared to LSTs." As such, for purposes of the construction LST analysis, only emissions included in the CalEEMod "on-site" emissions outputs were considered.

The "acres disturbed" for analytical purposes are based on specific equipment type for each subcategory of construction activity and the estimated maximum area a given piece of equipment can pass over in an 8-hour workday (as shown on Table 7). The equipment-specific grading rates are summarized in the SCAQMD's Fact Sheet for Applying CalEEMod to Localized Significance Thresholds and CalEEMod User's Guide Appendix A: Calculation Details for CalEEMod. The disturbed area per day is representative of a piece of equipment making multiple passes over the same land area. In other words, one Rubber Tired Dozer can make multiple passes over the same land area totaling 0.5 acres in a given 8-hour day.

Based on information provided, it was assumed that 1 acre would be disturbed per day for all project Categories. This is conservative as the construction impacts are assessed against a smaller acreage threshold which would represent a more conservative assessment.

Receptors

As previously stated, LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that would not cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable NAAQS and CAAQS at the nearest residence or sensitive receptor. Receptor locations are off-site locations where individuals may be exposed to emissions from project activities.

Some people are especially sensitive to air pollution and are given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. These groups of people include children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular illness. Structures that house these persons or places where they gather are defined as "sensitive receptors". These structures typically include uses such as residences, hotels, and hospitals where an individual can remain for 24 hours. Consistent with the LST Methodology, the nearest land use where an individual could remain for 24 hours to the project site has been used to determine construction and operational air quality impacts for emissions of PM10 and PM2.5, since PM10 and PM2.5 thresholds are based on a 24-hour averaging time.

LSTs apply, even for non-sensitive land uses, consistent with LST Methodology and SCAQMD guidance. Per the LST Methodology, commercial and industrial facilities are not included in the definition of sensitive receptor because employees and patrons do not typically remain onsite for a full 24 hours but are typically onsite for 8 hours or less. However, LST Methodology explicitly states that "LSTs based on shorter averaging periods, such as the NO2 and CO LSTs, could also be applied to receptors such as industrial or commercial facilities since it is reasonable to assume that a worker at these sites could be present for periods of one to eight hours." Therefore, any adjacent land use where an individual could remain for 1 or 8-hours, that is located at a closer distance to the project site than the receptor used for PM10 and PM2.5 analysis, must be considered to determine construction and operational LST air impacts for emissions of NO2 and CO since these pollutants have an averaging time of 1 and 8-hours.

Project Related Receptors

The SCAQMD recommends that the nearest sensitive receptor be considered when determining the project's potential to cause an individual and cumulatively significant impact. As a conservative measure it is assumed that the nearest sensitive receptor could potentially be located immediately adjacent to construction activities. It should be noted that the LST Methodology also explicitly states that "It is possible that a project may have receptors closer than 25 meters. Projects with boundaries located closer than 25 meters to the nearest receptor should use the LSTs for receptors located at 25 meters." Consistent with the SCAQMD's LST Methodology, a 25-meter receptor distance is utilized in this analysis and provide for a conservative i.e., "health protective" standard of care.

Localized Thresholds for Construction Activity

Since the total acreage disturbed is less than five acres per day for construction activities, the SCAQMD's screening look-up tables are utilized in determining impacts. It should be noted that since the look-up tables identifies thresholds at only 1 acre, 2 acres, and 5 acres, linear regression has been utilized to determine localized significance thresholds. Consistent with SCAQMD guidance, the thresholds presented in Table III-6 were calculated by interpolating the threshold values for the project's disturbed acreage.

Table III-6: Maximum Daily Localized Construction Thresholds

Construction Activity	Pollutant			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Pipeline Installation	132 lbs/day	878 lbs/day	4 lbs/day	3 lbs/day
Septic Tanks Abatements				
Linear, Paving				

Source: Localized Thresholds presented in this table are based on the SCAQMD Final LST Methodology

Construction Source Localized Emissions

Emissions during the peak construction activity will not exceed the SCAQMD's localized significance thresholds at the maximally exposed receptor location, as illustrated in Table III-7. All other modeled locations in the study area would experience lower concentrations, resulting in a reduced impact. As such, the project's localized impacts during construction activity would be less than significant. Outputs from the model runs for construction LSTs are provided in **Appendix 1**

Table III-7: Construction Localized Significance Summary

Construction Activity	Year	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Area A					
Pipeline Installation	2026	10.15	13.70	0.36	0.33
	2027	9.83	13.70	0.33	0.30
	2028	9.44	13.68	0.29	0.27
Maximum Daily Emissions		10.15	13.70	0.36	0.33
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2028	4.57	6.62	0.15	0.13
	2029	4.33	6.58	0.13	0.12
	2030	4.17	6.55	0.13	0.12
	2031	3.99	6.54	0.12	0.11
Maximum Daily Emissions		4.57	6.62	0.15	0.13
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2026	1.52	2.06	0.08	0.07
	2027	1.47	2.06	0.07	0.07
	2028	1.40	2.06	0.06	0.06
Maximum Daily Emissions		1.52	2.06	0.08	0.07
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Area D-3					
Pipeline Installation	2031	8.67	13.57	0.23	0.21
Maximum Daily Emissions		8.67	13.57	0.23	0.21
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2031	3.99	6.54	0.12	0.11
Maximum Daily Emissions		3.99	6.54	0.12	0.11

Construction Activity	Year	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2031	1.25	2.06	0.05	0.05
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.25	2.06	0.05	0.05
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area G					
Pipeline Installation	2031	8.67	13.57	0.23	0.21
	2032	8.46	13.55	0.21	0.20
	Maximum Daily Emissions	8.67	13.57	0.23	0.21
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2032	3.83	6.54	0.11	0.11
	Maximum Daily Emissions	3.83	6.54	0.11	0.11
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2031	1.25	2.06	0.05	0.05
	2032	1.21	2.05	0.05	0.04
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.25	2.06	0.05	0.05
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area H					
Pipeline Installation	2032	8.46	13.55	0.21	0.20
	2033	8.29	13.52	0.19	0.18
	Maximum Daily Emissions	8.46	13.55	0.21	0.20
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2033	3.69	6.53	0.11	0.10
	2034	3.56	6.51	0.10	0.09
	Maximum Daily Emissions	3.69	6.53	0.11	0.10
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2033	1.21	2.05	0.05	0.04
	2034	1.18	2.05	0.04	0.04
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.21	2.05	0.05	0.04
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area I					
Pipeline Installation	2034	8.12	13.50	0.18	0.17
	2035	7.96	13.47	0.16	0.15
	Maximum Daily Emissions	8.12	13.50	0.18	0.17
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3

Construction Activity	Year	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2035	3.45	6.50	0.09	0.09
	2036	3.31	6.49	0.08	0.08
	Maximum Daily Emissions	3.45	6.50	0.09	0.09
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2034	1.16	2.05	0.04	0.04
	2035	1.11	2.05	0.03	0.03
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.16	2.05	0.04	0.04
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area J-2					
Pipeline Installation	2036	7.77	13.45	0.14	0.13
	2037	7.58	13.44	0.13	0.12
	Maximum Daily Emissions	7.77	13.45	0.14	0.13
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2037	3.18	6.48	0.08	0.07
	Maximum Daily Emissions	3.18	6.48	0.08	0.07
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2036	1.08	2.04	0.03	0.03
	2037	1.04	2.04	0.02	0.02
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.08	2.04	0.03	0.03
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area K					
Pipeline Installation	2037	7.58	13.44	0.13	0.12
	2038	7.43	13.43	0.12	0.11
	Maximum Daily Emissions	7.58	13.44	0.13	0.12
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2038	3.06	6.48	0.07	0.07
	Maximum Daily Emissions	3.06	6.48	0.07	0.07
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2037	1.04	2.04	0.02	0.02
	2038	1.02	2.04	0.02	0.02
	Maximum Daily Emissions	1.04	2.04	0.02	0.02
	SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	132	878	4	3
	Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO
Area I-10 Corridor					

Construction Activity	Year	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Pipeline Installation	2038	8.49	15.83	0.13	0.12
	2039	8.34	15.81	0.13	0.12
	2040	8.25	15.81	0.12	0.11
Maximum Daily Emissions		8.49	15.83	0.13	0.12
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Septic Tanks Abatements	2040	2.86	6.46	0.07	0.06
	2041	2.81	6.46	0.06	0.06
	2042	2.77	6.46	0.06	0.06
Maximum Daily Emissions		2.86	6.46	0.07	0.06
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO
Paving	2038	1.02	2.04	0.02	0.02
	2039	1.00	2.04	0.02	0.02
	2040	0.99	2.04	0.02	0.02
Maximum Daily Emissions		1.02	2.04	0.02	0.02
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds		132	878	4	3
Threshold Exceeded?		NO	NO	NO	NO

Localized Operational Emissions

According to SCAQMD localized significance threshold methodology, LSTs would apply to the operational phase of a proposed project if the project includes stationary sources or attracts mobile sources that may spend extended periods queuing and idling at the site (e.g., warehouse or transfer facilities). The project would generate a nominal number of traffic trips in the context of on-going maintenance resulting in a negligible amount of new mobile source emissions. Therefore, the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be less than significant.

CO "Hot Spot" Analysis

A CO hotspot is defined as a localized concentration of CO exceeding the state one-hour standard of 20 ppm or the eight-hour standard of 9 ppm. At the time the most recent CEQA Air Quality Handbook (1993) was published by SCAQMD, the air basin was designated as non-attainment, requiring projects to perform hotspot analyses to ensure they did not worsen the existing conditions. Over the last two decades, background CO concentrations have been significantly reduced due to regulatory controls on tailpipe emissions, which have culminated in the air basin achieving attainment status for CO.

The 2003 AQMP's findings underscore that CO hotspots are highly unlikely due to the reduced background concentrations and the effectiveness of California's air quality management strategies. The substantial reduction in CO levels from the vehicle fleet and the state's attainment status for CO further diminish the need for detailed microscale hotspot analyses, reinforcing that existing monitoring and regulatory frameworks adequately address potential air quality concerns.

In 2003, the SCAQMD as part of its AQMP development process, prepared modeling to determine

the potential for CO Hotspots at the four busiest intersections in the air basin. As summarized in the 2003 AQMP, even at one of the busiest intersections at that time, only 0.7 ppm of CO is attributable to vehicular traffic and the remaining 7.7 ppm were due to ambient background conditions. The 2003 AQMP's findings underscore that CO hotspots are highly unlikely due to the reduced background concentrations and the effectiveness of California's air quality management strategies. The substantial reduction in CO levels from the vehicle fleet and the state's attainment status for CO further diminish the need for detailed microscale hotspot analyses, reinforcing that existing monitoring and regulatory frameworks adequately address potential air quality concerns.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Thus, impacts are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – SCAQMD Rule 402 Nuisance, prohibits discharge from any source whatsoever of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety or any such persons or the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property. This rule covers generation of odors. Typical sources of odor complaints include facilities such as sewage treatment plants, landfills, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, and livestock operations. Under the right meteorological conditions, some odors may still be offensive several miles from the source.

Implementation of this project would have the potential to generate odorous emissions during construction activities. Construction activities are not typically sources of continuous nuisance odors, although construction could result in minor amounts of odorous emissions associated with diesel exhaust or evaporation of VOCs from architectural coatings. These smells are largely due to the presence of sulfur and the creation of hydrocarbons during combustion. As shown in Table III-5, construction would not result in significant emissions of SO_X. Further, the septic tank abatement would consist of rerouting plumbing to the new public sewer system, pumping and cleaning the tank of all liquid waste, sludge, and scum, with the tank residue disposed of at an approved facility. The tank is then filled with sand or slurry and covered up. The tank is left in place. The most significant potential for odor is during the pumping and cleaning of the tank, as the waste and accumulated gases (such as hydrogen sulfide) are exposed. Licensed professionals use specialized vacuum trucks and work efficiently to contain and remove the waste, minimizing the time the odor is present. Furthermore, construction would be temporary, and equipment would not be located in a single location throughout the duration of construction. Odorous hydrocarbons tend to dissipate quickly and would only affect receptors in the immediate vicinity, rather than a substantial number of people at any given time. Therefore, construction activities would not result in other emissions, such as odors, adversely affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the project would not result in odor impacts because none of the project components include odor-generating components, as the sewer pipelines are located belowground, and are enclosed. Thus, no significant odor emissions would occur. Impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, odors associated with the proposed project construction and operations would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: 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 Wildlife 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 Wildlife or U.S. 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information is provided based on a Biological Resources Assessment prepared by HDR, Inc. dated June 2025 and is titled "*MSWD Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and I-10 Sewer Improvements Project Biological Resources Assessment.*" The following information is abstracted from the Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) provided as **Appendix 2.**

Environmental Setting

The project area is situated in the geographically based ecological classification known as the Upper Coachella Valley and Hills of the Sonoran Basin and Range in southern California. The goal of regional ecological classifications is to reduce variability based on spatial covariance in climate, geology, topography, climax vegetation, hydrology, and soils. The Upper Coachella Valley and Hills ecoregion is a transitional desert region with some affinities to the Mojave Basin and Range ecoregion to the north and is surrounded by mountains, except to the south where it descends toward the agricultural lands and the

Salton Sea.

The Desert Hot Springs area is situated in the northwestern end of the Coachella Valley and is bordered on the north and northeast by the Little San Bernardino Mountains, on the east/southeast by the Seven Palms Valley and Edom Hills and on the west by the San Bernardino Mountain foothills. The topography of the project area consists of an urban landscape that slopes downward from northeast to southwest, built over naturally occurring alluvial fans and bajadas. The elevation of the project area ranges from approximately 1,055 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the southern limits of the project area to 1,520 feet amsl near the northeastern-most limits.

The project area is within a hot desert climate (BWh), characterized by year-round high temperatures, low humidity, and considerable variation in the occurrence, intensity, and distribution of precipitation. Average annual maximum temperatures within the project area peak at 108.5 degrees Fahrenheit (° F) in July and fall to an average annual minimum temperature of 37° F in December and January (Palm Springs Airport temperature data average over 27 years, 1998-2025; NOAA 2025). Average total annual precipitation is approximately 3.73 inches and reaches a peak in January (0.87 inches) (Palm Springs Airport precipitation data average over 27 years, 1998-2025; NOAA 2025). Precipitation is lowest in the month of June (0.00 inches average).

Hydrologically, the eastern portions of the project area are situated within the Miracle Hill Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 719.43) and the western portions are within the Mission Creek Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 719.42). The Miracle Hill and Mission Creek HSAs comprise 44,525-acre and 73,871-acre drainage areas respectively; both within the larger Whitewater River Watershed (HUC 18100201). The Whitewater River is the major hydrogeomorphic feature within the Whitewater River Watershed and is one of the main tributaries to the Salton Sea. The nearest tributary to the Whitewater River is Morongo Wash, which is southwest-adjacent to Area A at its closest point to the project area.

Soils within the project area are comprised mostly of Carsitas Series soils including Carsitas gravelly sand, 0 to 9 percent slopes, Carsitas gravelly sand, 9 to 30 percent slopes, Carsitas cobbly sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes and Carsitas fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes. Carsitas family soils consist of gravelly sand that is comprised of gravelly alluvium derived from granite. This soil type is excessively drained, with a low to very low runoff class and does not have a hydric soil rating.

The City of Desert Hot Springs is a desert community situated north of the City of Palms Springs, along the southern foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains, which consists of a mix of urban landscapes and undeveloped desert scrub habitats. The project area is entirely within a disturbed environment, with only minor areas of the project footprint containing native desert species (such as any areas outside of road ROW). The mix of land uses that occur within the project area includes nearly all of the land uses that could be found within the City of Desert Hot Springs; and further, within the City of Palm Springs, the land use is generally Industrial (IND) in nature, with some areas designated for Open Space Desert (OS-D), and a small area designated for Medium Density Residential (MDR). Within Unincorporated Riverside County, the predominant land uses are Medium Density Residential, Commercial Retail, Open Space Recreation, Conservation, and Medium High Density Residential. Within all "lettered" Sub Areas, the predominant land uses are residential in nature. Habitat within the surrounding undeveloped areas consist mostly of Creosote bush scrub (Larrea tridentata) Shrubland Alliance plant communities.

Existing Biological and Physical Conditions

The project would be conducted within an area of about 2,000 acres, when taking into account each of the Subareas that would be connected to MSWD's sewer system (Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor). The footprint encompasses all the anticipated construction ground disturbance and physical location of new sewer line and properties receiving septic abatement. Existing disturbances within the immediate project area are primarily associated with urban and suburban development and paved roadways. Habitat within the project area is disturbed and highly fragmented. Land cover within project area consists of urban and suburban development, and surrounding land cover consists of a mix of development and undeveloped scrub habitats.

The proposed impact area is completely disturbed, consisting of paved streets (Appendix B of **Appendix 2**, Site Photos and Photo-point Map). The majority of the project area no longer supports undisturbed habitat, and the only species expected to occur within the project area were those adapted to urban-suburban environments. Species observed or otherwise detected in the project area during the survey included:

- greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*)
- Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*)
- rock pigeon (*Columba livia*)
- common raven (*Corvus corax*)
- house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)
- house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- great-tailed grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)
- Eurasian collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)
- mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*)
- Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)
- western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*)
- desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*)

Special Status Species and Habitats

According to the CNDDB, CNPS, and other relevant literature and databases, 95 sensitive species (57 plant species, 38 animal species) have been documented in the surrounding nine quad search within the surrounding project area (Joshua Tree South, Myoma, East Deception Canyon, Seven Palms Valley, Morongo Valley, Desert Hot Springs, Yucca Valley South, Cathedral City and Palm Springs) USGS 7.5-Minute Series Quadrangles. This list of sensitive species and habitats includes any state and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species, California Fully Protected species, CDFW designated Species of Special Concern (SSC), and otherwise Special Animals. "Special Animals" is a general term that refers to all the taxa the CNDDB is interested in tracking, regardless of their legal or protection status. This list is also referred to as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species." The CDFW considers the taxa on this list to be those of greatest conservation need.

Of the 16 state and/or federally listed (or state candidate) species documented within the Joshua Tree South, Myoma, East Deception Canyon, Seven Palms Valley, Morongo Valley, Desert Hot Springs, Yucca Valley South, Cathedral City and Palm Springs quads, the following six state and/or federally listed (or state candidate) species have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 3 miles):

- Triple-ribbed milk-vetch (*Astragalus tricarinatus*; FE)
- Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia* [BUOW]; SCE)
- Mojave desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*; FT, CT)
- Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*; FT, CE)
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*; FE, CE)

However, the project area consists entirely of residential development and the habitat requirements for these species are absent from the proposed impact area. The habitat within the undeveloped portions of the project area is disturbed and highly fragmented, and the aeolian sand dune habitat that Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and Coachella Valley milk-vetch require are absent from the project area and immediate vicinity, as well as the rocky slopes required for triple-ribbed milk-vetch. The project area is not suitable to support Mojave desert tortoise (due to disturbance and habitat fragmentation) or least Bell's vireo (due to absence of riparian habitat) and these species are not expected to occur within or adjacent the project area.

BUOW have been documented adjacent to Areas A, G, I-10 and K. Also, BUOW tolerate some degree of human disturbance. However, there is little suitable BUOW habitat within or adjacent the project area, due to development and habitat fragmentation. Additionally, few fossorial mammal burrows were detected during the reconnaissance survey; BUOW do not create their own burrows and therefore require mammal burrows, and no BUOWs or BUOW sign was detected during the survey. BUOW may occur within the project area due to the proximity of documented occurrences and the species' ability to tolerate human disturbance, but their potential to occur within the project area is low.

Special Status Species

No state and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species, or other sensitive species were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level field survey and due to the environmental conditions within and adjacent the proposed project footprint, none are expected to occur with the exception of BUOW, which has a low potential to occur within the project area. An analysis of the likelihood and potential for occurrence of all CNDDB sensitive species is documented (Appendix A of **Appendix 2**, Special-Status Species and Potential to Occur in the Vicinity of the Project Area). The analysis considers species' range as well as documentation within the vicinity of the project area. It also includes the habitat requirements for each species and the potential for their occurrence on site, based on required habitat elements and range relative to the current site conditions.

Special Status Habitats

The project area does not contain any sensitive habitats or USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species. However, the nearest Critical Habitat unit is adjacent to Area A. This Critical Habitat unit is part of the Mission Creek Morongo Wash System (Unit 3) for the federally listed endangered Coachella Valley milk-vetch. However, no portion of the project area is within Critical Habitat or sensitive habitat. Therefore, the project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of USFWS designated Critical Habitat, or any other special status habitats.

Jurisdictional Delineation

The project area is within two Hydrologic Sub-Areas: Miracle Hill (HSA 719.43) and Mission Creek (HSA 719.42). The Miracle Hill HSA comprises a 44,525-acre drainage area and Mission Creek comprises a 73,871-acre drainage area; both HSAs are within the larger Whitewater River Watershed (HUC 18100201).

This watershed is primarily within Riverside County, with a small portion in San Bernardino County. The Whitewater River Watershed is bound on the north by the Santa Ana and Southern Mojave Watersheds, on the southeast by the Salton Sea Watershed, on the southwest by the San Felipe Creek and Santa Margarita Watersheds, and on the west by the San Jacinto Watershed. The Whitewater River Watershed encompasses a portion of the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and the San Jacinto Mountains to the south and is approximately 1,500 square miles in area. The Whitewater River is the major hydrogeomorphic feature within the Whitewater River Watershed. The nearest tributary to the Whitewater River is Big Morongo Wash just west of Area A and Little Morongo Creek which travels through Area A as a highly altered swale entering and exiting a golf course.

The swale feature (Photograph 3 and Photograph 10 of **Appendix 2**) includes indicators of hydrology, including sedimentation and flow patterns with a weak ordinary high water mark upstream and downstream of the paved road, along with flow pattern indications on the paved road, the feature has the potential to be a water of the State regulated under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Because the paved road previously impacted the feature, any impacts to the swale across the paved road would result in no loss of functions and would not result in a discharge of fill material. As a result, impacts to the paved road would only require implementation of best management practices to avoid discharges of fill to nearby upstream and downstream portions of the swale.

Waters of the United States

The USACE has authority to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material in WOTUS under Section 404 of the CWA. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and USACE 'Waters of the United States,' Conforming Rule is defined generally as territorial seas, interstate waters, tributaries that are relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of waters, wetlands adjacent to regulated waters, and intrastate lakes and ponds. The Conforming Rule specifically excludes from the definition of WOTUS:

1) Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons, designed to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act;
2) Prior converted cropland designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. The exclusion would cease upon a change of use, which means that the area is no longer available for the production of agricultural commodities. Notwithstanding the determination of an area's status as prior converted cropland by any other Federal agency, for the purposes of the Clean Water Act, the final authority regarding Clean Water Act jurisdiction remains with EPA;
3) Ditches (including roadside ditches) excavated wholly in and draining only dry land and that do not carry a relatively permanent flow of water;
4) Artificially irrigated areas that would revert to dry land if the irrigation ceased;
5) Artificial lakes or ponds created by excavating or diking dry land to collect and retain water and which are used exclusively for such purposes as stock watering, irrigation, settling basins, or rice growing;
6) Artificial reflecting or swimming pools or other small ornamental bodies of water created by excavating or diking dry land to retain water for primarily aesthetic reasons;
7) Waterfilled depressions created in dry land incidental to construction activity and pits excavated in dry land for the purpose of obtaining fill, sand, or gravel unless and until the construction or excavation operation is abandoned and the resulting body of water meets the definition of waters of the United States; and
8) Swales and erosional features (e.g., gullies, small washes) characterized by low volume, infrequent, or short duration flow.

Areas meeting all three wetland parameters (i.e. hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and wetland hydrology) and are adjacent to other jurisdictional waters would be designated as USACE wetlands. As described in the EPA/USACE *'Memorandum to the Field Between the U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Concerning The Proper Implementation of "Continuous Surface Connection" Under the Definition of "Waters of the United States" Under the Clean Water Act'* (dated March 12, 2025) an adjacent wetland is where there is a 'continuous surface connection to a requisite covered water making it difficult to determine where the water ends and wetland begins.

There are no wetland or non-wetland WOTUS within the project area. Because all aquatic resources have ephemeral flow durations, none are relatively permanent waters and therefore are not federal WOTUS. Therefore, the project will not result in any permanent or temporary impacts to WOTUS.

State/Lake and Streambed

Little Morongo Creek is an ephemeral drainage that originates in the hills north of the project area. The creek runs southwest into a wide concrete-sided channel just north of Area A, and crosses Augusta Avenue into the north side of Area A via a concrete Arizona crossing during high flows. Once within Area A, the creek enters an area of mowed lawn with concrete walls along the margins for a short distance before entering the golf course. Project-related ground disturbance is proposed for Augusta Avenue. A second Arizona crossing on the southern side of Area A conveys high flows out of the project area and across Mission Lakes Boulevard into the existing continuation of Little Morongo Creek; no project-related ground disturbance is proposed for Mission Lakes Boulevard, so the Arizona crossing at the south end of Area A will not be impacted by the project.

The at-grade 'Arizona' stream crossing of Little Morongo Creek at Augusta Avenue, is subject to RWQCB Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code regulated by CDFW.

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The County of Riverside developed the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) to enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem processes while allowing future economic growth. The CVMSHCP sets Conservation Goals and Objectives to ensure the conservation of the Covered Species and conserved natural communities in the MSHCP Reserve System. In addition to setting Conservation Goals and Objectives for the Species and conserved natural communities, the MSHCP has designated Core Habitat, Other Conserved Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors and Linkages. The CVMSHCP area is divided into Conservation Areas based on a combination of ecological and jurisdictional factors. The CVMSHCP is intended to satisfy the legal requirements to authorize the "take" of species covered under the Plan during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species.

The project area is outside any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas, the nearest Conservation Area is along the southern border of Area A and the northern border of Area K, J-2, and I-10 Corridor (Upper Mission Creek Covered/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area (**Figures IV-1 through IV-3**). Therefore, no conservation or avoidance measures are expected, and the project as described, would be consistent with the Conservation Goals and Objectives set forth in the CVMSHCP.

Conclusion

Sensitive Biological Resources

No sensitive species were observed within the project area during the field survey and due to the environmental conditions on site, none are expected to occur except BUOW, which has a low potential to occur. The project area is completely disturbed, consisting of paved streets and previously graded, compact, and otherwise disturbed bare ground (see attached Site Photos). Existing disturbances within the immediate project area are primarily associated with residential development and paved roadways, and habitat within the project area is highly fragmented. Due to the environmental conditions on site and the adjacent disturbances, the project area is likely not suitable to support most of the special status plant and wildlife species that have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 3 miles), including the federally listed as endangered Coachella Valley milk-vetch, the federally listed as endangered triple-ribbed milk-vetch, the state and federally listed as threatened Mojave desert tortoise, the state listed as endangered and federally listed as threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, and the state and federally listed as endangered least Bell's vireo.

The CESA candidate for listing, endangered BUOW, has the potential to occur within the project area due to the proximity of documented occurrences and the species' ability to tolerate some degree of human disturbance; however, the potential for occurrence is low due to habitat fragmentation and scarcity of burrows. No BUOW or BUOW signs were observed during the survey. Provided project activities are restricted to the existing paved or graded roadways, impacts to BUOW can be avoided through implementation of the avoidance and minimization measures provided below for nesting birds.

The project area does not contain any USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species, therefore, the project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat. Additionally, the project will not impact any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. The Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Mojave desert tortoise, Peninsular bighorn sheep, burrowing owl, least Bell's vireo, southwester willow flycatcher and Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard are all CVMSHCP Covered Species. The CVMSHCP provides "take" authorization for Covered Species during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species. The District and the City of Desert Hot Springs are both signatories to the CVMSHCP. Since the Coachella Valley milk-vetch, triple-ribbed milk-vetch, Mojave desert tortoise, Peninsular bighorn sheep, southwester willow flycatcher, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, least Bell's vireo, and BUOW are all Covered Species under the CVMSHCP and the project will not impact any MSHCP Conservation Areas or USFWS designated Critical Habitat for Coachella Valley milk-vetch, "take" authorization is provided for any potential project-related impacts to these species that may occur.

Nesting Birds

Habitat within the project area includes suitable to support nesting birds, including both vegetation and man-made structures. Most native bird species are protected from unlawful take by the MBTA (Appendix C of **Appendix 2**, Regulatory Framework). In December 2017, the Department of the Interior (DOI) issued a memorandum concluding that the MBTA's prohibitions on take apply "[…] only to affirmative actions that have as their purpose the taking or killing of migratory birds, their nests, or their eggs." Then in April 2018, the USFWS issued a guidance memorandum that further clarified that the take of migratory birds or their active nests (i.e., with eggs or young) that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity does not constitute a violation of the MBTA .

However, the State of California provides additional protection for native bird species and their nests in the California Fish and Game Code. Bird nesting protections in the California Fish and Game Code include the following (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, 3513 and 3800):

- Section 3503 prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of the nest or eggs of any bird.
- Section 3503.5 prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of any nests, eggs, or birds in the orders Falconiformes (new world vultures, hawks, eagles, ospreys, and falcons, among others), and Strigiformes (owls).
- Section 3511 prohibits the take or possession of Fully Protected birds.
- Section 3513 prohibits the take or possession of any migratory nongame bird or part thereof, as designated in the MBTA. To avoid violation of the take provisions, it is generally required that project-related disturbance at active nesting territories be reduced or eliminated during the nesting cycle.
- Section 3800 prohibits the take of any non-game bird (i.e., bird that is naturally occurring in California that is not a gamebird, migratory game bird, or fully protected bird).

In general, impacts to all bird species (common and special status) can be avoided by conducting work outside of the nesting season, which is generally February 1st through August 31st. However, if all work cannot be conducted outside of nesting season, the following is recommended:

- To avoid impacts to nesting birds (common and special status) during the nesting season, a qualified avian biologist should conduct pre-construction nesting bird surveys prior to project-related disturbance to suitable nesting areas to identify any active nests. If no active nests are found, no further action would be required. If an active nest is found, the biologist should set appropriate no-work buffers around the nest which would be based upon the nesting species, its sensitivity to disturbance, nesting stage and expected types, intensity and duration of disturbance. The nest(s) and buffer zones should be field checked weekly by a qualified biological monitor. The approved no-work buffer zone should be clearly marked in the field, within which no disturbance activity should commence until the qualified biologist has determined the young birds have successfully fledged and the nest is inactive.

Jurisdictional Waters

In addition to the BRA survey, the project area was assessed for the presence of any state and/or federal jurisdictional waters. The result of the jurisdictional waters assessment is that there are no wetland or non-wetland WOTUS or waters of the State potentially subject to regulation by the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. However, Little Morongo Creek crosses Augusta Avenue, which is within the project's disturbance footprint, at an Arizona crossing that may fall under the jurisdiction of the RWQCB under Section 401 of the CWA and/or Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, or the CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Therefore, the project may impact RWQCB/CDFW jurisdictional waters and state jurisdictional waters permitting may be required.

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The County of Riverside developed the CVMSHCP to enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem processes while allowing future economic growth. The CVMSHCP sets Conservation Goals and Objectives to ensure the conservation of the Covered Species and conserved natural communities in the MSHCP Reserve System. In addition to setting Conservation Goals and Objectives for the Covered Species and conserved natural communities, the MSHCP has designated Core Habitat, Other Conserved Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors and Linkages. The CVMSHCP area is divided into

Conservation Areas based on a combination of ecological and jurisdictional factors. The CVMSHCP is intended to satisfy the legal requirements to authorize the "take" of species covered under the Plan during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species.

The project area is outside any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas, the nearest Conservation Area is along the southern border of Area A and the northern border of Area K (Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area (Figure 4a). Additionally, the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area boarder the easter side of the 1-10 Area. Although none of the I-10 Area proposes disturbance to occur with a conservation area, the portion of the I-10 Area that is south of I-10 is within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Conservation Area.

The project as described, would be consistent with the Conservation Goals and Objectives set forth in the CVMSHCP, and no conservation lands or avoidance measures are expected to be required. However, the project is within the CVMSHCP boundary. Although the project site is not within any Conservation Areas and will not impact any Essential Ecological Processes or Biological Corridors and Linkages, the project site is adjacent (west of) the two Conservation Area. Therefore, the project will need to conform with the Guidelines for projects that are adjacent CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Section 4.5 of the CVMSHCP identifies guidelines to avoid or minimize indirect effects from development sharing a common boundary with Conservation Areas. These Guidelines are designed to minimize the edge effects, and shall be implemented where applicable:

- **4.5.1 Drainage**: Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.
- **4.5.2 Toxics**: Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bioproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.
- **4.5.3 Lighting**: For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.
- **4.5.4 Noise**: Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA Leq hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.
- **4.5.5 Invasives**: Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112. The plants listed in Table 4-113 shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The construction and operation of the proposed infrastructure across the whole of the project footprint (Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor) required to support the project may result in direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife species. The extent and nature of impacts on special-status wildlife species varies depending on the species under consideration, their range, and the type and quality of suitable habitats present.

In general, permanent and temporary direct impacts on special-status wildlife species during construction of the proposed project over the 10 year life of the project could include mortality or injury, and disturbances to suitable habitats for special-status wildlife species, including disruption of wetland and streambeds; water pollution; and reptile, bird, and mammal burrow or nest disturbance. These habitat disturbances could lead to the permanent or temporary abandonment of these habitats by special-status species, a disruption in the life cycle of these species, or direct mortality or injury of individuals of these species.

Temporary and permanent indirect impacts on special-status wildlife species would occur through construction activities associated with the proposed project, with no operational impacts anticipated as the proposed project would be developed belowground, with operational activities involving only limited maintenance trips to the project areas on an as needed basis. in a number of ways depending on the species and type of disturbance. Potential indirect impacts include erosion, soil compaction, increased siltation and sedimentation, fractures in the hardpan soils, alteration of jurisdictional water hydrology, dust aerosolization, host plant stress, destruction of native vegetation, habitat fragmentation, and noise and light pollution. These indirect impacts could lead to the disturbance of special-status wildlife species such as a temporary shift in foraging patterns or territories, refugia abandonment, increased predation, decreased reproductive success, and reduced population viability.

Construction of the whole of the project, because it is occurring primarily within developed areas, should only result in mostly minimal impacts on special-status wildlife species. Only a limited amount of marginal habitat for special-status wildlife species could be impacted by construction activities. The location where most of the proposed project will be installed or constructed occurs within built-up land, or otherwise disturbed locations, as demonstrated in Appendix B of **Appendix 2**, Site Photos. Thus, construction would potentially impact special-status wildlife species that use mostly urban/developed areas. This does not negate the fact that special-status species and habitat supporting special status species exists within MSWD's service area, and may be impacted by implementation of the proposed project, particularly in more sparsely developed areas such as around the I-10 corridor, or along areas that border the CVMSHCP Conservation areas, such as the I-10 corridor, Area A, Area J-2, and Area K.

As previously stated, ongoing operation of the sewer line would be conducted on an as-needed basis, or in the event of an emergency such as a line break. The sewer alignments would be primarily located within paved road rights-of-way, with several areas that would occur within dirt road rights-of-way (ROW) or dirt pathways. Within the I-10 corridor, the project would require installation of pipeline through an area consisting of native desert. It is not anticipated that any operational activities would occur within this area once the pipeline is installed.

Further, during construction or operation near environmentally sensitive areas, such as within the more sparsely developed areas such as around the I-10 corridor, or along areas that border the CVMSHCP Conservation areas, such as the I-10 corridor, Area A, Area J-2, and Area K, wildlife exclusion fencing shall be installed as appropriate to deter wildlife from entering the project area, thereby protecting special status wildlife species from potential project-related impacts.

BIO-1 ***Exclusion barriers (e.g., silt fences) will be installed at the edge of the construction footprint and along the outer perimeter of Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Environmentally Restricted Areas as defined by the project biologist prior to the commencement of construction activities to restrict special-status species from entering the construction area during construction. The design specifications of the exclusion fencing will be determined through consultation with the USFWS and/or CDFW, as appropriate. Clearance surveys will be conducted for special-status species after the exclusion fence is installed in compliance with USFWS and/or CDFW requirements. The project biologist shall determine the frequency in which clearance surveys will be conducted to determine the efficacy of the exclusion fencing.***

Implementation of the following **MMs BIO-2 through BIO-6** will ensure that project construction impacts, both direct, and indirect, to sensitive biological resources and potential special status species and habitats, including the potential effects of invasive species, are reduced to a level of insignificance.

BIO-2 ***All food-related trash items (e.g., wrappers, cans, bottles, food scraps) will be disposed of in closed containers and removed at least once a week from the construction site.***

BIO-3 ***Use of rodenticides and herbicides in the project footprint will be restricted at the direction of the project biologist. This measure is necessary to prevent poisoning of special-status species and the potential reduction or depletion of the prey populations of special–status wildlife species. Where pesticides must be used, they must be used in full accordance with use instructions for the particular chemical and at the direction of the project biologist.***

BIO-4 ***Prior to the commencement of construction, MSWD shall identify staging areas for construction equipment to be utilized during construction that will be located outside sensitive biological resources areas, including habitat for special-status species, jurisdictional waters, and wildlife movement corridors.***

During construction and operation, the contractor shall eliminate all nonessential lighting throughout the project area and avoid or limit the use of artificial light during the hours of dawn and dusk when many wildlife species are most active. The contractor shall ensure that construction lighting for project activities is shielded, cast downward, and does not spill over onto other properties or upward into the night sky. The contractor shall ensure use of LED lighting with a correlated color temperature of 3,000 Kelvins or less, proper disposal of hazardous waste, and recycling of lighting that contains toxic compounds with a qualified recycler.

BIO-5 ***Plastic mono-filament netting (erosion-control matting) or similar material will <u>not</u> be used in erosion control materials to prevent potential harm to wildlife. Materials such as coconut coir matting or tackified hydroseeding compounds will be used as substitutes.***

BIO-6 ***All excavated, steep-sided holes or trenches more than 8 inches deep will be covered at the close of each working day with plywood or similar materials, or a minimum of one escape ramp constructed of earth fill for every 10 feet of trenching will be provided to prevent the entrapment of wildlife. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they will be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. All culverts or similar enclosed structures with a diameter of 4 inches or greater will be covered, screened, or stored more than 1 foot off the ground to prevent use by wildlife. Stored material will be cleared for common and special-status wildlife species before the pipe is subsequently used or moved.***

As described throughout the introductory sections presented before this impact analysis, based on the areas of potential effect (APE) being located primarily within disturbed road ROWs, the potential to impact special status species during construction is limited. As the surveys for this project were conducted in 2025, it is expected that these survey results would be valid into 2026, but for projects being considered in later years, for each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella, a new biological resources assessment, including surveys, shall be conducted to verify findings, and ensure that impacts to special status species are minimized to a level of less than significant. Based on the findings found in the BRA, only one sensitive species was identified with a potential to occur during the reconnaissance-level field survey, burrowing owl (BUOW). As a result, focused BUOW surveys are required to determine if, when, and how the site is used by BUOW, and whether the proposed project may impact this species. Surveys shall be conducted prior to construction of each pipeline alignment area under consideration by MSWD.

Typical habitat for this species includes open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably, the California ground squirrel. Potential to occur is high in all of the project footprint, particularly as BUOW has been shown to adapt to urban areas and overwinter in drain pipes, abandoned tires and other cover sites, which occur throughout the project area. Further, known sitings of BUOW have occurred adjacent to Little Morongo Road within Mission Creek, which is a conservation area under the CVMSHCP. Thus, in areas such as the I-10 corridor, this species may be more likely to occur, particularly as this area, while developing rapidly, remains more sparsely developed than the other areas of the project occurring in the more northerly portions of Desert Hot Springs.

Permanent and temporary direct impacts on this species during construction include mortality or injury, and disturbances to suitable habitats for special-status wildlife species, including disruption of wetland and streambeds; water pollution; and reptile, bird, and mammal burrow or nest disturbance A significant impact to this species could occur should unauthorized "take" of the species occur or should any of the above permanent or direct impacts to this species occur. As the project would potentially involve construction activities that could occur within the occurrence areas for this species, a significant direct impact could occur should development be unable to avoid take of this species.

Potential indirect impacts include erosion, soil compaction, increased siltation and sedimentation, fractures in the hardpan soils or rock outcroppings, alteration of jurisdictional water hydrology, dust aerosolization, host plant stress, destruction of native vegetation, habitat fragmentation, and noise and light pollution. These indirect impacts could lead to the disturbance of special-status wildlife species such as a temporary shift in foraging patterns or territories, refugia abandonment, increased predation, decreased reproductive success, and reduced population viability, which could result in a significant and unavoidable impact to this species.

Cumulative impacts could occur should cumulative development in the Coachella Valley region result in reduced habitat for this species, thereby resulting in a cumulative reduction in species occurrences across the existing habitat supporting this species. However, it should be noted that occurrences within the Coachella Valley region are greater than in other regions within which this species is found according to research conducted by HDR biologist Lisa Patterson. The project could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to this species as a result of cumulatively considerable contributions to loss of habitat supporting this species, or cumulative take of this species, including increasing the status level of this species a higher status under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), particularly as this species is presently undergoing review by CDFW to determine whether its status should be considered endangered under CESA, and is therefore currently subject to greater protections thereof.

MM BIO-7 would ensure that direct impacts to the special status species are mitigated through avoidance, mitigation or compensation in accordance with regulatory requirements including compliance with CDFW and USFWS through the acquisition of incidental take permits where required. This would avoid or compensate for potential "take" of this species.

BIO-7 Pre-Construction Consultations. Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to consult with a biologist to determine the need for site-specific biological surveys. Where an area under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella has been determined to require a site-specific survey by a biologist, in any case in which the project will affect undeveloped land, site surveys shall be conducted by a biologist. If sensitive species are identified as a result of the survey for which mitigation/compensation must be provided in accordance with regulatory requirements, all work must stop in the area until the following subsequent mitigation actions are taken:

1. *MSWD shall provide compensation for sensitive habitat acreage lost by acquiring and protecting in perpetuity (through property or mitigation bank credit acquisition) habitat for the sensitive species at a ratio of not less than 1:1 for habitat lost. The property acquisition shall include the presence of at least one animal or plant per animal or plant lost at the development site to compensate for the loss of individual sensitive species.*
2. *The final mitigation may differ from the above values based on negotiations between the project proponent and USFWS and CDFW for any incidental take permits for listed species. MSWD shall retain a copy of the incidental take permit as verification that the mitigation of significant biological resource impacts at a project site with sensitive biological resources has been accomplished.*
3. *Preconstruction botanical surveys for special-status plant communities and special- status plant species will be conducted when needed in areas that were*

not previously surveyed because of access or timing issues or project design changes. Pre-construction surveys for special-status plant communities and special-status plant species will be conducted before the start of ground-disturbing activities during the appropriate blooming period(s) for the species.

MM BIO-8 would ensure that the protective mitigation measures provided herein are successfully implemented for the duration of construction and operation of future individual projects under the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella.

BIO-8 Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. The burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version) prior to any construction activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. The information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, appropriate NCCP (Fish and Game Code section 2835) or CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.

As previously discussed, BUOW is a state candidate for listing as an endangered species under CESA. As such, BUOW currently receive the same legal protection afforded to a state listed threatened or endangered species (FGC sections 2074.2 and 2085). If BUOW are determined to be present within the project area prior to project implementation, then any potential project related impacts to BUOW would need to be avoided and coordination with the CDFW may be required. **MM BIO-8** would ensure protection of this species in light of project implementation.

No other sensitive species have been identified as having a potential to exist within or be impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, with the implementation of **MMs BIO-1 through BIO-8,** the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to result in 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the proposed project has minimal potential to have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS. As stated in the BRA provided as **Appendix 2** prepared by HDR, the project area does not contain any sensitive habitats, including any USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species, and the project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat. Based on the field survey conducted by HDR and the information contained in **Appendix 2,** no significant impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive communities are anticipated to occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – According to the data gathered by HDR in **Appendix 2**, no federally protected wetlands occur within the project footprint. However, the result of the jurisdictional waters assessment is that there are no wetland or non-wetland WOTUS or waters of the State potentially subject to regulation by the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. However, Little Morongo Creek crosses Augusta Avenue, which is within the project's disturbance footprint, at the "Arizona" crossing that may fall under the jurisdiction of the RWQCB under Section 401 of the CWA and/or Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, or the CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Therefore, the project may impact RWQCB/CDFW jurisdictional waters and state jurisdictional waters permitting may be required. Thus, MSWD will likely be required to obtain the following regulatory approvals prior to impacts occurring within the identified jurisdictional areas: Corps Approved Jurisdictional Determination/Waiver; Regional Board CWA Section Report of Waste Discharge; and CDFW Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA).

BIO-9 ***For the Little Morongo Creek crossing at Augusta Avenue, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) shall be notified pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602. If CDFW determines that the Project may substantially affect fish and wildlife resources, then CDFW shall issue a Streambed Alternation Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement shall include measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources.***

Through an Agreement from CDFW and/or other agencies (Corps, Regional Board [regulatory agencies]) with jurisdiction over impacts to jurisdictional waters, the District shall minimize discharge of fill to the extent feasible, and any discharge of fill not avoidable and all impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources shall be authorized and mitigated through compensatory mitigation in an Agreement. Mitigation shall be provided by restoration of temporary impacts, enhancement of existing resources, or for permanent impacts as follows: purchasing into CDFW, Corps, or Regional Board authorized mitigation bank; or by selecting a site near the Project site and enhancing it with a native riparian habitat or invasive species removal in accordance with a habitat mitigation plan approved by regulatory agencies; or by acquiring sufficient compensating habitat to meet regulatory agency requirements. Impacts to jurisdictional waters shall be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 ratio, with the ultimate compensatory mitigation ratio being determined through negotiation with regulatory agency, and never at a rate of less than 1:1. The ratio will rise based on the

type of habitat, habitat quality, and presence of sensitive or listed plants or animals in the affected area. This ratio will be determined by the regulatory agency, and must be deemed sufficient by the regulatory agency issuing the permit to compensate for/offset the impacts to the jurisdictional waters and supported species and habitats therein. A Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Proposal shall be prepared by a biologist or regulatory specialist and reviewed and approved by the appropriate regulatory agencies. These agencies (Corps, Regional Board, CDFW and any other applicable regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the proposed facility improvement) can impose greater mitigation requirements in their permits, but the District will utilize the ratios outlined above as the minimum required to offset or compensate for impacts to jurisdictional waters, riparian areas or other wetlands.

Thus, with implementation of the above mitigation measure, there is a less than significant potential for implementation of this project to impact any federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Habitat linkages provide connections between larger habitat areas that are separated by development. Wildlife corridors are similar to linkages but provide specific opportunities for animals to disperse or migrate between areas. A corridor can be defined as a linear landscape feature of sufficient width to allow animal movement between two comparatively undisturbed habitat fragments. Adequate cover is essential for a corridor to function as a wildlife movement area. It is possible for a habitat corridor to be adequate for one species yet still inadequate for others. Wildlife corridors are features that allow for the dispersal, seasonal migration, breeding, and foraging of a variety of wildlife species. Additionally, open space can provide a buffer against both anthropogenic disturbance and natural fluctuations in resources. There are many stream channels that traverse this area that could serve to enable movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or serve established native resident or migratory wildlife movement corridors, or serve as native wildlife nursery sites.

The proposed project could result in construction impacts from the installation of the sewer pipeline at the Little Morongo Road and Augusta Avenue crossing. Construction may cause adverse impacts on migratory species through disturbing or harming nesting birds, which are protected under the MTBA, but these impacts would be subject to the provisions of regulatory permitting (CWA Section 401 and 404 permitting, and FGC Section 1602 LSA Agreement permitting), which would ensure that wildlife linkages and corridors are maintained and impacts thereof are minimized for the temporary duration of construction. **MM BIO-9** would ensure that jurisdictional features are documented in accordance with state and federal guidelines. This would aid in identification of jurisdictional features that may be impacted by discharge of fill or streambed alteration by a future individual projects under the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, and thereby may impact wildlife linkages and/or wildlife corridors. The implementation of **MM BIO-9** would ensure that future projects that would discharge of fill or streambed alteration of state or federal water jurisdictional areas are designed to minimize and be protective of the environment both during construction, and once operational for activities that would require ongoing maintenance within jurisdictional features. The impacts to jurisdictional features would thereby be subject to the provisions of regulatory permitting (CWA Section 401 and 404 permitting, and FGC Section 1602 LSA Agreement permitting), which would ensure that wildlife linkages and corridors are maintained for the temporary duration of construction. Thus, with implementation of mitigation, impacts would

be less than significant.

Once installed, the sewer pipelines would be located below ground. The surface will be recompacted and returned to original condition, thereby no operational changes in wildlife movement would be anticipated to occur.

However, the State does protect all migratory and nesting native birds. Further, the project APE and surrounding area consists of habitat that is suitable to support nesting birds. Thus, the project area may include areas that function as nesting locations for native birds. To avoid impacting nesting birds as required by the MBTA and California FGC, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

BIO-10 ***Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. The buffer shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds, unless a smaller buffer is specifically determined by a qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and an established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.***

Thus, with implementation of the above measures, any effects on wildlife movement or the use of wildlife nursery sites can be reduced to a less than significant impact.

e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Development of the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Impacts to biological resources have been addressed above under issues IV(a-d). Due to the nature of the proposed project—installing sewer pipeline and septic abatement—no trees or other biological resources that might be protected exist within the project footprint. Therefore, the potential for the project to conflict with local policies or ordinances pertaining to biological resources would be considered less than significant.

f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Please refer to the discussion under Conclusion and issue IV(a), above. The County of Riverside developed the CVMSHCP to enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem processes while allowing future economic growth. The CVMSHCP sets Conservation Goals and Objectives to ensure the conservation of the Covered Species and conserved natural communities in the MSHCP Reserve System. In addition to setting Conservation Goals and Objectives for the Covered Species and conserved natural communities, the MSHCP has designated Core Habitat, Other Conserved Habitat, Essential Ecological Processes, and Biological Corridors and Linkages. The CVMSHCP area is divided into Conservation Areas based on a combination of ecological and jurisdictional factors. The CVMSHCP is intended to satisfy the legal requirements to authorize the "take" of species covered under the Plan during otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the conservation of the Covered Species. The BRA provided as **Appendix 2** concluded that the project area is outside any CVMSHCP Conservation Areas, but that the project will need to conform with the Guidelines for projects that are adjacent CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Thus, the proposed project shall be required to adhere to the CVMSHCP guidelines through the implementation of **MM BIO-11.**

BIO-11 The project shall be required to comply with the provisions of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan requirements for projects adjacent to Conservation Areas, where construction occurs adjacent to Conservation Areas (the nearest Conservation Area is along the southern border of Area A and the northern border of Area K and J-2 (Upper Mission Creek Covered/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area) and the eastern border of Area I-10.

1) *Drainage – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.*
2) *Toxics – Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate byproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.*
3) *Lighting – For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.*
4) *Noise – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA Leq hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.*
5) *Invasives – Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape*

treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112 [of the CVMSHCP]. The plants listed in Table 4-113 [of the CVMSHCP] shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.

Therefore, with the above mitigation, the project as described would be consistent with the Conservation Goals and Objectives set forth in the CVMSHCP. Impacts are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

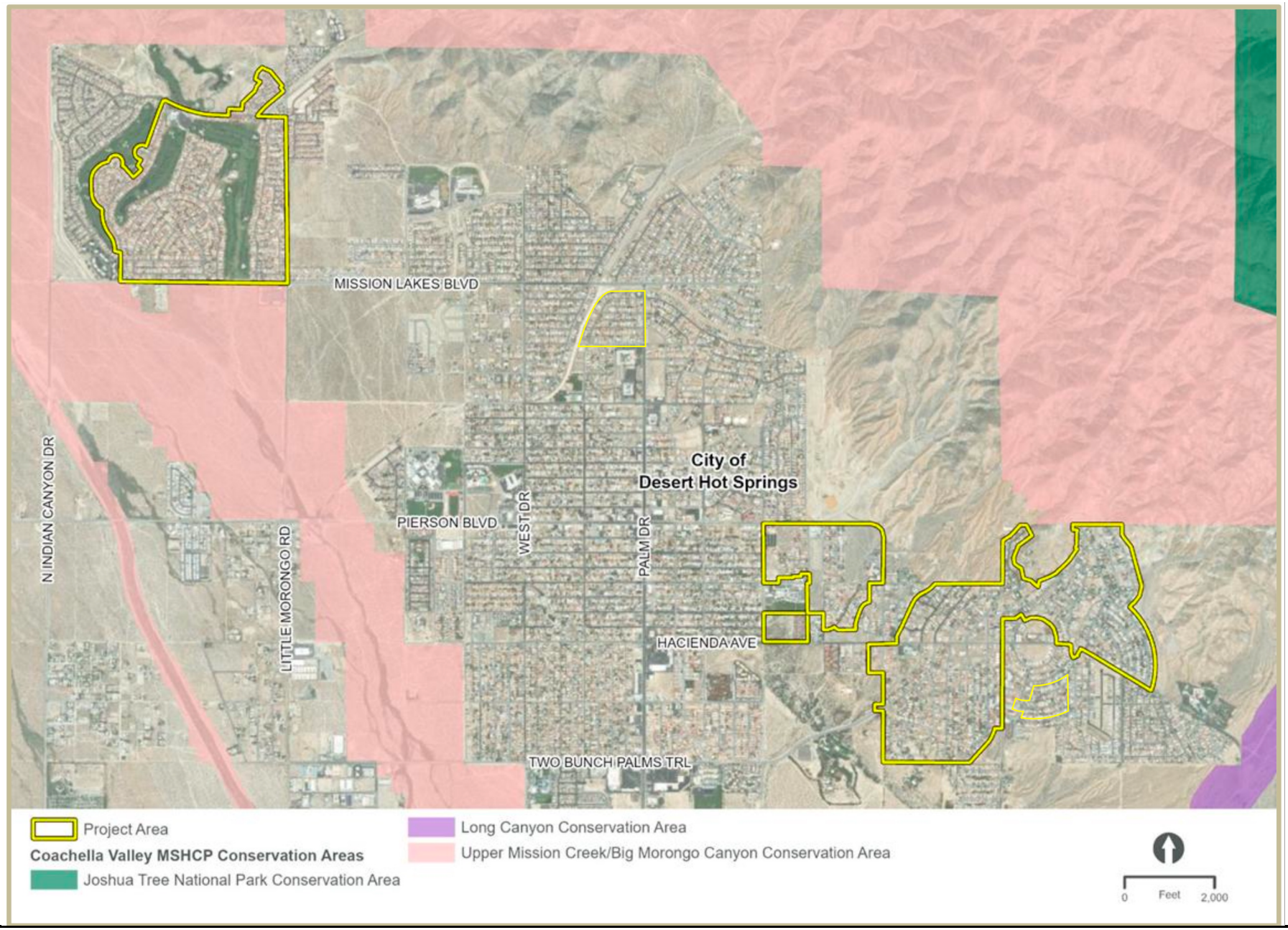

FIGURE IV-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Map

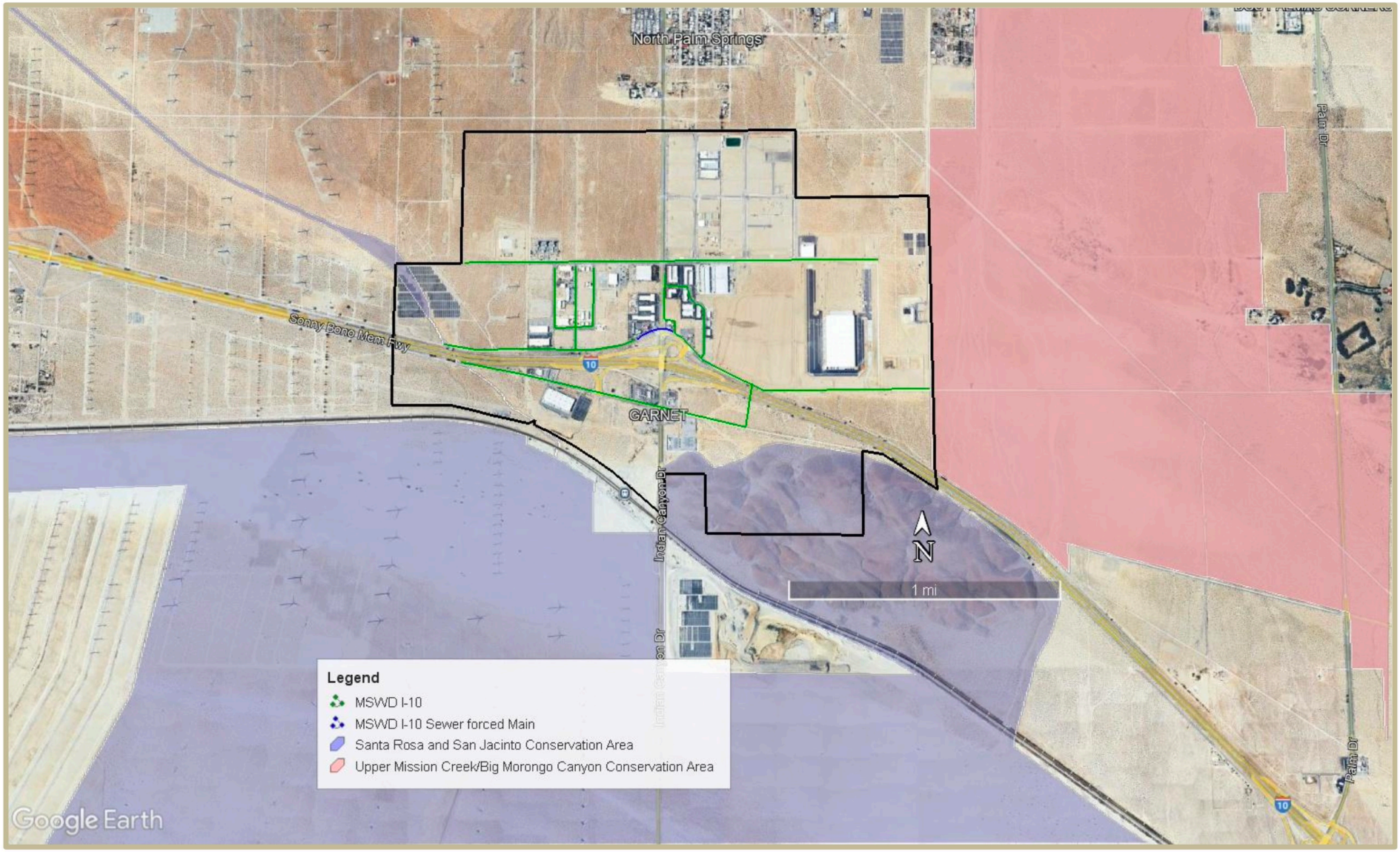

FIGURE IV-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Areas Near I-10 Corridor

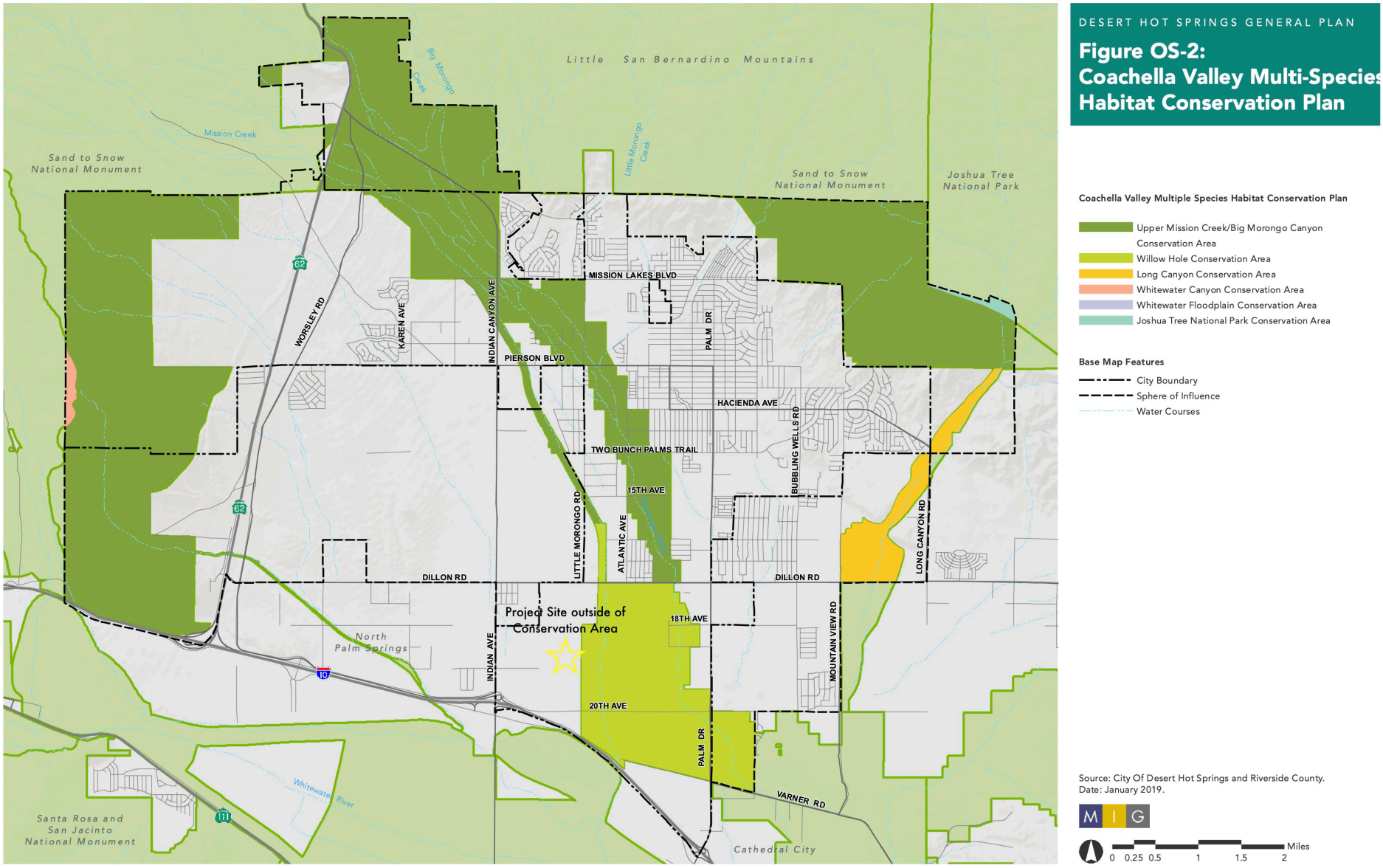

FIGURE IV-3

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: 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 formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: A cultural resources report has been prepared to evaluate the potential for cultural resources to occur within the project area of potential effect entitled "*Identification And Evaluation Of Historic Properties Groundwater Quality Protection Program Septic-To-Sewer Update Project*" prepared by CRM TECH dated November 1, 2025 (**Appendix 3**). The following information is abstracted from this report. It provides an overview and findings regarding the cultural resources found within the project area.

Background

Between May and October 2025, at the request of Tom Dodson and Associates, CRM TECH performed a cultural resources assessment on the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the proposed Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) Septic to Sewer Project in and near the City of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California. This study is a part of the environmental review process for the project, as required by the lead public agency, namely the MSWD, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project may involve federal funding administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and thereby may qualify as a federal "undertaking," which would mandate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as well.

Area of Potential Effects (APE)

The APE is delineated to encompass the maximum extent of ground disturbance required for the implementation of the undertaking. The horizontal extent of the APE includes the proposed 26.9 linear miles of sewer main pipeline alignments within roadways and existing rights-of-way as well as the sites of the 2,500 service laterals and the septic tanks. In general, the portion of the APE for future laterals and septic tank abatement coincides with the portions of the individual parcels lying immediately adjacent to the sewer main pipeline alignments, between the public rights-of-way and the buildings.

The vertical extent of the APE, representing the maximum depth of excavation required for pipeline installation, is estimated to range from seven to ten feet below surface for the sewer mains and from four to six feet for the service laterals but may reach up to 15 feet in some areas due to the natural terrain or to cross under existing drainage channels. The APE is located in Section 23 of T2S R4E, Sections 30, 32, and 33 of T2S R5E, and Sections 14, 15, 22, and 23 of T3S R4E, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian, as depicted in the United States Geological Survey Desert Hot Springs and Seven Palms Valley, California, 7.5' quadrangles.

Steps Taken to Identify Historic Properties

CRM TECH conducted a cultural resources records search, historical and geoarchaeological background research, Native American outreach, and a systematic field survey of the APE. The results of these research procedures indicate that four cultural resources of historical origin were previously recorded within, partially within, or in very close proximity to the APE, all of them in the vicinity of I-10 Corridor. Among these, Site 33-028591, Isolate 33-028593, and Site 33-028595 consisted of refuse items from the 1930s-1970s era, while Site 33-008410 represented the former alignment of the main construction access road for the 1930s Colorado River Aqueduct project, which coincided partially with the segments of Indian Canyon Drive in the APE.

All four of these known cultural resources were previously determined not to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Furthermore, Site 33-028591, Isolate 33-028593, and Site 33-028595 could not be located during the field survey and were deemed to be no longer extant. The segments of Indian Canyon Drive in the APE are essentially modern in appearance today due to upgrading and maintenance during recent decades and retain little historic integrity to relate to the road's period of origin. Therefore, the present study concurs with the previous evaluation of Site 33-008410 and concludes that it does not meet the definition of a "historic property" under Section 106 or a "historical resource" under CEQA.

Most of the existing roadways in the APE are now more than 50 years of age. However, as with Indian Canyon Drive, the current characteristics of these roadways are a direct result of upgrading and maintenance during the modern era. As working components of the modern transportation infrastructure, they are not considered potential "historic properties" or "historical resources." Adjacent to the APE, numerous buildings along the project alinements also date to the historic period. Since the installation of underground pipelines and associated laterals and the abatement of existing septic tanks have little potential to compromise their historic integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, the buildings adjacent to the project alignments were not included in the APE and do not require any further consideration.

In conclusion, the proposed undertaking would not cause an "adverse effect" or a "substantial adverse change" to any known "historic properties" or "historical resources." While most of the APE appears relatively low in sensitivity for subsurface archaeological deposits, two areas of moderate to high sensitivity were identified from the sources consulted. The results of past studies nearby indicate that the eastern extent of a prehistoric Native American village site around the Two Bunch Palms oasis, designated Site 33-001246, lies relatively close to the southwestern portion of Area H, namely along the southernmost segment of Miracle Hill Road and the westernmost segments of Loma Vista Road and Monterey Road. The southern portions of Areas H and I, around the intersection of Hidalgo Street/Yerxa Road and Loma Vista Road, are known to be the general location of well-known early settler Cabot Yerxa's homestead. Consequently, these portions of the APE are considered to be higher in potential for encountering buried archaeological deposits of prehistoric or early historic origin during construction activities.

Since the APE lies predominantly within the paved roadbeds of existing public roads or on adjacent private properties, standard subsurface exploration procedures known as Extended Phase I do not appear to be a feasible approach to determine the presence or absence of subsurface cultural remains in the vertical APE. In order to identify such remains in a timely manner and, if necessary, protect them from project impact, CRM TECH recommends that excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils)

in the archaeologically sensitive areas be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations should be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a Phase II archaeological testing program.

Under this condition, the proposed undertaking may be cleared to proceed in compliance with Section 106 and CEQA provisions on cultural resources. No further cultural resources investigation is recommended for the rest of the APE unless project plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by this study. However, if buried cultural materials are encountered during earth-moving operations anywhere within the APE, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (PRC §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC §5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired."

Records Search Results

Within the one-mile scope of the records search, SCIC records identify approximately 150 additional studies and 127 previously recorded historical/archaeological resources (see Table V-1). Four of these known cultural resources, designated Sites 33-008410, 33-028591, and 33-0028595, and Isolate 33-28593, were found within, partially within, or in very close proximity to the APE. All four of these localities dated to the historic period, and all of them were located in the vicinity of I-10 Corridor. Sites 33-028591 and 33-0028595 were refuse scatters made up of various types of metal cans from the 1930-1975 era, while Isolate 33-28593 consisted of a single crushed matchstick-filler vent-hole can that dated to the same period. At the time of their recordation in 2017, these three localities were all determined not to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.

Site 33-008410 represented the former main access road built by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in the early 1930s for the construction of the Colorado River Aqueduct. After the completion of the project in 1938, the road was transferred to the County of Riverside and dedicated as a public highway named Dillon Highway, after County Supervisor Robert Emmet Dillon (Smallwood 2015:3; see App. B). In the Desert Hot Springs area, the original alignment of the 1933 access road has evolved into present-day Dillon Road and the segment of Indian Canyon Drive between Dillon Road and Garnet Avenue. Despite its early associations with one of the most important water supply projects in California history, Dillon Road was previously determined not to meet any of the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources or to retain sufficient historic integrity in relation to its period of origin.

None of the other 123 previously identified cultural resources within the records search scope was found in the immediate vicinity of the APE. However, the easternmost portion of Site 33-001246 was located within a few hundred feet of the APE along Miracle Hill Road. First recorded in 1977, Site 33-001246 was subject to archaeological testing and a data recovery program in 2006. Excavations

into the various mesquite dunes within the site boundary resulted in the discovery of deeply buried and stratified archaeological deposits associated with Late Archaic and Late Prehistoric cultures. These deposits contain dense clusters of artifacts and features of diverse types, suggesting intensive residential occupation and extensive use over the past 2,500 years.

Late Prehistoric living surfaces with multiple thermal features and distinct work areas have been discovered in the easternmost portion of the site, approximately 900 feet west of the APE. This includes the remains of a ramada floor, a processing area with groundstone but few flaked-stone artifacts, and a flaked-stone tool production area surrounding a thermal feature and containing a multitude of Cottonwood Triangular and Desert Side-Notched projectile points. Deposits in this area of the site ranged from the surface to depths of more than one meter.

The deepest archaeological deposits encountered during the excavations at Site 33-001246 were in the western portion of the site and extended to a depth of approximately three meters below the surface of a large mesquite dune. It was here that the region's only known Archaic pit house feature was discovered in association with a concentration of stone beads, groundstone and flaked-stone artifacts, a bone awl, and several thermal features, including a large rock-lined oven or roasting pit. Based on the quantity, quality, and diversity of cultural remains it contains, Site 33-001246, dubbed the Two Bunch Palms village site, is considered to be one the most significant and unique prehistoric archaeological resources in the western Colorado Desert.

Table V-1: Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Scope of the Records Search

Resource Number	Date Recorded	Description
33-001118/CA-RIV-01118	1976, 2004	Prehistoric ceramic sherd scatter
33-001119/CA-RIV-01119	1972-2004	Prehistoric habitation site
33-001246/CA-RIV-01246	1977, 2004	Prehistoric site
33-001294/CA-RIV-01294H	1972	Historic-period residential building made of local cobbles and mortar
33-001808/CA-RIV-01808	1979, 2004	Prehistoric ceramic scatter (destroyed by residential development)
33-003441/CA-RIV-03441H	1988	Historic-period structural foundations and refuse
33-006837	1983	Gurney Ranch, 1938
33-006840	1983	B Bar H Ranch, 1936
33-006842	1980, 1983	Cabot's Indian Pueblo, ca. 1941; California Point of Historical Interest
33-006843	1983	Lost Heads Ranch, 1950
33-006844	1983	Coffee's Pool, 1948
33-006845	1983	Historic-period Desert Hot Springs Library & Museum
33-006847	1983	Two residential buildings, 1932
33-006848	1983	Residential building, circa pre-1946
33-006849	1983	Cliff's Shop, 1951
33-006850	1983	Desert Hot Springs School House, ca. 1935
33-006887	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006888	1983	Residential building, ca. 1935
33-006889	1983	Residential building, 1951
33-006891	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006892	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006893	1983	Residential building, 1941
33-006894	1983	Residential building, ca. 1940

Resource Number	Date Recorded	Description
33-006895	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006896	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006897	1983	Residential building, 1945
33-006898	1983	Los Chimeneas, 1949
33-006899	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006900	1983	Residential building, 1950
33-006901	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006902	1983	Residential building, 1945
33-006903	1983	Residential building, 1949
33-006904	1983	Residential building, 1950
33-006905	1983	Residential building, 1943
33-006906	1983	Residential building, 1946
33-006907	1983	Stone Crest, 1949
33-006908	1983	Residential building, 1942
33-008403	1998	Two-lane asphalt road, ca. 1940s
33-008408	1998-2015	Varner Road, ca. 1915
33-008409	1998	Palm Drive, ca. 1930s and 1967
33-008410/CA-RIV-13015H*	1998, 2015	Dillon Road, 1933
33-009498/CA-RIV-06381H	1999-2017	Southern Pacific Railroad, ca. 1870
33-011265	2000-2013	California River Aqueduct, ca. 1930s
33-012629	1992	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic sherd
33-012922	1979	Isolate: historic-period nail
33-013425	1979	Prehistoric ceramic sherd and two portable metates
33-013426	1979	Historic-period glass fragments
33-013435	1979	Prehistoric ceramic sherds and two metates
33-013605/CA-RIV-7491H	2004	Scott Farris Date Farm, 1947
33-013898/CA-RIV-07606H	2004, 2006	Historic-period concrete foundation and four associated artifact concentrations
33-014810	2004	Residential building, 1948
33-014849	2005	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic scatter
33-014863	1979	Duplicate of 33-013426
33-015035	1998-2019	Chino-Hayfield 200kV Transmission Line
33-015145/CA-RIV-08054	2006	Possible prehistoric stone circle
33-015281	2006	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic scatter
33-015282	2006	Isolate: prehistoric lithic flake
33-015298	2005	Isolate: historic-period bottle neck
33-016938/CA-RIV-08105	2008	Prehistoric artifact scatter
33-017841/CA-RIV-09232H	2009	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-017842/CA-RIV-09233H	2009, 2015	Historic-period foundation, collapsed walls, and refuse scatter
33-018094	2010	Isolate: prehistoric lithic flake
33-018166	2010	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic sherds
33-018169	2010	Isolate: historic-period can and glass bottle
33-018665	2010	Historic-period porcelain insulators
33-018666	2010	Ceramic doll head, ca. 1950s
33-019935/CA-RIV-10127	2011	Prehistoric ceramic scatter
33-022389	2012	Devers-Vista #1 220kV Transmission Line (partially encompassed by 33-015035)
33-024265	2015	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic sherds
33-024266	2015	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic sherds

Resource Number	Date Recorded	Description
33-024705/CA-RIV-12230H	2015	Historic-period road
33-024712/CA-RIV-12236H	2015	Historic-period road
33-024713/CA-RIV-12237H	2015	Historic-period road
33-024714	2015	Historic-period road
33-024716/CA-RIV-12239H	2015	Historic-period electrical substation
33-024717	2015	Historic-period cans and bottle fragment
33-026494	2011	Prehistoric ceramic sherds
33-026706	2016	Isolate: prehistoric lithic flake
33-026872	2016	Isolate: historic-period can
33-026873	2016	Isolate: historic-period can
33-026874	2016	Isolate: historic-period can
33-026875	2016	Isolate: historic-period cans
33-028014	2017	Prehistoric obsidian debitage
33-028015	2017	Isolate: historic-period cans
33-028053	2017	Historic-period segment of 20th Avenue
33-028585	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028586	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028587	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028591/CA-RIV-12879H*	2017	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-028592/CA-RIV-12880H	2017	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-028593*	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028594	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028595/CA-RIV-12881H*	2017	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-028596	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028597	2017	Isolate: historic-period cans
33-028598/CA-RIV-12882H	2017	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-028599	2017	Isolate: historic-period glass bottle isolate
33-028600	2017	Isolate: historic-period can and bottle fragment
33-028601	2017	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028951	2018	Isolate: historic-period can
33-028952	2018	Historic-period metal automobile part
33-028969	2019	Prehistoric percussing tool
33-028970	2019	Isolate: prehistoric lithic flake
33-028971	2019	Isolate: prehistoric lithic flake
33-029139/CA-RIV-13022H	2022	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-029140/CA-RIV-13023H	2022	Historic-period power transmission line
33-029326/CA-RIV-13110H	2015, 2018	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-029328/CA-RIV-13112H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029329/CA-RIV-13113H	2015	Historic-period glass insulator fragment
33-029330/CA-RIV-13114H	2015	Isolate: historic-period cans
33-029331	2015	Isolate: historic-period glass bottle stopper
33-029332/CA-RIV-13116H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029333/CA-RIV-13117H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029334/CA-RIV-13118H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029335/CA-RIV-13119H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029336/CA-RIV-13120H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029337/CA-RIV-13121H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029338/CA-RIV-13122H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029339/CA-RIV-13123H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029340/CA-RIV-13124H	2015	Isolate: historic-period can

Resource Number	Date Recorded	Description
33-029417	2023	Isolate: historic-period can
33-029418	2023	Isolate: prehistoric ceramic sherd
33-029419/CA-RIV-13172H	2023	Historic-period concrete foundation and two posts
33-029420/CA-RIV-13173H	2023	Historic-period road
33-029421/CA-RIV-13174H	2023	Historic-period road
33-029740/CA-RIV-13257H	2015, 2018	Historic-period refuse scatter
33-029778/CA-RIV-13268H	2023	Historic-period refuse scatter

Sacred Land Files Results

As part of the written request to the State of California NAHC for a records search in the commission's SLF, five of the tribes have responded to the inquiry in writing, and three others have provided their comments by telephone. Among them, the Augustine Band, the Quechan Indian Tribe, and the Santa Rosa Band expressed no concerns over this undertaking. The Quechan Indian Tribe deferred to other tribes in closer proximity to the APE, while the Soboba Band and the Torres Martinez band deferred specifically to the Agua Caliente Band. The Twenty-nine Palms Band stated that they were unaware of any cultural resources in the APE, and the Yuhaaviatam found the area to be low in sensitivity for cultural resources. Both tribes, however, consider the project location to be a part of their traditional territory. The Agua Caliente Band also consider the APE a part of their traditional use area. In addition, the Agua Caliente Band reported that there were several tribal cultural resources adjacent to the APE. Therefore, the tribe requested to review all cultural resources documentation generated for this undertaking, including the records search results.

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band requested that MSWD protect tribal cultural and cultural resources. Based on the fact that a Native American monitor will be present during construction, and that the Agua Calinte Band of Mission Indians put forth protocol for treatment of such resources, MSWD believes that this request by the Twenty-Nine Palms Band has been met. Note that this tribe has not requested formal consultation under AB 52. The YSMN indicated that it wished to engage in in government-to-government consultation pursuant to AB 52. However, the Tribe has not sent the initial formal consultation request pursuant to AB 52 to MSWD that would require consultation. Regardless, on January 9th, 2026, Mr. Eric Weck of MSWD reached out to the contact at YSMN that was contacted by CRM TECH (refer to **Appendix 3**) to ascertain whether the Tribe wished to provide MSWD with an initial consultation request from the Tribe pursuant to PRC 21080.3.1(b). To date, MSWD has not received a response back, and therefore considers that no formal AB 52 consultation with the YSMN is required. However, as with the Twenty-Nine Palms Band, a Native American monitor will be present during construction, and MSWD will be required to implement mitigation that the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians put forth addressing protocol for treatment of tribal cultural resources.

Geoarchaeological Results

As a part of the research procedures, CRM TECH archaeologist Elizabeth Beckner pursued geoarchaeological analysis to assess the APE's potential for the deposition and preservation of subsurface cultural deposits from the prehistoric period, which cannot be detected through a standard surface archaeological survey. Sources consulted for this purpose included primarily topographic and geologic maps and reports pertaining to the project vicinity. Findings from these sources were used to develop a geomorphologic history of the APE and address geoarchaeological sensitivity of the vertical APE.

Most of the soils in Area A of the APE consist of Qyf, or young alluvial fan deposits, with the rest of the area featuring Qw, alluvial wash deposits, and a very small amount of pKm, Cretaceous and pre-Cretaceous metamorphic formations.

The young alluvial fan deposits, *Qyf*, date to the Holocene to Late Pleistocene and is described as "unconsolidated to slightly consolidated, undissected to slightly dissected boulder, cobble, gravel, sand, and silt deposits issued from a confined valley or canyon." *Qw* dates to the late Holocene and is described as "unconsolidated sandy and gravelly sediment deposited in recently active channels of streams and rivers," while *pKm* is Mesozoic in age or older and is of "sedimentary and volcanic origin."

The surface soils in Area D-3 are identified as *Qyf* and *Qw*, while the soils in Area G are identified primarily as *Qyf*, with portions consisting of *Qw*. In Areas H and I, the soils also consist of *Qyf* and *Qw*, with the northern portion of the areas having some *Qof*, or old alluvial fan deposits, which date to the late to middle Pleistocene and are described as "slightly to moderately consolidated, moderately dissected boulder, cobble, gravel, sand and silt deposits issued from a confined valley or canyon." The soils in Areas J-2 are identified as *Qyf*, *Qof*, and a small portion as *pKm*, while Area K is identified as *Qyf*, *Qw*, and *pKm*. The soils in I-10 Corridor are identified as *Qyf*, *Qe* (eolian and dune deposits), and *Qya* (young alluvial valley deposits). The eolian and dune deposits, *Qe*, date to the late Holocene and are described as "unconsolidated, generally well-sorted wind-blown sand," while *Qya* dates to the Holocene to Late Pleistocene and is described as "unconsolidated to slightly consolidated, undissected to slightly dissected clay, silt, sand, and gravel along stream valleys and alluvial flats of larger rivers."

The potential for encountering buried archaeological deposits in the Holocene-age alluvial and fluvial soils that cover the majority of the APE ranges from low to high. The Pleistocene-age or older soils are known to be present on or very close to the surface. Deposited largely before widespread human habitation in this region, these soils are generally considered unlikely to contain deeply buried cultural materials.

Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, and K of the APE lie at a higher elevation, at and above the northwest-southeast trending Mission Creek branch of the San Andreas Fault, where geologic processes forced groundwater to the surface near Two Bunch Palms. Active springs in that area led to the development of an oasis lush with vegetation and full of wild game, which attracted human populations to settle the area over 2,000 years ago. These oases and the mesquite dunes that formed around them also provided shelter against the sometimes turbulent winds in the San Gorgonio Pass area, which was an important factor in the establishment of Native American settlements.

In comparison, the areas within the APE lacked both perennial water sources and vegetation that could provide shelter from the wind. Therefore, they would be considered less favorable for long-term human habitation in prehistoric times. They would likely be used as resource gathering areas where plant and animal resources were harvested for consumption and use at nearby habitation sites (e.g., the Two Bunch Palms oasis). As such, there is a low potential for substantial prehistoric archaeological deposits to be encountered subsurface in most of the APE. Conversely, along the southern portion Miracle Hill Road and the western portions of Loma Vista Road and Monterey Road,

near the Two Bunch Palms village site, the potential for encountering buried, intact prehistoric archaeological deposits appears to be high.

During the historic period, the southern portions of Areas H and I were partially occupied by Cabot Yerxa's homestead with several buildings, including the Yerxa Trading Post identified on the 1940s USGS maps. These buildings were evidently removed prior to the subdivision and residential development that occurred in the Miracle Hill area following WWI. At this time, the extent of ground disturbance resulting from the more recent development is unclear, as is the depth at which native sediments may be encountered underneath the existing roadbeds. As such, it is possible that buried archaeological deposits associated with the early 20th century settlement may be encountered during excavation in the southern portion of Areas H and I, around the intersection of Hidalgo Street/Yerxa Road and Loma Vista Road.

In summary, there is a low potential for encountering buried archaeological deposits associated with prehistoric and historic land use and settlement in most of the APE. However, areas with a moderate to high potential for encountering such deposits are identified along the southern portion Miracle Hill Road and the western portions of Loma Vista Road and Monterey Road, as well as around the intersection of Hidalgo Street/Yerxa Road and Loma Vista Road.

Survey Results

Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, and K are predominantly residential neighborhoods with some commercial establishments, while I-10 Corridor consists of commercial and industrial properties and vacant land. Much of the ground surface in the APE is paved or covered by landscaping, with little vestige of the native ground surface visible. In addition, two small portions of the APE in I-10 Corridor had restricted access, where the survey team was unable to enter due to active road construction east of Indian Canyon Drive on 20th Avenue and east of Calle de los Romos on 19th Avenue. Both of these areas, however, are located within and adjacent to paved roadbeds. in light of the extent of past ground disturbances in the vicinity, the visibility level and restricted access were not considered a major hindrance to the survey effort.

The field survey of the APE yielded negative results for potential "historic properties" or "historical resources," and no buildings, structures, objects, features, or artifacts of potential historic significance were observed within the APE boundaries. No trace of Sites 33-028591 and 33-0028595, the two previously recorded historic-period refuse scatters, or Isolate 33-28593, the metal can, were discovered at or near their previously reported locations. As demonstrated by the historical research results, most of the roadways in the APE are now more than 50 years old, including the segment of Indian Canyon Drive between Dillon Road and Garnet Avenue, which is a part of Site 33-008410. However, the current appearance of these roads reflects the results of decades of upgrading and maintenance during the modern era, and none of them demonstrates any particularly historical character.

Conclusion

Historical Resources: The only built-environment feature in the APE that was previously identified as a cultural resource, Site 33-008410, does not meet the definition of a "historic property" under Section 106 or a "historical resource" under CEQA. Also in the APE, most of the existing roadways containing the proposed sewer main pipelines are now more than 50 years of age, but their current characteristics are a direct result of upgrading and maintenance during the modern era. As working

components of the modern transportation infrastructure, they are not considered potential "historic properties" or "historical resources." Thus, the project as it is currently proposed will not cause a substantial adverse change to any known historical resources.

Archaeological Resources: None of the three archaeological resources previously recorded within, partially within, or in very close proximity to the APE, Site 33-028591, Isolate 33-028593, and Site 33-028595, could be found in the field today. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would not affect any known archaeological resources. The geoarchaeological analysis suggests that most of the vertical APE is relatively low in sensitivity for subsurface deposits of intact, potentially significant archaeological remains from the prehistoric or early historic period. However, two areas of moderate to high sensitivity for buried archaeological deposits were identified from the sources consulted.

Historical maps indicate that buildings associated with well-known early settler Cabot Yerxa's homestead and trading post once stood in or near the southern portions of Areas H and I, around the intersection of Hidalgo Street/Yerxa Road and Loma Vista Road. To the west of that location, existing archaeological records show the eastern extent of Site 36-001246, known as the Two Bunch Palms village site, lies a few hundred feet from the southwestern portion of Area H, namely along the southernmost segment of Miracle Hill Road and the westernmost segments of Loma Vista Road and Monterey Road.

Yerxa's homestead was evidently removed prior to the development of the Miracle Hill area, but it is possible that archaeological features and/or artifact deposits associated with the homestead may survive in this area at depth. Similarly, given the close distance, the possibility that buried prehistoric cultural deposits associated with Site 36-001246 may extend into the APE cannot be ruled out. Any archaeological discovery that is potentially related to either Cabot Yerxa's homestead or the Two Bunch Palms village site would require further study to examine its possible association with a historical figure of recognized importance to the community and the potential to yield important information for the study of local history or prehistory.

Recommendations

In conclusion, the undertaking as currently proposed would not cause an "adverse effect" or a "substantial adverse change" to any known "historic properties" or "historical resources," as defined by Section 106 and CEQA. While most of the APE appears relatively low in sensitivity for subsurface cultural deposits, the southern portions of Areas H and I and the southwestern portion of Area H demonstrate a moderate to high potential for such deposits, as outlined above.

Since the APE lies predominantly within the paved roadbeds of existing public roads or on adjacent private properties, standard subsurface exploration procedures known as Extended Phase I do not appear to be a feasible approach to determine the presence or absence of subsurface cultural remains in the vertical APE. In order to identify such remains in a timely manner and, if necessary, protect them from project impact, it is recommended that excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils) in the archaeologically sensitive areas be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. As such, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

CUL-1 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of these facilities,

earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the District's onsite inspector. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

CUL-2 Due to the heightened cultural sensitivity of the proposed project area, a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines) shall be present for excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils) in the archaeologically sensitive areas (specifically within Areas H and I). A sufficient number of archaeological monitors shall be present each work day to ensure that simultaneously occurring ground disturbing activities receive thorough levels of monitoring coverage. A Monitoring and Treatment Plan that is reflective of the project mitigation shall be completed by the archaeological consultant and submitted to the District and shall be approved by the District prior to implementation. Any and all findings will be subject to the protocol detailed within the Monitoring and Treatment Plan.

CUL-3 If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations shall be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a Phase II archaeological testing program. These procedures should include, at a minimum, the following:

- *Hand excavations in the immediate vicinity of unearthed cultural remains to remove all artifacts;*
- *Immediate notification of the Riverside County Coroner and consultation with the NAHC and local Native American groups if human remains or potential human remains are discovered, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and Public Resources Code §5097.98;*
- *Cataloguing, laboratory analysis, and permanent curation of the recovered artifacts;*
- *Compilation of archaeological site records and/or site record updates, as appropriate, to document any archaeological discoveries in the California Historical Resources Inventory;*
- *Preparation of a final report as a comprehensive record of the research procedures and study findings.*

Under this condition, the proposed undertaking may be cleared to proceed in compliance with Section 106 and CEQA provisions on cultural resources. Thus, with the above mitigation measures, the potential for impacts to cultural resources will be reduced to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As noted in the discussion above, because parts of the project area have been documented as archaeologically sensitive, it is possible that human remains may occur within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Human remains discovered during the project will need to be treated in accordance with the provisions of HSC §7050.5 and

PRC §5097.98, which is mandatory. State law (Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code) as well as local laws requires that the Police Department, County Sheriff and Coroner's Office receive notification if human remains are encountered. Compliance with these laws is considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts; however, **MM CUL-3**, reinforces compliance with these laws, and as such, would aid in further reducing potential adverse impacts to human remains from project implementation. Thus, the potential for impact to discovery and treatment of human remains will be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VI. ENERGY: 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 operations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Energy consumption encompasses many different activities. For example, construction can include the following activities: delivery of equipment and material to a site from some location (note it also requires energy to manufacture the equipment and material, such as harvesting, cutting and delivering wood from its source); employee trips to work, possibly offsite for lunch (or a visit by a catering truck), travel home, and occasionally leaving a site for an appointment or checking another job; use of equipment onsite (electric or fuel); and sometimes demolition and disposal of construction waste. For the proposed project the number of employees will be limited to about 21 persons at a given time during construction with no new employees anticipated to be required once construction has concluded. The project would require demolition of existing pavement, concrete, and excavation of existing vegetation to install the sewer pipeline and laterals belowground, and further would require septic system abatement. To minimize energy costs of construction debris management, laws are in place that require diversion of all material subject to recycling. During construction, the proposed project will utilize construction equipment that is CARB approved, minimizing emissions generated and electricity required to the extent feasible. Equipment not in use for 5 minutes must be turned off, and electrical construction equipment must be used where available. This standard requirement would prevent a significant impact during construction due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and would also conform to the CARB regulations regarding energy efficiency.

Southern California Edison Company (SCE) is the primary distribution provider for electricity in the project area. According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Environmental Impact Report (General Plan EIR), in the 2018 fiscal year, SCE sold approximately 87,143 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity; approximately 46% of the electricity that SCE delivered to customers came from carbon-free resources, including solar energy (approximately 13%), wind energy (approximately 13%), and geothermal energy (approximately 8%). The City's General Plan EIR provides the following analysis related to new development under Chapter 4.6, Energy:

"New development and land use turn over would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity consumption in new and/or retrofitted

structures. Additional electricity reductions would be achieved through the implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1C, which requires the adoption of a Zero Net Energy (ZNE) ordinance. The adoption and implementation of a ZNE ordinance would require increased building efficiency and the installation of renewable energy infrastructure (e.g., photovoltaic (PV) systems and/or windmills) to offset the building/structure's energy consumption."

A ZNE ordinance has not yet been adopted by the City. Furthermore, the proposed project would be required to comply with Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code). Additionally, in July 2013, the City of Desert Hot Springs adopted an Energy Action Plan (EAP), to which the project will be required to adhere. However, the operation of the new sewer system will not require a new source of energy to operate. The collection of sewage from Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor would be operate by gravity or would otherwise be directed to the Dos Palmas Lift Station which will direct wastewater through a pressurized force main to the new regional Nancy Wright Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility (RWRF). The Dos Palmas Lift Station already handles wastewater within the District's service area, and it is possible that the proposed project could incrementally increase energy demanded by this facility due to operating with greater volume than occurs at present. However, as the proposed project would utilize energy from either SCE, or from the District's existing and planned Solar Arrays, it is not anticipated that this energy demand would be considered unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

No natural gas would be required to operate the proposed project, and trips to the project footprint would occur only on an as needed basis for maintenance purposes. As such, petroleum consumption associated with implementation of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not be considered unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

While MSWD generates solar power to supply some of its operational energy demands, and is in the process of expanding its solar energy generation facilities, SCE still provides the District with electrical service. According to SCE's website[4], SCE is committed to delivering power reliably and to meet demand; SCE is expanding and upgrading the transmission and distribution networks to meet the region's growing demand for electricity, and improve grid performance, while meeting California's ambitious renewable-power goals. As such, it is anticipated that SCE will continue to have ample power supply to serve the construction of the project without the need for additional electrical capacity. Therefore, given the minimal energy required to operate the proposed project, it is not anticipated that the project would either result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operations, or conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts under these issues are considered less than significant.

[4] SCE, 2025. Meeting Demand. https://www.sce.com/about-us/reliability/meeting-demand (10/22/25)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: 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 onsite or offsite 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 wastewater disposal systems where RWs are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: A paleontological resources sensitivity assessment has been prepared by CRM TECH for the proposed project titled *"Paleontological Resources Sensitivity Assessment: Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) Septic to Sewer Project, in and near the City of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California,"* and dated November 3, 2025. This report is provided as **Appendix 5.**

Impact Analysis

a. i. Ground Rupture

Less Than Significant Impact – The project footprint is located in the City of Desert Hot Springs within the County of Riverside, which is situated proximate to several active faults, including the North and South Branches of the San Andreas fault, which are considered to be Alquist-Priolo fault zones, as well as the Garnet Hill Fault, which is a Riverside County Designated Fault Zone. **Figure VII-1** shows where these faults are located as depicted in the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, which depicts faults within the City boundary as well as within and around its Sphere of Influence. The South Branch of the San Andreas and the North Branch of the San Andreas Fault, which are Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones, and the Garnet Hill Fault, which is a Riverside County designated fault zone each traverse through the project footprint, as does an additional unnamed Riverside County designated fault zone. Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement activities would be temporary, and would be developed at or below grade and outdoors. Construction workers would generally only be at risk when working indoors. This is because fault rupture may cause structural damage that could affect persons inside structures to be exposed to risk associated with fault rupture when indoors or atop a roof of a structure. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the potential for adverse effects on humans as a result of fault rupture during construction is less than significant. Thus, construction impacts would be less than significant.

As the only operational component of the proposed project, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from fault rupture, depending on the severity of a seismic event. In the event that a strong earthquake was to occur, the proposed sewage pipeline could burst, causing sewage to leak. MSWD has a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) in place to mitigate impacts of sewage spills/overflows, which MSWD will continue to comply with for the newly constructed facilities. Therefore, while there is a potential for fault rupture, impacts from operation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would be less than significant. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to expose people or structures to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map.

ii. Strong Seismic Ground Shaking

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated in the discussion above, several faults run through the City, and as with much of southern California, the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals will be subject to strong seismic ground shaking impacts should any major earthquakes occur in the future, particularly due to the project footprint overlapping with several faults within the City, as shown in **Figure VII-1**. Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement activities would be temporary, and would be developed at or below grade and outdoors. Construction workers would generally only be at risk when working indoors. This is because seismic ground shaking may cause structural damage that could affect persons inside structures to be exposed to risk associated with strong seismic ground shaking when indoors or atop a roof of a structure. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the potential for adverse effects on humans as a result of seismic ground shaking during construction is less than significant. Thus, construction impacts would be less than significant.

During operation, ground shaking could result in structural damage and hazards to the proposed sewer pipeline and laterals, which in turn could affect their operation. Underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from seismic ground shaking, and furthermore are subject to industry standards that will minimize the potential risk of damage or pipeline rupture. The primary and secondary effects of ground shaking could distort or break pipelines, and cause structural failure. In the event that a strong earthquake was to occur, the proposed sewage pipeline could burst, causing sewage to leak. MSWD has a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) in place to mitigate impacts of sewage spills/overflows, which MSWD will continue to comply with for the newly constructed facilities. Further, the California Professional Engineers Act (Building and Professions Code Sections 6700-6799) and the Codes of Professional Conduct, as administered by Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (BPELSG), provide the basis for regulating and enforcing engineering practice in California. Compliance with these construction requirements would reduce potential impacts associated with ground shaking to a level of less than significant. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

iii. Seismic-Related Ground Failure Including Liquefaction

Less Than Significant Impact – The three factors determining whether a site is likely to be subject to liquefaction include seismic shaking, type and consistency of earth materials, and groundwater level. Liquefaction of saturated cohesionless soils can be caused by strong ground motion resulting from earthquakes. Soil liquefaction is a phenomenon in which saturated, cohesionless soils lose their strength due to the build-up of excess pore water pressure during cyclic loading such as that induced by earthquakes. According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Seismic Hazards Map (**Figure VII-1**), the project footprint is located within a general area known to be susceptible to liquefaction. Construction of the proposed facilities would be temporary, with the majority of the proposed facilities proposed to be developed underground and outdoors. Construction workers would generally only be at risk when working indoors. This is because liquefaction may cause structural damage that would could affect persons inside structures to be exposed to risk associated with liquefaction when indoors, which is not anticipated to occur during construction. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the probability of liquefaction during construction is low. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

There are sewer pipeline and lateral locations where potential seismic-related ground failure could cause damage once operational, but would not result in a substantial adverse impact, such that the pipeline could not be repaired. This is because, as discussed above, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from liquefaction, and furthermore are subject to industry standards that will minimize the potential risk of damage or pipeline rupture. Thus, liquefaction impacts would be less than significant.

iv. Landslide

Less Than Significant Impact – According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR, Landslides are found along the perimeter of the City on properties abutting the surrounding hills and mountains. The proposed project footprint is generally within developed areas that, while adjacent to the foothills, are removed from hillsides as a result of existing development. Regardless, some landslide potential may exist within the project footprint. Construction of the proposed facilities would be temporary, with the majority of the facilities proposed to be developed

underground and outdoors. Landslides and mudflow hazards exist throughout Big Bear Valley on steep hillsides and in creek and streambed areas. The Conveyance Pipelines would be installed in locations that are generally flat or are within flat areas of roadways in residential areas and therefore the risk associated with landslide occurring and significantly impacting construction activities would be low. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the probability of landslide during construction is low. Thus, construction impacts would be less than significant.

While landslide potential is unlikely throughout much of the project footprint, it is possible that in the foothills, some landslide potential may exist. As a result, there are sewer pipeline and lateral locations where potential seismic-related landslide could cause damage, but would not result in a substantial adverse impact, such that the pipeline could not be repaired. This is because, as discussed above, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from landslide, and furthermore are subject to industry standards that will minimize the potential risk of damage or pipeline rupture. Thus, landslide impacts would be less than significant.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. Based on the above description, a majority of the project would occur within developed areas, but there are some sewer pipeline alignments that would occur either within dirt roadways or within undeveloped vacant land, such as that which is planned to occur to cross under the I-10. As indicated in Table VII-1, the whole of the project area contains well drained soils. Compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 would ensure that construction activities that generate wind-induced soil erosion are below significance thresholds as this requirement is intended to prevent significant wind-induced soil erosion. As a mandatory requirement, mitigation is not required to ensure compliance with the above Rule.

Table VII-1: Soil Units in Project Footprint

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Drainage and Runoff Class
1250	Ironlung-Rock outcrop complex, 30 to 75 percent slopes	25.5	*Drainage class: Well Drained* *Runoff class: slow to medium runoff*
CdC	Carsitas gravelly sand, 0 to 9 percent slopes	1,137.1	*Drainage class: Somewhat excessively drained* *Runoff class: Very low*
CdE	Carsitas gravelly sand, 9 to 30 percent slopes	233.6	Drainage: *Somewhat excessively drained* *Runoff: negligible to low runoff*
ChC	Carsitas cobbly sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes	165.0	*Drainage class: Excessively drained* *Runoff class: Very low*
CkB	Carsitas fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	786.5	*Drainage class: Excessively drained*

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Drainage and Runoff Class
			Runoff class: Negligible
CmB	Carsitas variant, 2 to 5 percent slopes	10.8	*Drainage class: Well drained* *Runoff class: Medium*
CoD	Chuckawalla very gravelly sandy clay loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes	40.5	*Drainage class: Well Drained* *Runoff class: medium runoff*
LR	Lithic Torripsamments-Rock outcrop complex	114.9	*Drainage class: Excessively drained* *Runoff class: Very high*
MaB	Myoma fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	6.3	*Drainage class: Somewhat excessively drained* *Runoff class: Negligible*
MaD	Myoma fine sand, 5 to 15 percent slopes	3.0	*Drainage class: Somewhat excessively drained* *Runoff class: Very low*
RO	Rock outcrop	0.9	*N/A*
RT	Rock outcrop-Lithic Torripsamments complex	2.7	*N/A*
W	Water	1.6	*N/A*
Totals for Area of Interest		**2,371.1**	

The proposed project would collectively disturb over one acre of land; however, as each Area will be undertaken consecutively rather than together all at one time, it is possible that smaller areas, specifically Area D-3, may result in disturbance of less than one acre. Larger projects (one-acre or more) must implement Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) that are mandated by the State and County to control runoff during construction and Water Quality Management Plans (WQMPs) must be implemented to control runoff and erosion from specific facility sites once the construction is completed. To prevent erosion associated with runoff from construction sites for each proposed site-specific project, the implementing agencies would implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure that the discharge of storm runoff from construction sites does not cause erosion downstream from the discharge point. Without the implementation of BMPs, a significant erosion impact could occur. However, for Area D-3, mitigation is necessary to minimize impacts as a SWPPP and WQMP would not be required. The implementation of **MM GEO-1** is necessary to prevent a significant construction related erosion impact, as it would ensure that the proposed facilities associated with the installation of sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement within Area D-3, which would disturb less than one acre in size, would not exacerbate conditions related to erosion associated with runoff from construction sites through the implementation of BMPs. Thus, through the implementation of mitigation, impacts related to implementation of the installation of sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement within Area D-3 proposed project would be less than significant.

GEO-1 ***For each site-specific project that is less than one acre in size requiring ground disturbing activities such as grading, the implementing agencies shall identify and***

implement BMPs to minimize soil erosion and loss of topsoil comparable to that which would be required under a SWPPP (BMPs may include, but are not limited to hay bales, wattles, detention basins, silt fences, coir rolls, etc.) to ensure that the discharge of the storm runoff from the construction site does not cause erosion downstream of the discharge point. If any substantial erosion or sedimentation occurs as a result of discharging storm water from a project construction site, any erosion or sedimentation damage shall be restored to pre-discharge conditions.

The implementation of **MM GEO-1** would ensure that the proposed facilities associated with the project that are less than one acre in size would not exacerbate conditions related to erosion associated with runoff from construction sites through the implementation of BMPs.

Operational erosion impacts are not anticipated to occur, as once the pipelines are installed belowground, the roadways and compacted dirt throughways will be returned to their original condition. Thus, no new potential for erosion would occur and operational impacts would be less than significant. No further mitigation is necessary.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As stated under issues VII(a[iii]) and VII(a[iv]) above, the project footprint does not traverse through an area that is susceptible to landslides. However, the project does traverse through areas that may be susceptible to liquefaction. This indicates that the project footprint and general area may be underlain by unstable soils, or be affected by subsidence, lateral spreading, or collapse. Soil instability from landslides, subsidence, lateral spreading, settlement, and slope failure can cause collapse or damage to structures. Construction of the proposed sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement would be temporary, with the majority of the proposed facilities proposed to be developed underground and outdoors. Construction workers would generally only be at risk when working indoors. This is because on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse may cause structural damage that would could affect persons inside structures to be exposed to risk associated with lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse when indoors, which is not anticipated to occur during project construction. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the probability of lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse during construction is low. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Within the project area, non-seismically induced geologic hazards, such as landslides, subsidence, lateral spreading, settlement, and slope failure can be caused by unstable soils, which occur in some parts of the project area. As previously stated, the project does traverse through areas that may be susceptible to liquefaction, which indicates that there is a possibility that soil instability from liquefaction, subsidence, lateral spreading, and settlement may occur within the project area. Slope failure and landslides are unlikely to occur in the project area, as the project area occurs within generally within developed areas that, while adjacent to the foothills, are removed from hillsides as a result of existing development. Soil instability from landslides, subsidence, lateral spreading, settlement, and slope failure can cause collapse or damage to structures. Based on the above location data, there are pipeline locations where potential soil instability could cause damage, but would not result in a substantial adverse impact, such that the pipeline could not be repaired. This is because, as discussed above, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from soil instability, and furthermore are subject to industry standards that will minimize the potential risk of damage or pipeline rupture. Thus, soil instability impacts would be less than

significant.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The entirety of the proposed project will be located below grade. Additionally, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey (**Appendix 4**), the soils that underly the project area vary in type and class. The specific soil properties of a site can vary on a small scale, and may include undetermined areas that exhibit expansive properties. The only area of concern for expansive soils would be in areas where Chuckawalla very gravelly sandy clay loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes occurs, as this soil class contains clay, which is known to exhibit expansive properties. Construction of the proposed facilities would be temporary, with the majority of the proposed facilities proposed to be developed underground and outdoors. Construction workers would generally only be at risk when working indoors. This is because expansive soils may cause structural damage that would could affect persons inside structures to be exposed to risk associated with l expansive soils when indoors, which is not anticipated to occur during construction of the proposed sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement. Overall, construction would be temporary in nature and the probability of expansive soils during construction is low. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

When expansive soils swell, the change in volume can exert significant pressures on loads that are placed on them, such as loads resulting from structure foundations or underground utilities, and can result in structural distress and/or damage. As stated above, soils throughout the project area do not typically exhibit expansive soil characteristics, with the exception of in areas where Chuckawalla very gravelly sandy clay loam, 5 to 15 percent slopes occurs, as this soil class contains clay, which is known to exhibit expansive properties. However, the proposed pipelines would be installed below ground; soils with expansive characteristics could exert pressure on the pipelines during times of saturation, potentially threatening pipeline stability. However, as with seismic hazards, there are sewer pipeline and lateral locations where potential expansive soil presence could cause damage, but would not result in a substantial adverse impact, such that the pipeline could not be repaired. This is because, as discussed above, underground pipelines are not typically susceptible to severe damage from landslide, and furthermore are subject to industry standards that will minimize the potential risk of damage or pipeline rupture. Thus, expansive soils impacts would be less than significant related to the creation of substantial risks to life or property.

e. *No Impact* – The proposed project proponent is MSWD, and the overall purpose of the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project is intended to connect area septic systems users to their wastewater collection service. No septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the project. Thus, because the project will be served by a municipal wastewater provider, no impacts related to the use of septic tanks or alternative water disposal systems will occur.

f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – In the Paleontological Resources Memo prepared by CRM TECH (**Appendix 5**), CRM TECH indicates that they initiated a records search at the appropriate repository, conducted a literature review, and carried out a systematic field survey of the APE. The records search service for this study was provided by the Western Science Center (WSC) in Hemet, California. The records search found no fossil localities within the APE or within a one-mile radius. However, the WSC considers the area to be high in paleontological sensitivity, stating that "any fossil specimens recovered from the project would be scientifically significant" (refer to **Figure VII-2**, which depicts the surface sediments within the project area). Therefore, the WSC recommends that a paleontological resource mitigation program be implemented, including

monitoring, to salvage and curate fossil remains potentially present within the APE (refer to **Appendix 5**).

The field survey of the APE encountered no surface evidence of any paleontological resources. Surface soils observed in the unpaved portions of I-10 Corridor were alluvial silty sand deposits, and no other geological formations or any indications of fossil remains were noted. As noted above, the ground surface in most of the APE has been extensively disturbed by past construction activities associated with the existing roadways, underground utility lines, and adjacent developments, leaving little vestige of the native landscape. As a result, it does not represent an accurate reflection of the paleontological sensitivity of the native soils in the vicinity.

In summary of the research results presented above, no paleontological localities were previously found within or in the immediate vicinity of the APE, and no surface manifestation of any fossil remains were observed during the field survey. However, the prevailing sediments at the APE location have been identified as Pleistocene-age alluvium, which generally has a high potential to contain significant, nonrenewable fossil remains beyond the extensively disturbed surface soils.

Based on the sensitivity assessment outlined above, the proposed project may impact paleontological resources that are potentially present in the relatively undisturbed subsurface sediments. Therefore, a mitigation plan shall be prepared for the project by a qualified paleontologist to prevent a potentially significant paleontological resources impact. As the primary component of the mitigation plan, paleontological monitoring should be required during the project, as outlined in detail below:

GEO-2 ***All earth-moving operations reaching beyond the disturbed surface soils (generally five to six feet in depth within the existing roadbed) shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays and shall collect samples of sediments that are likely to contain fossil remains of small vertebrates or invertebrates. However, the monitor must have the power to temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens.***

Collected samples of sediment shall be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.

A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when submitted to the MSWD and the USACE, would signify completion of the statutory compliance process regarding paleontological resources.

With implementation of the above mitigation measure, impacts under this issue are lowered to a level of less than significant.

Figure VII-1

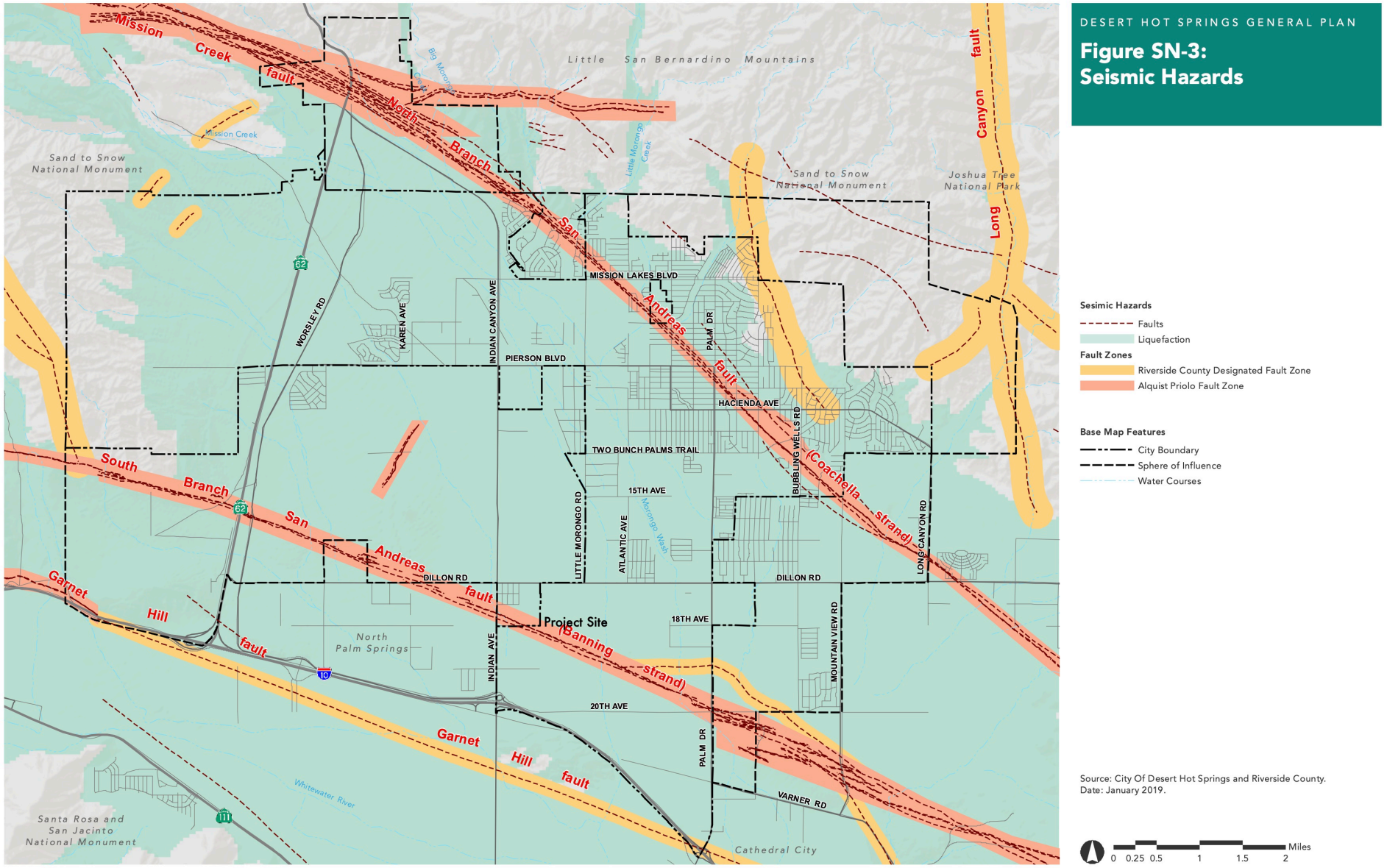

FIGURE VII-1

Tom Dodson & Associates

Seismic Hazards Map

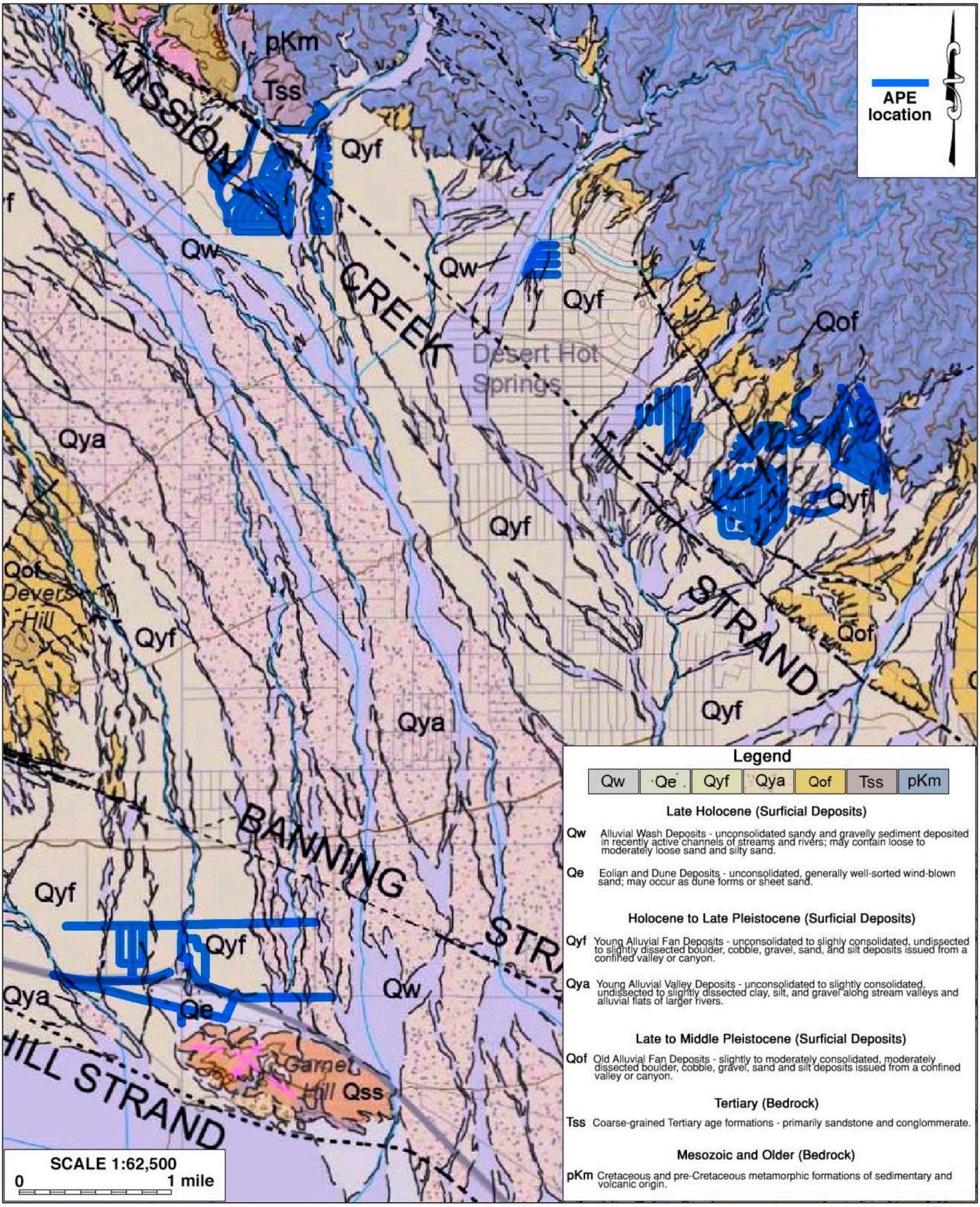

FIGURE VII-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Surface Sediments Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Mission Springs-306 Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Assessment prepared* by Urban Crossroads dated November 3, 2025. This technical study is provided as **Appendix 1** to this document.

Climate Change Setting

Global climate change (GCC) is the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. The majority of scientists believe that the climate shift taking place since the Industrial Revolution is occurring at a quicker rate and magnitude than in the past. Scientific evidence suggests that GCC is the result of increased concentrations of GHGs in the earth's atmosphere, including carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), and fluorinated gases. The majority of scientists believe that this increased rate of climate change is the result of GHGs resulting from human activity and industrialization over the past 200 years.

An individual project like the proposed project evaluated in this memo cannot generate enough GHG emissions to affect a discernible change in global climate. However, the proposed project may participate in the potential for GCC by its incremental contribution of GHGs combined with the cumulative increase of all other sources of GHGs, which when taken together constitute potential influences on GCC. Because these changes may have serious environmental consequences, this memo will evaluate the potential for the proposed project to have a significant effect upon the environment as a result of its potential contribution to the greenhouse effect.

GCC refers to the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, wind patterns, precipitation and storms. Global temperatures are regulated by naturally occurring atmospheric gases such as water vapor, CO_2, N_2O, CH_4, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6). These particular gases are important due to their residence time (duration they stay) in the atmosphere, which ranges from 10 years to more than 100 years. These gases allow solar radiation into the earth's atmosphere, but prevent radiative heat from escaping, thus warming the earth's atmosphere. GCC can occur naturally as it has in the past with the previous ice ages.

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often referred to as GHGs. GHGs are released into the atmosphere by both natural and anthropogenic activity. Without the natural GHG effect, the earth's

average temperature would be approximately 61 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) cooler than it is currently. The cumulative accumulation of these gases in the earth's atmosphere is considered to be the cause for the observed increase in the earth's temperature.

For the purposes of this analysis, emissions of CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O were evaluated because these gases are the primary contributors to GCC from development projects. Although there are other substances such as fluorinated gases that also contribute to GCC, these fluorinated gases were not evaluated as their sources are not well-defined and do not contain accepted emissions factors or methodology to accurately calculate these gases.

Standards of Significance

According to the *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G thresholds, to determine whether impacts from GHG emissions are significant. Would the project:

- **Threshold 1**: Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- **Threshold 2**: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?

The evaluation of an impact under CEQA requires measuring data from a project against both existing conditions and a "threshold of significance." For establishing significance thresholds, the Office of Planning and Research's amendments to the *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.7(c) state "[w]hen adopting thresholds of significance, a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or recommended by other public agencies, or recommended by experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) further states, ". . . A lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to: (1) Use a model or methodology to quantify greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project, and which model or methodology to use . . .; or (2) Rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 provides that a lead agency should consider the following factors, among others, in assessing the significance of impacts from greenhouse gas emissions:

- **Consideration #1:** The extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting.
- **Consideration #2:** Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.
- **Consideration #3:** The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. Such regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must reduce or mitigate the project's incremental contribution of greenhouse gas emissions. In determining the significance of impacts, the lead agency may consider a project's consistency with the State's long-term climate goals or strategies, provided that substantial evidence supports the agency's analysis of how those goals

or strategies address the project's incremental contribution to climate change and its conclusion that the project's incremental contribution is not cumulatively considerable.

Establishment of Significance Thresholds

The Mission Springs Water District has not adopted its own numeric threshold of significance for determining impacts with respect to GHG emissions. A screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO2e/yr to determine if additional analysis is required is an acceptable approach. This approach is a widely accepted screening threshold used by numerous cities and counties in the SSAB and is based on the SCAQMD staff's proposed GHG screening threshold for stationary source emissions for non-industrial projects, as described in the SCAQMD's Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules and Plans (SCAQMD Interim GHG Threshold). The SCAQMD Interim GHG Threshold identifies a screening threshold to determine whether additional analysis is required.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The estimated GHG emissions for the project are summarized in Table VIII-1. The estimated GHG emission includes emissions from Carbon Dioxide (CO2), Methane (CH4), Nitrous Oxide (N2O), and Refrigerants (R). As shown in Table VIII-1, the project would generate a total of approximately 261.43 MTCO2e/yr. Detailed model outputs for the proposed project are presented in Attachment A of **Appendix 1**.

Table VIII-1: Emissions (Metric Tons CO_2e)

Source	Emissions (MT/year)				
	CO_2	CH_4	N_2O	Refrigerants	Total CO_2e
Annual construction-related emissions amortized over 30 years	257.71	7.91E-03	1.16E-02	5.12E-02	261.43
Total CO_2E (All Sources)	261.43				
Screening Threshold (CO_2E)	3,000				
Threshold Exceeded?	NO				

As shown in Table VIII-1, the project will result in approximately 261.43 $MTCO_2e/yr$; the proposed project would not exceed the screening threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e/yr$. Thus, the project would not have the potential to result in a cumulatively considerable impact with respect to GHG emissions and project GHG emissions would have a less than significant impact.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The Mission Springs Water District has not adopted its own numeric threshold of significance for determining impacts with respect to GHG emissions. A screening threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e/yr$ to determine if additional analysis is required is an acceptable approach. This approach is a widely accepted screening threshold used by numerous cities and counties in the SSAB and is based on the SCAQMD staff's proposed GHG screening threshold for stationary source emissions for non-industrial projects, as described in the SCAQMD's Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules and Plans (SCAQMD Interim GHG Threshold). The SCAQMD Interim GHG Threshold identifies a screening threshold to determine whether additional analysis is required.

The project will result in approximately 261.43 $MTCO_2e/yr$ from construction activities. As such, the

project would not exceed the SCAQMD's recommended numeric threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/yr if it were applied. Thus, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact with respect to GHG emissions

2022 Scoping Plan Consistency

The project would not impede the State's progress towards carbon neutrality by 2045 under the 2022 Scoping Plan. The project would be required to comply with applicable current and future regulatory requirements promulgated through the 2022 Scoping Plan. As such, the project would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan.

As discussed above, the project involves construction activity and does not propose a trip-generating land use or facilities that would generate any substantive amount of on-going GHG emissions. As presented in Table VIII-1, the project's GHG emissions are below the 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/yr threshold. As concluded in Impact Statement GHG-1 the proposed project would not have the potential to generate a significant amount of GHGs emissions. As such, the proposed project will not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

Conclusion

Thus, a less than significant impact related to GHG emissions from project construction and operation would occur and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Construction of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement activities can require delivery of hazardous materials (such as petroleum products) to support their installation. Implementation of mitigation outlined below, is necessary to avoid a significant adverse impact under this issue and ensure that the use and generation of hazardous substances in support of both construction and operation of the proposed project facilities would not pose a significant hazard to workers, adjacent land uses, or the environment. **MM HAZ-1** would require implementation of an Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) and the Best Management Practices (BMPs) therein to minimize the potential for

accidental release of hazardous materials. **MM HAZ-2** would require assessment of the accidental release scenarios and identify equipment and personnel training necessary to control and prevent the spread of any accidentally released hazardous materials, thereby minimizing exposure to and spread of hazardous materials. **MM HAZ-3** would require disposal of hazardous materials in compliance with State and Federal law. **MM HAZ-4** would require cleanup of any contaminated areas as a result of accidental release during construction or operation to ensure that the site contamination level has been reduced to a level that complies with State and Federal law.

HAZ-1 ***For project facilities that handle hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste, the HMBP prepared and submitted to the CUPA shall incorporate BMPs designed to minimize the potential for accidental release of such chemicals and shall meet the standards required by California law for HMBPs. The facility managers shall implement these measures to reduce the potential for accidental releases of hazardous materials or wastes. The HMBP shall be approved prior to operation of the given facility.***

HAZ-2 ***The HMBP shall assess the potential accidental release scenarios and identify the equipment and response capabilities required to provide immediate containment, control, and collection of any released hazardous material. Prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy, each facility shall ensure that necessary equipment has been installed and training of personnel has occurred to obtain sufficient resources to control and prevent the spread of any accidentally released hazardous or toxic materials.***

HAZ-3 ***All hazardous materials that become waste during both operation and construction of project infrastructure shall be delivered to a licensed treatment, disposal, or recycling facility and be disposed of in accordance with State and Federal law.***

HAZ-4 ***Before determining that an area contaminated as a result of an accidental release during project operation or construction is fully remediated, specific thresholds of acceptable clean-up shall be established and sufficient samples shall be taken and tested within the contaminated area to verify that these clean-up thresholds have been met in compliance with State and Federal law.***

These **MMs** will be applied to project facilities and would reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

Long-term operation of the project would not require use of hazardous materials. These facilities would be installed belowground, and would therefore not involve routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Thus, no potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials existing. No impacts would occur.

Thus, no greater potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials exists as a result of implementing the proposed project. Overall, impacts are therefore less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As discussed above, construction activities

associated with implementation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement could create hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials used in construction activities and equipment. Construction activities may involve the use of adhesives, solvents, paints, thinners, petroleum products, and other chemicals. Cal/OSHA regulations provide for the proper labeling, storage, and handling of hazardous materials to reduce the potential harmful health effects that could result from worker exposure to hazardous materials. If not properly handled, however, accidental release of these substances could expose construction workers, degrade soils, or become entrained in stormwater runoff, resulting in adverse effects on the public or the environment. MSWD would be required to comply with all relevant and applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the accidental release of hazardous materials during construction of proposed facilities such as California Health and Safety Code Sections 25500 et seq. Compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local regulations can reduce potential impacts to the public or the environment regarding accidental release of hazardous materials to less than significant impact, but a contingency **MM** is provided to ensure accidental releases and any related contamination would not significantly affect the environment at facility locations, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact. **MM HAZ-5**, would minimize the potential hazard to the public or environment due to accidental release.

HAZ-5 ***All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the local CUPA and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into SWPPP prepared for each future facility developed under the project, or where an SWPPP is not required due Project size, shall be incorporated as a BMP. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.***

The use of hazardous materials and substances during construction would be subject to the Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements for the handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials, summarized in the Regulatory Setting. With compliance with these regulations, and preparation and implementation of **MM HAZ-5**, hazardous material impacts related to construction activities would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement would consist of transmission of sewage to MSWD's wastewater treatment facilities. Hazardous materials would not be associated with the regular operation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, as well as the proposed septic abatement. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project footprint traverses through a large portion of the City of Desert Hot Springs, as well as through limited portions of the City of Palm Springs, and Unincorporated Riverside County. As a result, the proposed project would be installed in some locations within one quarter mile of a school. Public schools in the area are shown on **Figure IX-1**, which depicts the Wildfire Hazards within the City in the City's General Plan. Thus, it is possible that

construction of proposed facilities would occur within one-quarter mile of a school. Construction activities would use limited quantities of hazardous materials during construction of pipelines and ancillary facilities, such as gasoline and diesel fuel. Additionally, MSWD would be required to comply with all relevant and applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations that pertain to the accidental release of hazardous materials during construction of proposed facilities. Compliance with all applicable Federal, State and local regulations would help to reduce potential impacts to the public or the environment regarding hazardous waste emissions within one-quarter mile of a school. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed project would consist of facilities designed to convey sewage to MSWD's wastewater treatment plants. Therefore, hazardous materials would not be associated with the regular operation of the facilities, and no hazardous materials would be emitted or handled within one-quarter mile of a school. Compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations would help to reduce potential impacts to the public or the environment regarding hazardous waste emissions within one-quarter mile of a school during operations. Impacts would be less than significant.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project footprint is not located in an area that has been included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result it will not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. According to the California State Waterboard's GeoTracker, which provides information regarding Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, there are no locations within the project footprint identified as a Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) site or Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) sites (**Figures IX-2 through IX-9** see GeoTracker figures). There are two listed LUST cleanup sites located adjacent to the I-10 area alignment, wherein the media of concern is listed as groundwater contamination (**Figure IX-8 and IX-9**). Further, there is one DTSC site that is simply a DTSC site as it is a school and was investigated in advance of school development (**Figure IX-7**). As the cases for these sites are not open, and are therefore considered remediated, no potential exists for the proposed project to encounter hazards related to an existing known hazardous contamination site. Furthermore, the nature of the proposed project is not such that persons working or residing in the area would be exposed to any hazards from any nearby contaminated sites, particularly as the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would occur within mostly disturbed areas. Therefore, the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the population or to the environment from their implementation. Impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

e. *No Impact* – The Palm Springs International Airport is the closest airport to the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project. Based on a review of Google Maps, the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project footprint is located, at a minimum, approximately 3.6 miles north of the Palm Springs International Airport, located in the City of Palm Springs. The proposed project footprint is not located within an Influence Area identified in the Palm Springs International Airport section of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission's Compatibility Plan (**Figure IX-10**).[5] Given the large distance between the proposed project and nearby airports, project implementation would not

[5] Riverside County, 2005. *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document.* https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/migrated/Portals-13-PDFGeneral-plan-newplan-18--20Vol.-201-20Palm-20Springs-20International.pdf (Accessed 12/09/25)

result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Furthermore, there are no private airstrips/public use airports located within two miles of the project site. Therefore, the development of the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would have no potential to result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project will be located within existing roadways within the City of Desert Hot Springs. Sewer pipelines and laterals installation would require construction along or in public roadways, with minimal areas of the sewer pipelines located in undisturbed areas, with another exception being an area that is not paved, consisting of compacted dirt to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way. Pipeline installed within public roadways could interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The Desert Hot Springs General Plan Wildfire Hazards Map (**Figure IX-1**) indicates the emergency evacuation routes within the project vicinity. The proposed sewer pipeline alignments have generally been designed to avoid conflicts with these roadways, with the exception of connecting a pipeline within Hacienda Avenue (Areas H, J-2, and K), and the short section of sewer pipeline located within Indian Canyon Avenue. At no time during the installation of pipeline will the entirety of this roadway be closed. The project would require one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented. Thus, in order to ensure adequate emergency circulation during construction of the proposed pipelines, implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would be required. This is because this construction activity, and other anticipated construction activities associated with sewer pipeline alignments, could potentially block access to roadways and driveways for emergency vehicles. The construction-related impacts, although temporary, could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. However, at no time during the installation of the proposed sewer pipeline alignments and associated laterals will the entirety of the roadways be closed. It is anticipated that the installation of the proposed sewer pipeline alignments and associated laterals within road ROW would require only one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented, which shall be enforced through the implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1**. Construction impacts would be less than significant through the implementation of mitigation.

TRAN-1 *Prepare and Implement Construction Transportation Management Plan (TMP)*
A construction TMP shall be developed and implemented by the implementing agency, in coordination with the respective jurisdictions, the City of Desert Hot Springs, County of Riverside Transportation Department, and/or other relevant parties during construction of the proposed project. The TMP shall conform to Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines and shall include but is not limited to:

Construction Traffic Routes and Staging Locations: ***The TMP shall identify construction staging site locations and potential road closures, alternate routes for detours, and planned truck routes for construction-related vehicle trips, including but not limited to haul trucks, material delivery trucks, and equipment delivery trucks. It shall also identify alternative safe routes and policies to maintain safety along bicycle and pedestrian routes during construction. Construction vehicle routes shall avoid local residential streets and avoid peak morning and evening commute hours to the***

maximum extent practicable. Staging locations, alternate detour routes, and construction vehicle routes shall avoid other active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites to the maximum extent practicable.

Damage Repair: The TMP shall include the following requirements to minimize damage to the existing roadway network:

- *A list of precautionary measures to protect the existing roadway network, including but not limited to pavements, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and drainage structures, shall be outlined. The construction contractor(s) shall be required to implement these measures throughout the duration of construction of the proposed sewer pipeline.*
- *The roadway network along the proposed sewer pipeline alignment(s) shall be surveyed prior to the start of project construction activities, and existing roadway conditions shall be summarized in a brief report.*
- *Any damage to the roadway network that occurs as a result of project construction activities shall be noted, and MSWD or its contractors shall repair all damage.*

Coordination with Emergency Services: The TMP shall include requirements to notify local emergency response providers, including relevant police and sheriff departments, ambulance services, and paramedic services at least one week prior to the start of work within public ROW if lane and/or road closures are required. To the extent practicable, the duration of disruptions/closures to roadways and critical access points for emergency services shall be minimized.

Coordination with Active Transportation Facilities: The TMP shall require coordination with owners/operators of any affected active transportation facilities to minimize the duration of disruptions/closures to bike paths, pedestrian trails, and adjacent access points.

Coordination with Riverside Transit Agency (RTA): If the proposed project affects access to existing transit stops, the TMP shall also include temporary, alternative transit stops and directional signage, as determined in coordination with RTA.

Coordination with Caltrans: If the proposed project requires lane and/or road closures of State highways or State highway ramps, the TMP shall require coordination with Caltrans to ensure the TMP conforms with Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines.

Coordination with Nearby Construction Sites: The TMP shall identify all active construction projects within 0.25 mile of project construction sites and require coordination with the applicants and/or contractors of these projects during all phases of construction regarding the following:

- *All temporary lane and/or roadway closures shall be coordinated to limit overlap of roadway closures;*
- *All major deliveries and haul truck trips shall be coordinated to limit the occurrence of simultaneous deliveries and haul truck trips; and*

- ***MSWD, its contractor(s), or its representative(s) shall meet on a regular basis with the applicant(s), contractor(s) or their representative(s) of active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites during construction to address any outstanding issues related to construction vehicles.***

Transportation Control and Safety: ***The TMP shall provide for roadway vehicle control measures including flag persons, warning signs, lights, barricades, cones, and/or detour routes to provide safe passage of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and access by emergency responders.***

Plan Approval: ***The TMP shall be reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW for review and approval.***

WF-1 ***Prior to initiating construction of proposed sewer pipeline and laterals within public ROW, MSWD shall prepare and implement a traffic control plan that contains comprehensive strategies for maintaining emergency access during construction. Strategies shall include, but are not limited to, maintaining steel trench plates at the construction sites to restore access across open trenches, flag persons and related assets to manage the flow of traffic, and identification of alternate routing around construction zones, where necessary. In addition, police, fire, and other emergency service providers (local agencies, Caltrans, and other service providers) shall be notified of the timing, location, and duration of the construction activities and the location of detours and lane closures. MSWD shall ensure that the traffic control plan and other construction activities are consistent with the County of Riverside Emergency Operations Plan, and are reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW.***

The construction-related impacts, although temporary, could potentially impair the implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be potentially significant. Therefore, mitigation is necessary to minimize impacts. The implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would require the preparation of a TMP with comprehensive strategies to reduce potential disruption to emergency evacuation or an emergency response plan during construction. Therefore, potential significant impacts to emergency access and evacuation during construction would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Following construction, the operation of the pipelines would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan as they would be located underground. Impacts related to an adopted emergency plan would be less than significant during operation.

g. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed pipelines would be constructed primarily within paved roadway ROW, with some areas of the sewer pipeline located in undisturbed areas, as previously described. CAL FIRE designates most of the areas within the project area as being located within moderate fire hazard severity zones (FHSZs) within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) due to the project's location within the City of Desert Hot Springs, Unincorporated Riverside County, and the City of Palm Springs, outside of higher fire risk areas in the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains and Mount San Jacinto (**Figures IX-11 and IX-12**). However, as

there are areas within the northern portion of Area A that are designated as high and very high FHSZ within an SRA per CAL FIRE as demonstrated on **Figure IX-12**, there is a potential for facilities to be located within or near wildland areas with high fire risk.

The use of spark-producing construction machinery within a fire risk area could create hazardous fire conditions and expose construction workers to wildfire risks. Impacts would be potentially significant. **MM WF-2** would require fire reduction measures to be incorporated into the fire management plan/fuel modification plan for the proposed facility, and shall be implemented during construction and over the long-term for protection of the site to avoid potentially significant wildfire risks. Therefore, **MM WF-2** shall be implemented for pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement occurring within high and very high FHSZs, which is generally limited to Area A.

WF-2 ***Prior to construction of facilities located in areas designated as High or Very High FHSZs by CAL FIRE, fire hazard reduction measures shall be incorporated into a fire management plan/fuel modification plan for the proposed facility, and shall be implemented during construction and over the long-term for protection of the site. These measures shall address all staging areas, welding areas, or areas slated for development that are planned to use spark-producing equipment. These areas shall be cleared of dried vegetation or other material that could ignite. Any construction equipment that can include a spark arrestor shall be equipped with a spark arrestor in good working order. During the construction of the project facilities, all vehicles and crews working at the project site shall have access to functional fire extinguishers and related fire prevention equipment (such as emergency sand bags, etc.) at all times. In addition, construction crews shall have a spotter during welding activities to look out for potentially dangerous situations, including accidental sparks. This plan shall be reviewed by MSWD and provided to CAL FIRE for review and comment, where appropriate, and approved prior to construction within high and very high FHSZs and implemented once approved. The fire management plan shall also include sufficient defensible space or other measures at a facility site located in a high or very high FHSZ to minimize fire exposure and damage to a level acceptable to the implementing agency over the long-term.***

During operation, the proposed facilities would operate as sewage transmission lines belowground, and these facilities would not be constructed of flammable materials or involve any spark-producing activities. Thus, operation of the proposed sewer pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement activities would have a less than significant potential to expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Impacts would be less than significant.

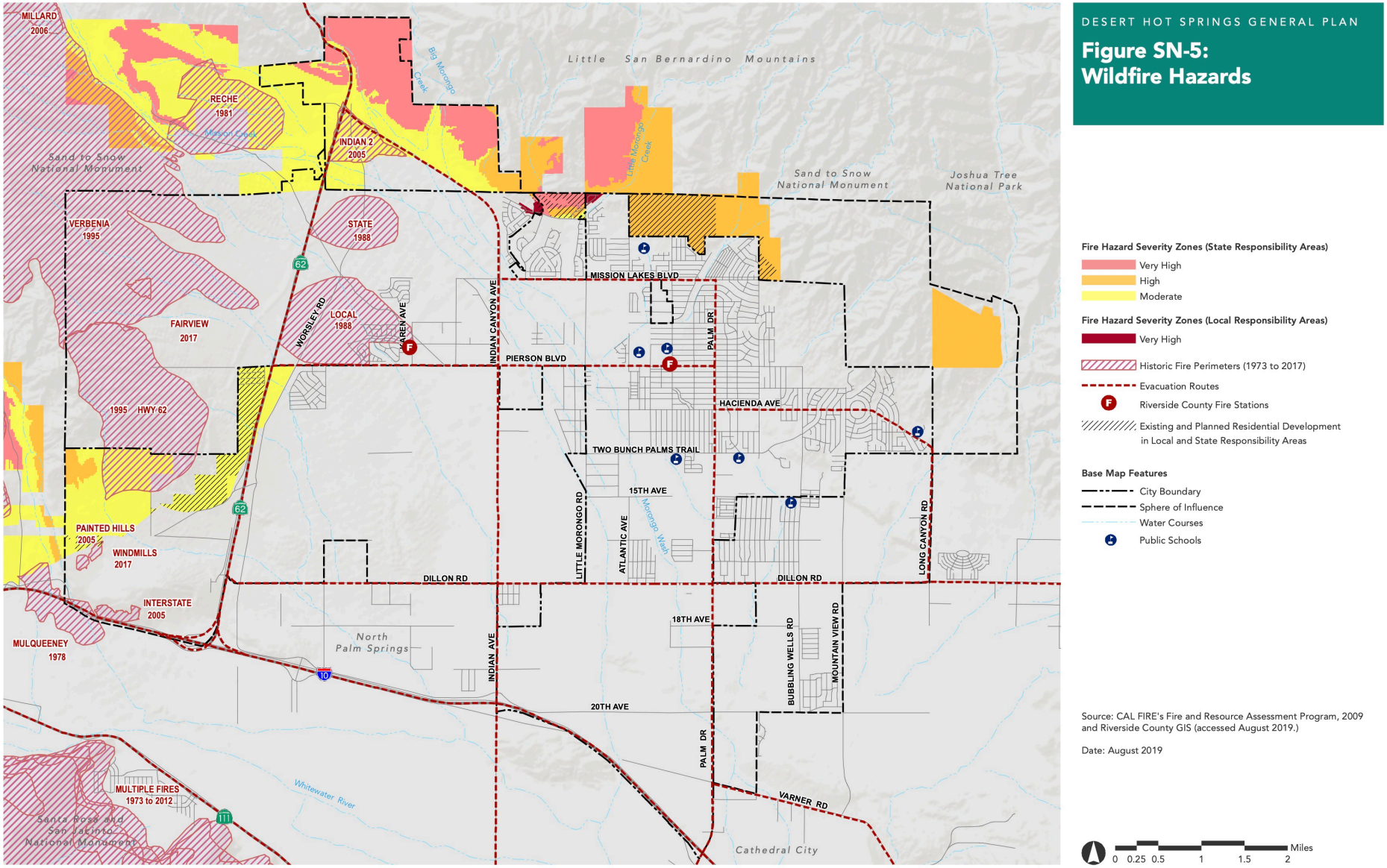
DESERT HOT SPRINGS GENERAL PLAN
Figure SN-5:
Wildfire Hazards
Little San Bernardino Mountains
Sand to Snow National Monument
Joshua Tree National Park
Big Morongo Creek
Little Morongo Creek
Mission Creek
MILLARD 2006
RECHE 1981
INDIAN 2 2005
VERBENIA 1995
STATE 1988
LOCAL 1988
FAIRVIEW 2017
1995 HWY 62
PAINTED HILLS 2005
WINDMILLS 2017
INTERSTATE 2005
MULQUEENEY 1978
MULTIPLE FIRES 1973 to 2012
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto National Monument
North Palm Springs
Whitewater River
Cathedral City
WORSLEY RD
KAREN AVE
INDIAN CANYON AVE
PALM DR
MISSION LAKES BLVD
PIERSON BLVD
HACIENDA AVE
TWO BUNCH PALMS TRAIL
15TH AVE
LITTLE MORONGO RD
ATLANTIC AVE
Morongo Wash
LONG CANYON RD
DILLON RD
INDIAN AVE
18TH AVE
BUBBLING WELLS RD
MOUNTAIN VIEW RD
20TH AVE
VARNER RD
62
10
111
Fire Hazard Severity Zones (State Responsibility Areas)
Very High
High
Moderate
Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Local Responsibility Areas)
Very High
Historic Fire Perimeters (1973 to 2017)
Evacuation Routes
Riverside County Fire Stations
Existing and Planned Residential Development in Local and State Responsibility Areas
Base Map Features
City Boundary
Sphere of Influence
Water Courses
Public Schools
Source: CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program, 2009 and Riverside County GIS (accessed August 2019.)
Date: August 2019
0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2
Miles

FIGURE IX-1

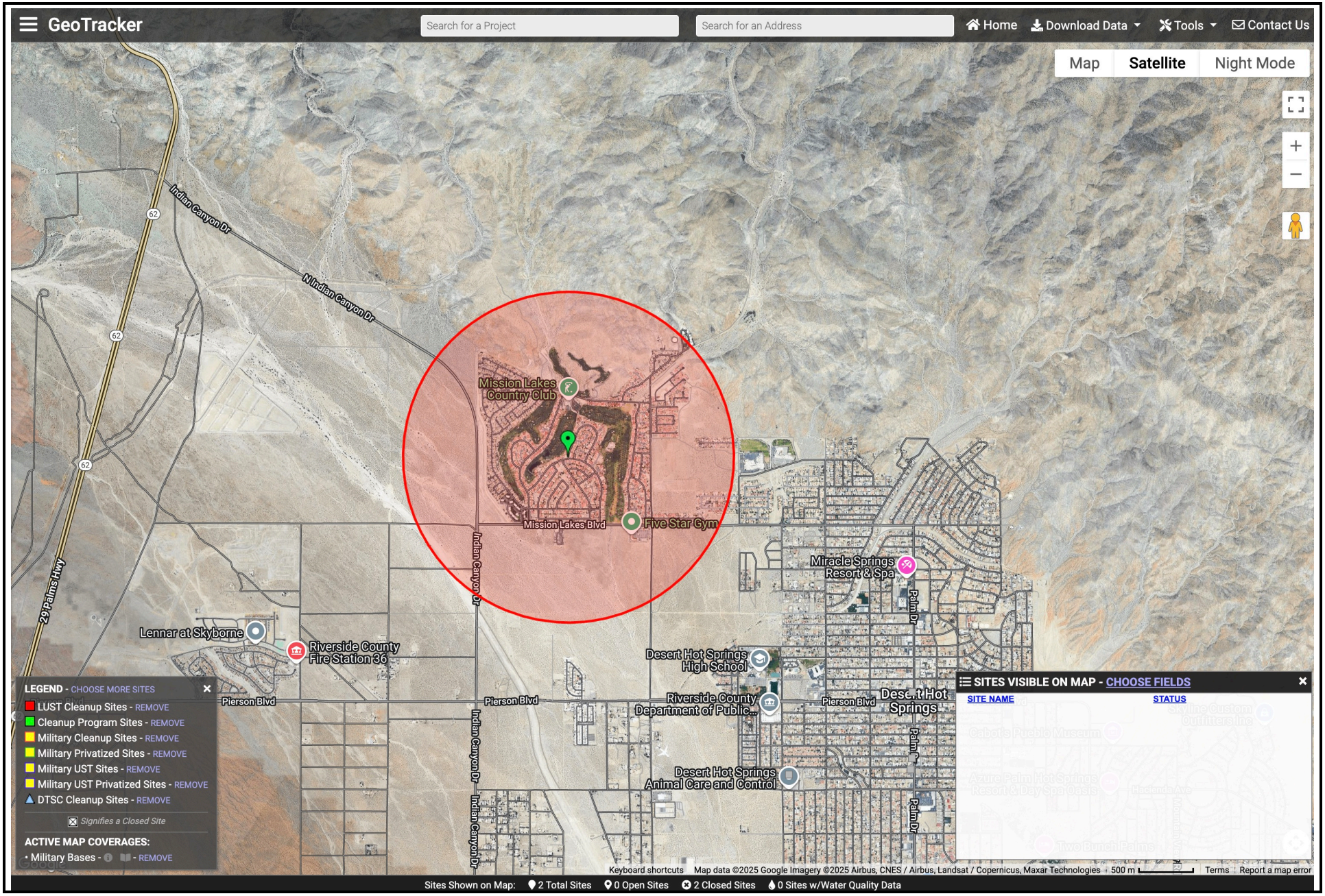

FIGURE IX-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Area A GeoTracker

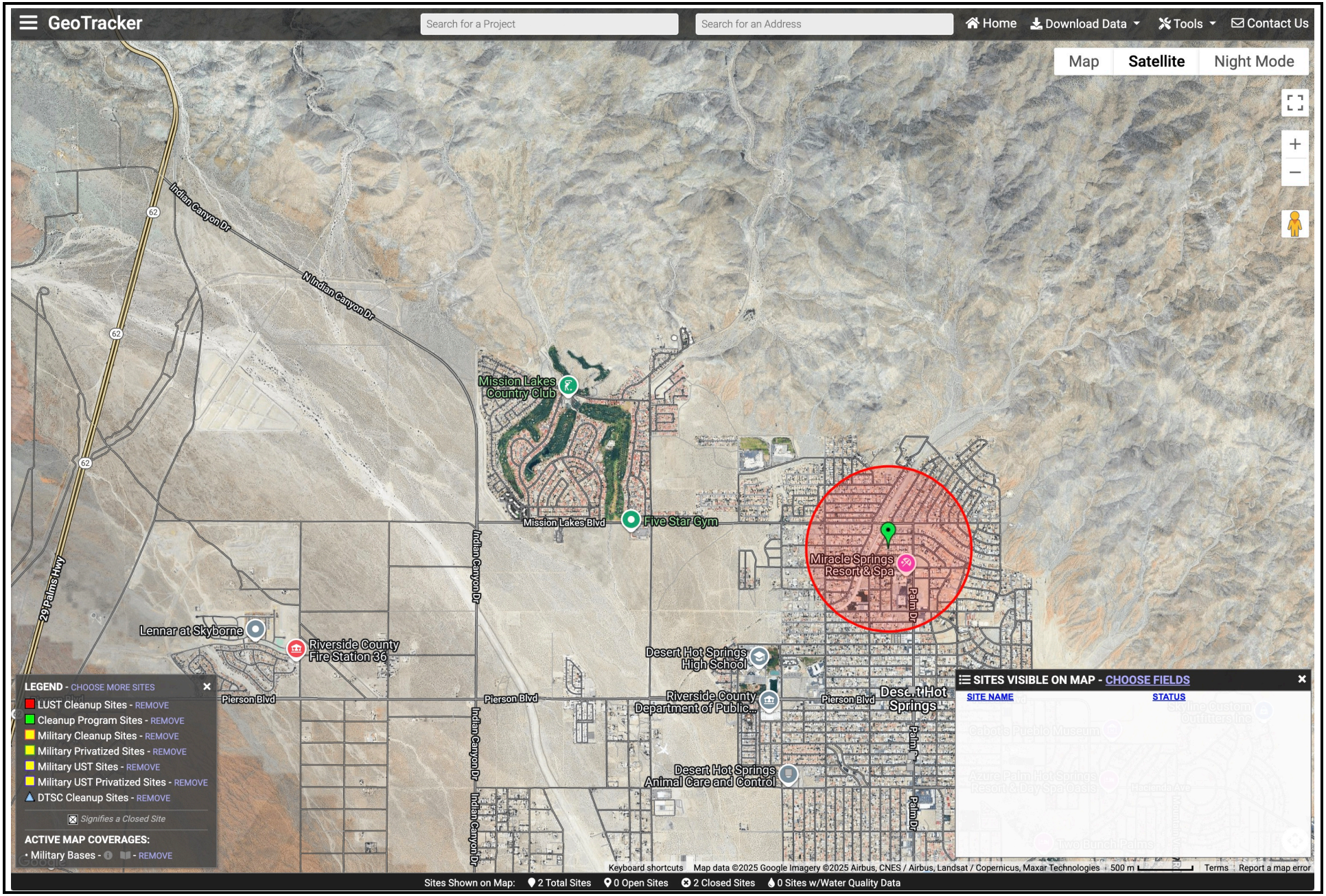

FIGURE IX-3

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Environmental Consultants

Area D-3 GeoTracker

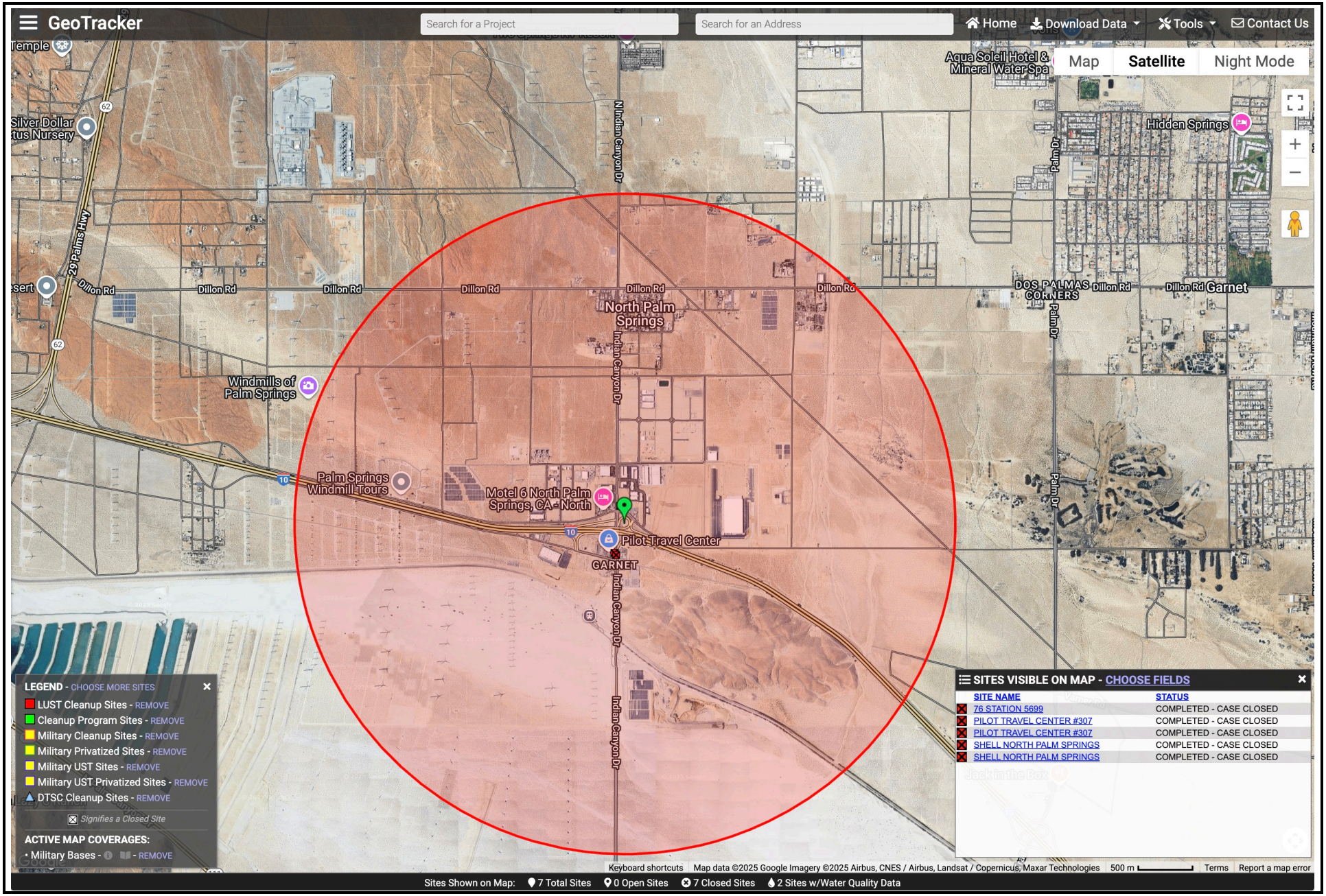

FIGURE IX-4

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Area I-10 GeoTracker

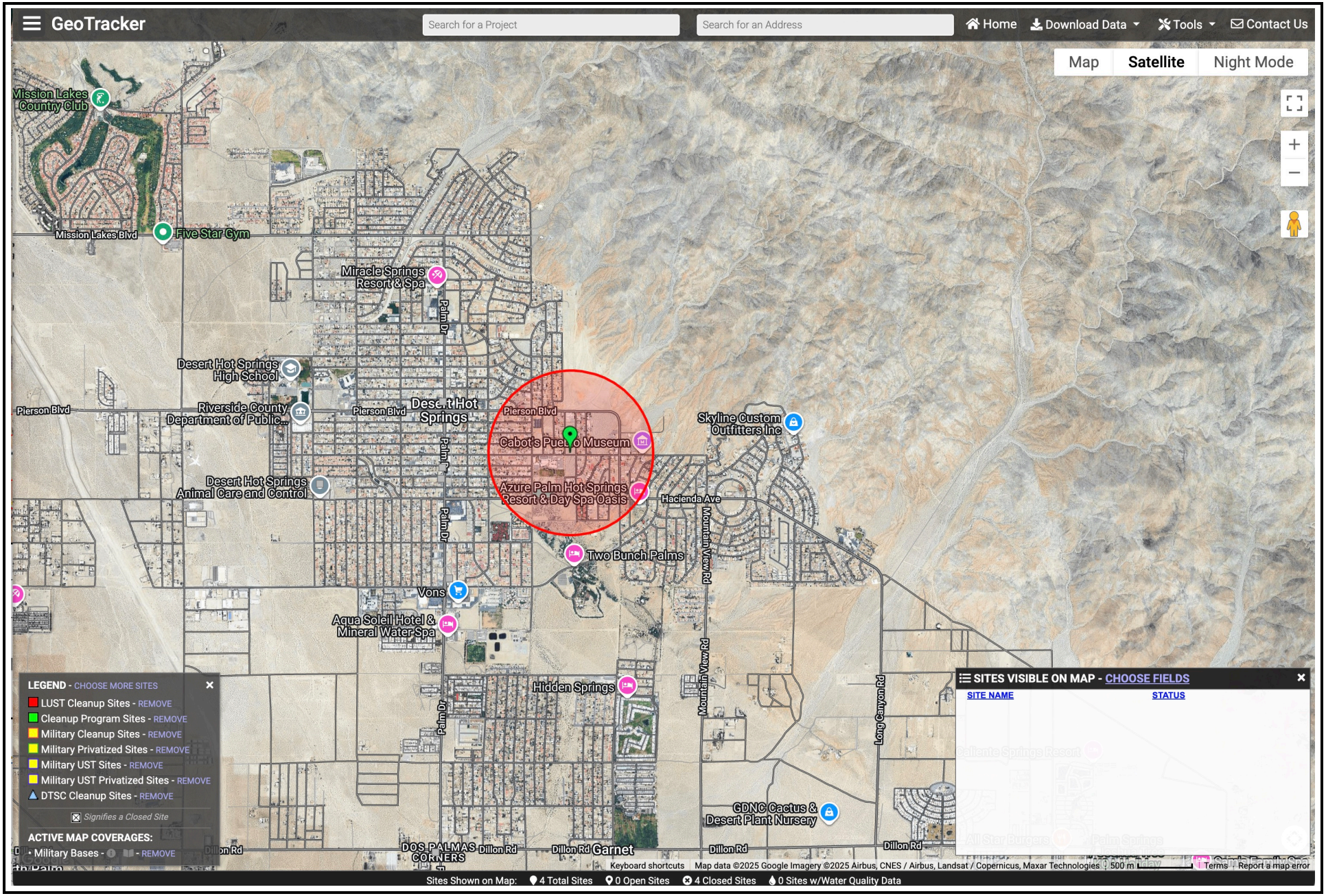

FIGURE IX-5

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Area G GeoTracker

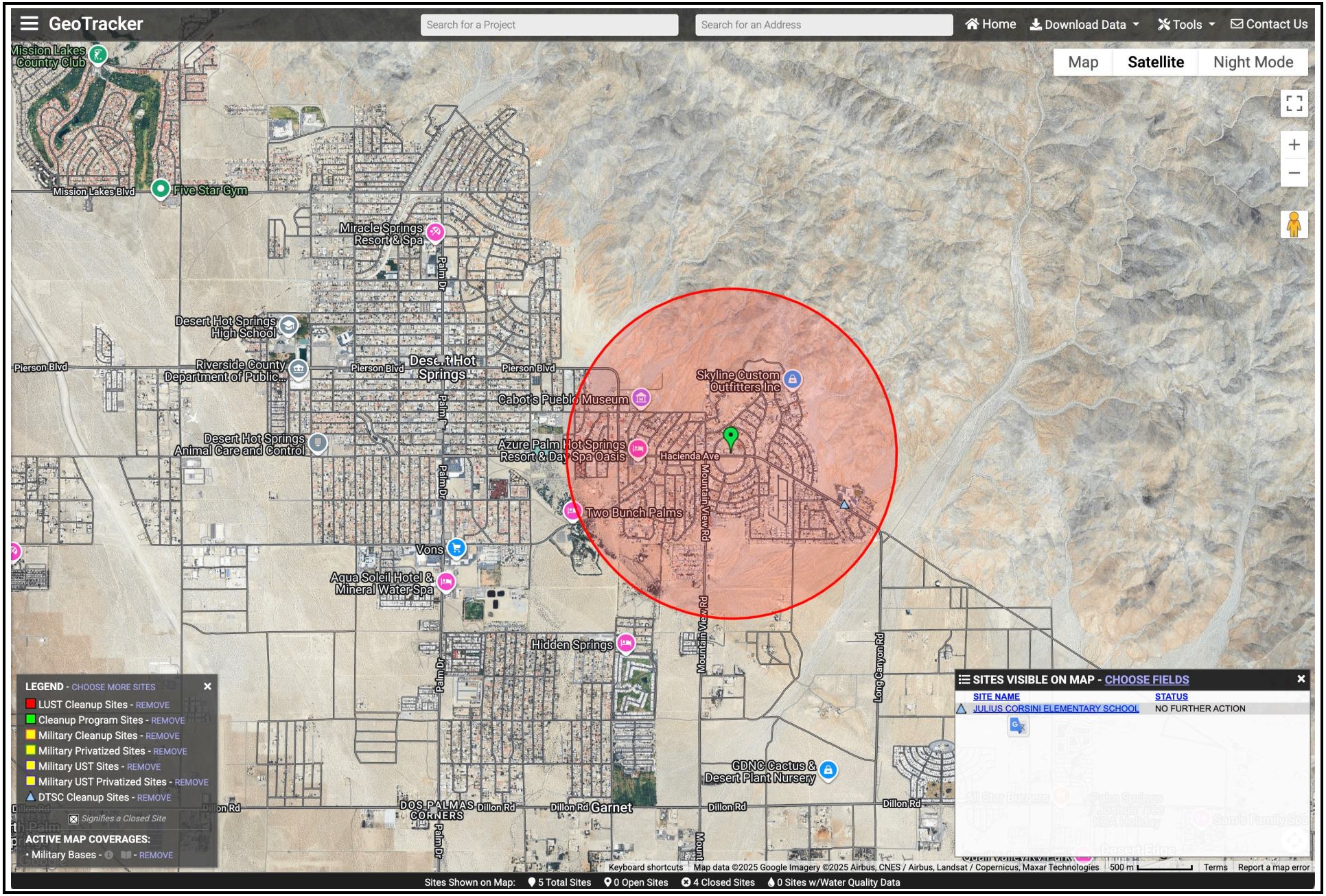

FIGURE IX-6

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Environmental Consultants

Areas H, I, J-2, K GeoTracker

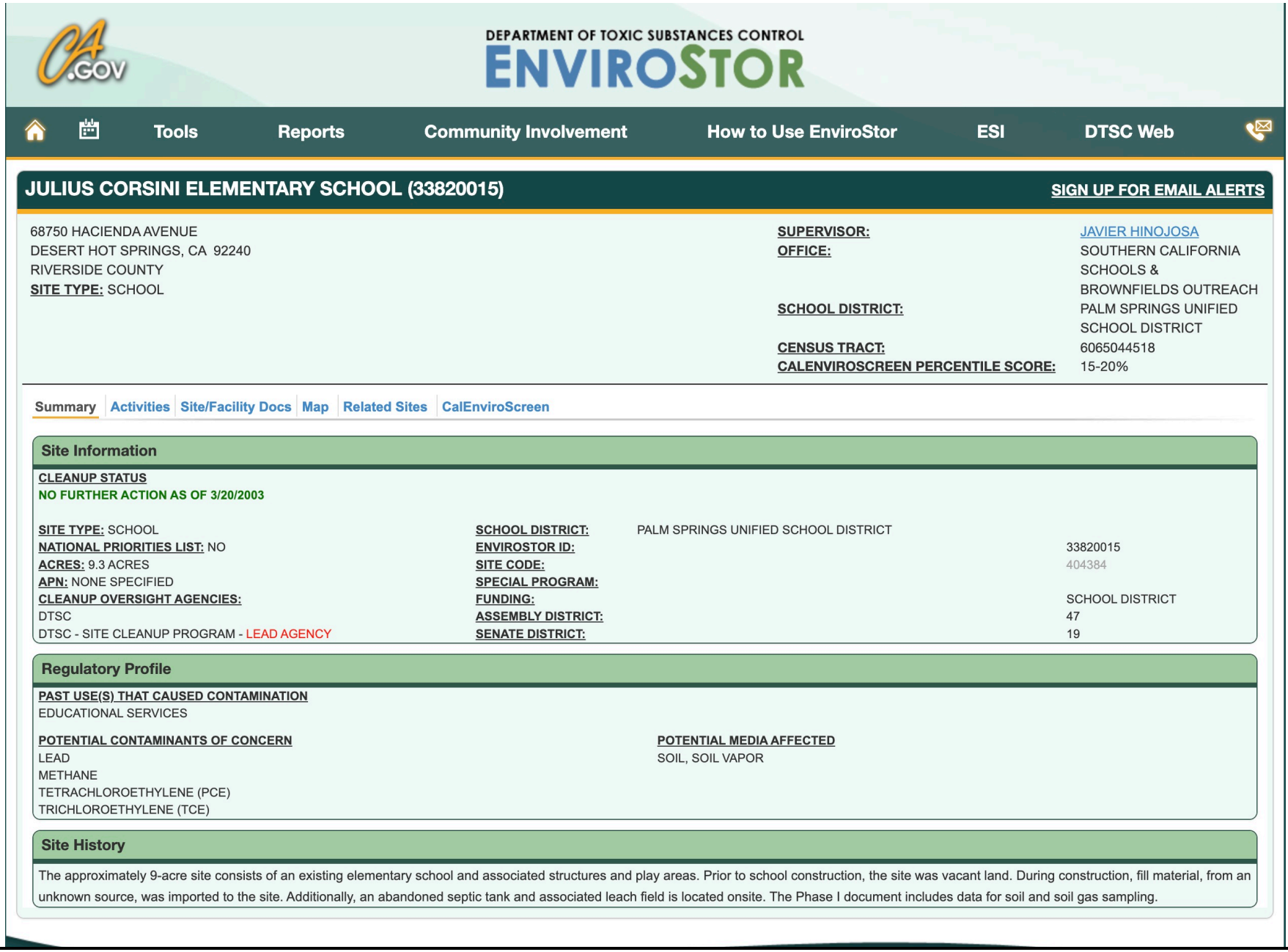
DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL
ENVIROSTOR
Tools
Reports
Community Involvement
How to Use EnviroStor
ESI
DTSC Web
JULIUS CORSINI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (33820015)
SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS
68750 HACIENDA AVENUE
DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CA 92240
RIVERSIDE COUNTY
SITE TYPE: SCHOOL
SUPERVISOR: JAVIER HINOJOSA
OFFICE: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS & BROWNFIELDS OUTREACH
SCHOOL DISTRICT: PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CENSUS TRACT: 6065044518
CALENVIROSCREEN PERCENTILE SCORE: 15-20%
Summary
Activities
Site/Facility Docs
Map
Related Sites
CalEnviroScreen
Site Information
CLEANUP STATUS
NO FURTHER ACTION AS OF 3/20/2003
SITE TYPE: SCHOOL
NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST: NO
ACRES: 9.3 ACRES
APN: NONE SPECIFIED
CLEANUP OVERSIGHT AGENCIES:
DTSC
DTSC - SITE CLEANUP PROGRAM - LEAD AGENCY
SCHOOL DISTRICT: PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
ENVIROSTOR ID: 33820015
SITE CODE: 404384
SPECIAL PROGRAM:
FUNDING: SCHOOL DISTRICT
ASSEMBLY DISTRICT: 47
SENATE DISTRICT: 19
Regulatory Profile
PAST USE(S) THAT CAUSED CONTAMINATION
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN
LEAD
METHANE
TETRACHLOROETHYLENE (PCE)
TRICHLOROETHYLENE (TCE)
POTENTIAL MEDIA AFFECTED
SOIL, SOIL VAPOR
Site History
The approximately 9-acre site consists of an existing elementary school and associated structures and play areas. Prior to school construction, the site was vacant land. During construction, fill material, from an unknown source, was imported to the site. Additionally, an abandoned septic tank and associated leach field is located onsite. The Phase I document includes data for soil and soil gas sampling.

FIGURE IX-7

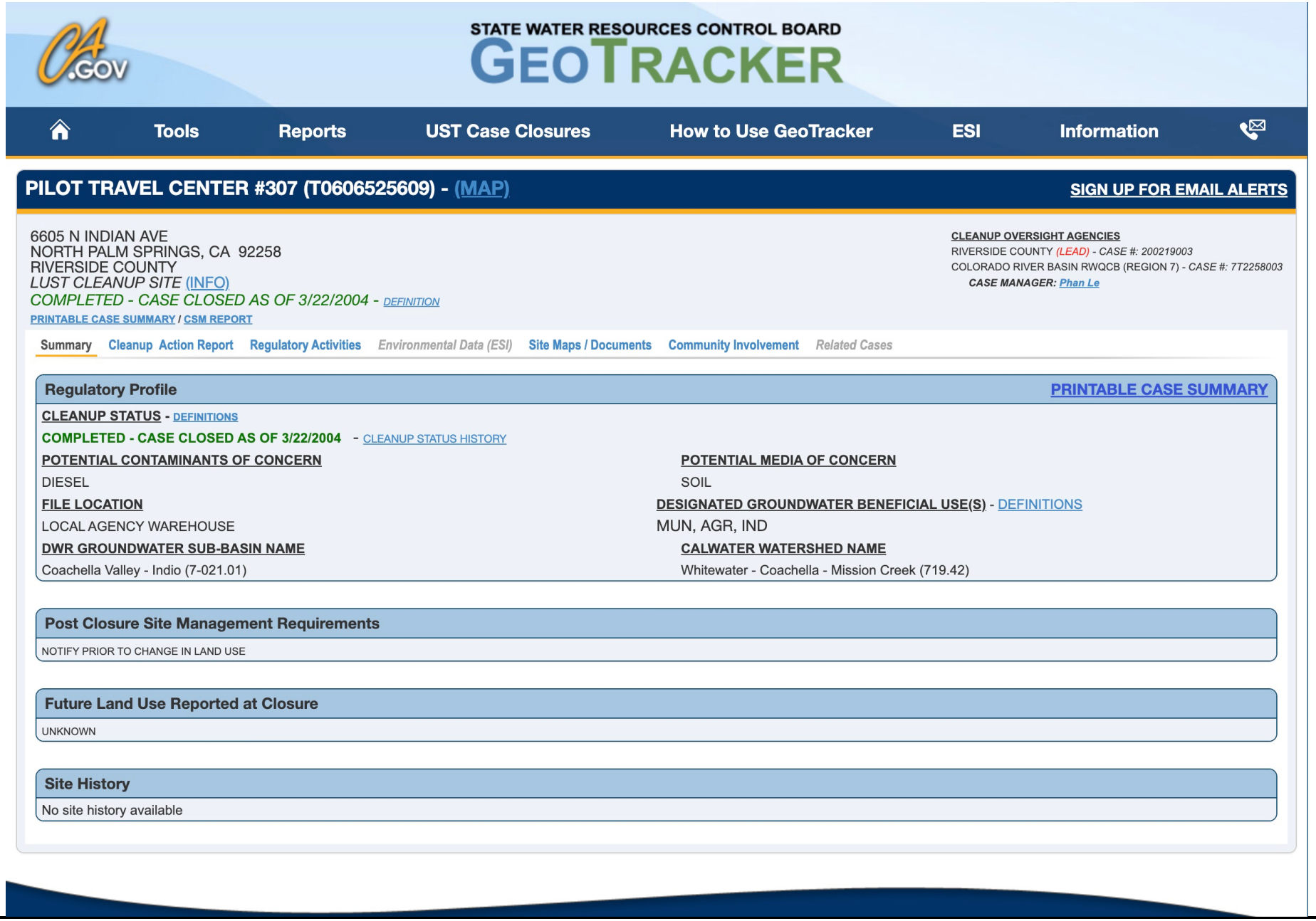
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
GEOTRACKER
Tools
Reports
UST Case Closures
How to Use GeoTracker
ESI
Information
PILOT TRAVEL CENTER #307 (T0606525609) - (MAP)
SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS
6605 N INDIAN AVE
NORTH PALM SPRINGS, CA 92258
RIVERSIDE COUNTY
LUST CLEANUP SITE (INFO)
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 3/22/2004 - DEFINITION
PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY / CSM REPORT
CLEANUP OVERSIGHT AGENCIES
RIVERSIDE COUNTY (LEAD) - CASE #: 200219003
COLORADO RIVER BASIN RWQCB (REGION 7) - CASE #: 7T2258003
CASE MANAGER: Phan Le
Summary
Cleanup Action Report
Regulatory Activities
Environmental Data (ESI)
Site Maps / Documents
Community Involvement
Related Cases
Regulatory Profile
PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY
CLEANUP STATUS - DEFINITIONS
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 3/22/2004 - CLEANUP STATUS HISTORY
POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN
DIESEL
POTENTIAL MEDIA OF CONCERN
SOIL
FILE LOCATION
LOCAL AGENCY WAREHOUSE
DESIGNATED GROUNDWATER BENEFICIAL USE(S) - DEFINITIONS
MUN, AGR, IND
DWR GROUNDWATER SUB-BASIN NAME
Coachella Valley - Indio (7-021.01)
CALWATER WATERSHED NAME
Whitewater - Coachella - Mission Creek (719.42)
Post Closure Site Management Requirements
NOTIFY PRIOR TO CHANGE IN LAND USE
Future Land Use Reported at Closure
UNKNOWN
Site History
No site history available

FIGURE IX-8

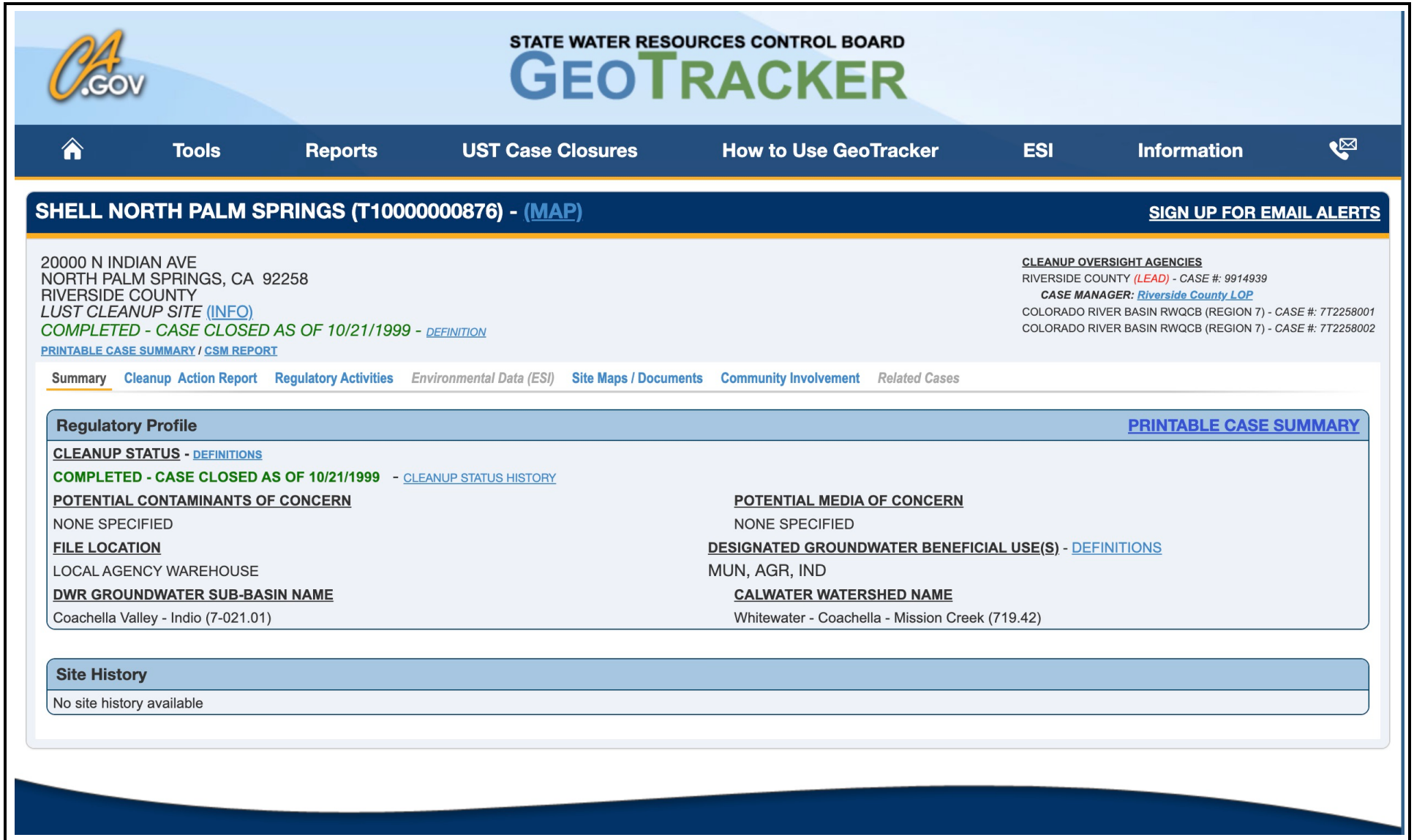
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
GEOTRACKER
Tools
Reports
UST Case Closures
How to Use GeoTracker
ESI
Information
SHELL NORTH PALM SPRINGS (T10000000876) - (MAP)
SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS
20000 N INDIAN AVE
NORTH PALM SPRINGS, CA 92258
RIVERSIDE COUNTY
LUST CLEANUP SITE (INFO)
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 10/21/1999 - DEFINITION
PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY / CSM REPORT
CLEANUP OVERSIGHT AGENCIES
RIVERSIDE COUNTY (LEAD) - CASE #: 9914939
CASE MANAGER: Riverside County LOP
COLORADO RIVER BASIN RWQCB (REGION 7) - CASE #: 7T2258001
COLORADO RIVER BASIN RWQCB (REGION 7) - CASE #: 7T2258002
Summary
Cleanup Action Report
Regulatory Activities
Environmental Data (ESI)
Site Maps / Documents
Community Involvement
Related Cases
Regulatory Profile
PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY
CLEANUP STATUS - DEFINITIONS
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 10/21/1999 - CLEANUP STATUS HISTORY
POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN
NONE SPECIFIED
POTENTIAL MEDIA OF CONCERN
NONE SPECIFIED
FILE LOCATION
LOCAL AGENCY WAREHOUSE
DESIGNATED GROUNDWATER BENEFICIAL USE(S) - DEFINITIONS
MUN, AGR, IND
DWR GROUNDWATER SUB-BASIN NAME
Coachella Valley - Indio (7-021.01)
CALWATER WATERSHED NAME
Whitewater - Coachella - Mission Creek (719.42)
Site History
No site history available

FIGURE IX-9

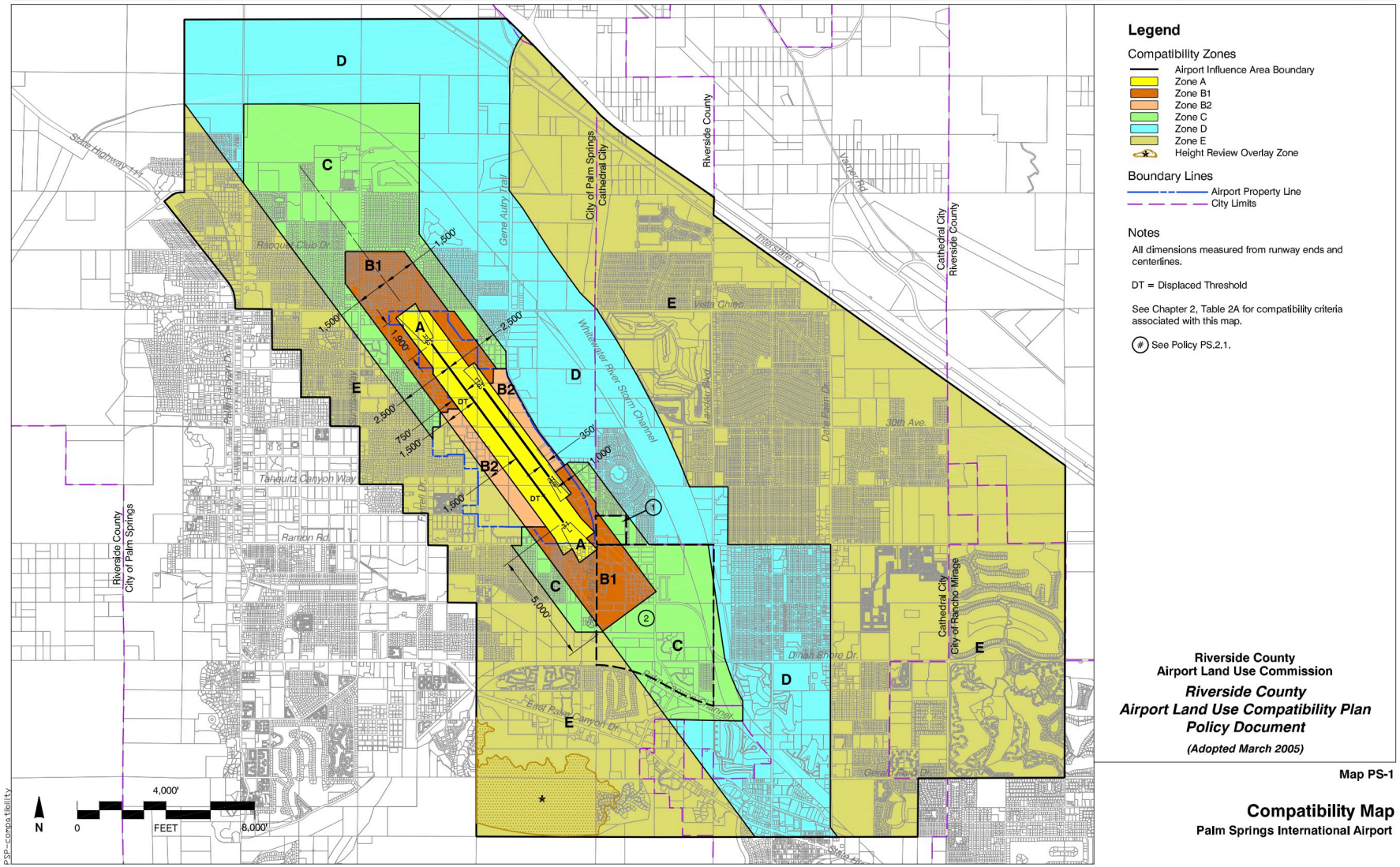

FIGURE IX-10

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Environmental Consultants

Palm Springs International Airport Compatibility Map

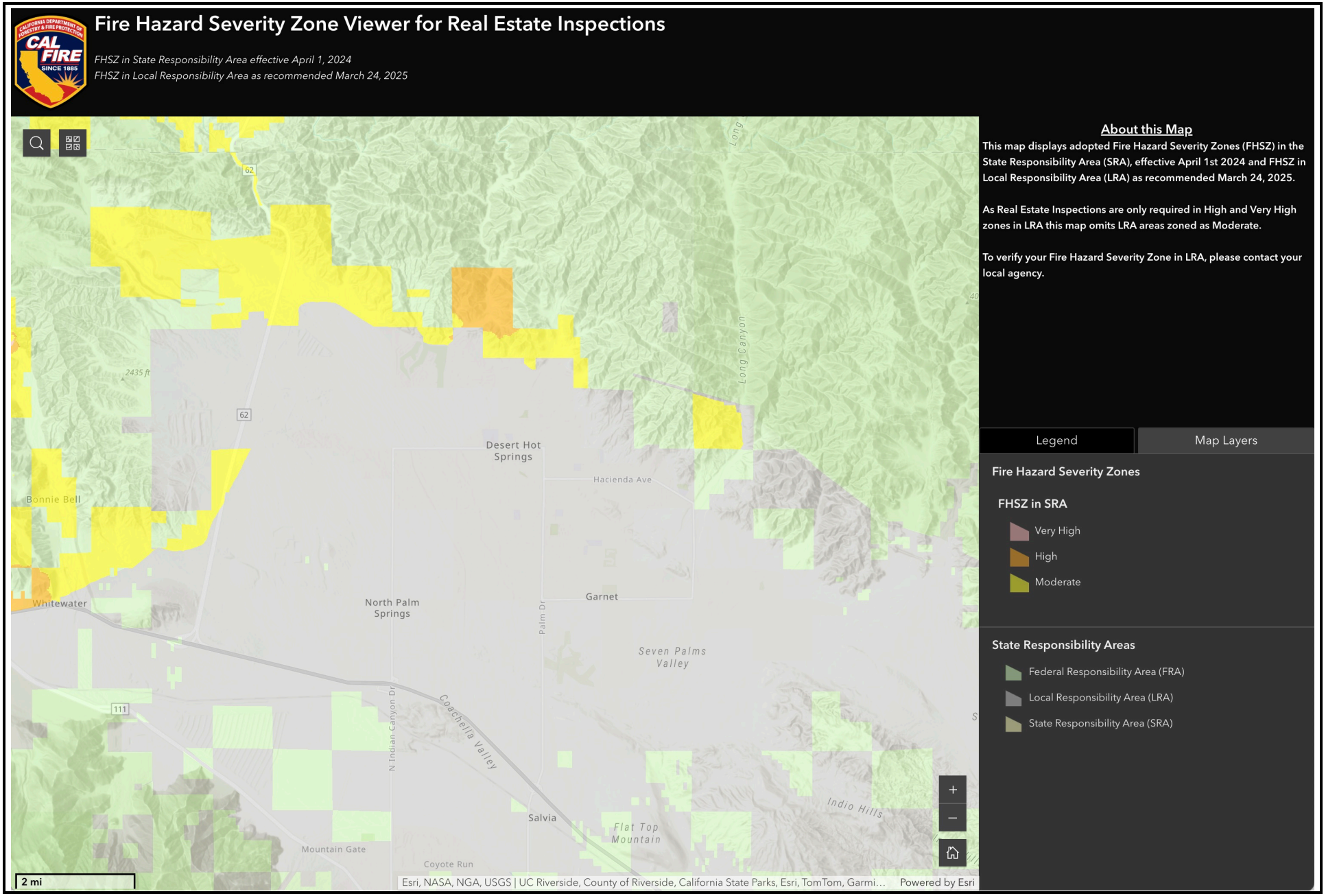


FIGURE IX-11

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer State Responsibility Areas

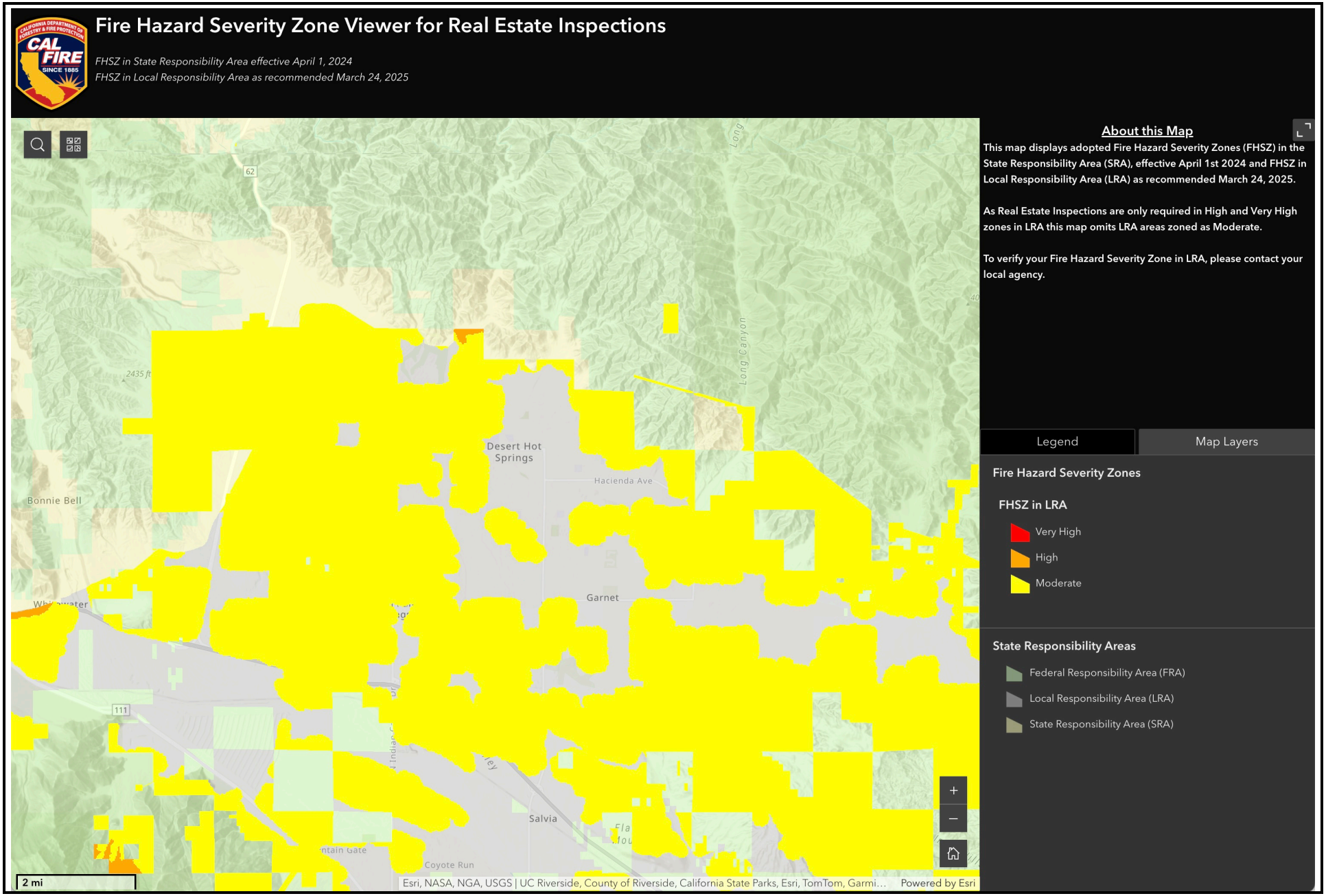


FIGURE IX-12

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer Local Responsibility Areas

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such 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 onsite or offsite?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer

pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. Three main sources of potential violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements are as follows: from generation of municipal wastewater; from stormwater runoff; and potential discharges of pollutants, such as accidental spills.

Construction of proposed project would require the use of heavy equipment and construction-related chemicals, such as fuels, oils, grease, solvents and paints that would be stored in limited quantities onsite. In the absence of proper controls, these construction activities could result in accidental spills or disposal of potentially harmful materials used during construction that could wash into and pollute surface waters or groundwater. Materials that could potentially contaminate the construction area from a spill or leak include diesel fuel, gasoline, lubrication oil, hydraulic fluid, antifreeze, transmission fluid, lubricating grease, and other fluids.

Because the proposed project would be implemented incrementally over time, there would not be a single construction discharge permitting process. Instead, as construction of each proposed Area identified in the Project Description is initiated, individual construction discharge permits would be acquired by MSWD. Where the anticipated total disturbance for a given Area undertaking would be greater than one acre, MSWD would be required to acquire coverage under the statewide Construction General Permit (CGP). By complying with the CGP and preparing and implementing a SWPPP. Without the coverage of the CGP and SWPPP, which is intended to protect surface water quality during construction, a significant impact could occur. However, compliance with the CGP is a mandatory requirement, and therefore, compliance thereof would be required as part of implementation of individual portions (areas) of the project in future. The SWPPP would include BMPs to control erosion, sedimentation, and hazardous materials release from construction sites into surface waters. Compliance with the SWPPP BMPs and other conditions of the CGP and SWPPP would ensure impacts to water quality are less than significant for development of portions of the project undertaken as a singular activity that are greater than one acre in size.

If anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Instead, installation of portions of the project undertaken as a singular activity would be required to comply with minimum BMPs as specified by the Riverside County MS4 Permit, which would implement BMPs to provide erosion control, sediment control, and waste management strategies for construction sites. Without implementation of these BMPs, which would protect surface water quality during construction, a significant impact could occur. However, compliance with the Riverside County MS4 Permit is mandatory, and therefore, compliance thereof would be required as part of implementation of future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella. Adherence to these conditions would ensure that potential water quality degradation associated with construction activities on sites less than one acre would be minimized to less than significant levels. Through compliance with the Riverside County MS4 Permit for projects under one acre during construction, impacts would be less than significant.

While the majority of the impacts to surface water quality can be minimized through compliance with mandatory regulations, it is imperative that such regulations are reinforced through the implementation of specific mitigation measures designed to ensure that full compliance with these regulations is achieved by each future proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, thereby avoiding violations to surface water quality standards. Therefore, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented to prevent any violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge

requirements or otherwise substantially degrading surface or groundwater quality.

HYD-1 Prior to the commencement of construction of any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella that will disturb less than one acre (i.e., that is not subject to the California Construction Stormwater General Permit), the Implementing Agency shall require implementation of and construction contractor(s) shall select best management practices (BMPs) to achieve a reduction in pollutants from stormwater discharge to the maximum extent practicable during construction, and to control urban runoff after each individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella is in operation. Examples of BMP(s) that would achieve a reduction in pollutants include, but are not limited to:

- *The use of silt fences or coir rolls;*
- *The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;*
- *The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;*
- *The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;*
- *The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;*
- *The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and*
- *Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.*

MM HYD-1 would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects. This mitigation measure would further ensure that no water quality standards are violated through targeted stormwater pollution control.

Once constructed, the pipelines would operate belowground, and would have no potential to violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Therefore, with no anticipated operational impacts or substantial change in the environment from implementation of the proposed project, implementation of these mandatory Plans and their BMPs, as well as **MM HYD-1** above, will prevent a violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project would be installed within the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin (**Figure X-1**). The project does not propose the installation of any water wells that would directly extract groundwater. The project would recompact or repave the roadways and pipeline alignments proposed for pipeline installation. Further, septic abatement would be carried out and would not result in greater impervious area than that which exists at present. Construction would require up to 5,000 gallons of potable water each day for a maximum of about 6,469 working days, which equates to the installation of the project requiring up to 3,234,500 gallons of water per year (9.9-acre feet per year) during construction. This amount is considered nominal when compared to the availability of supply from the project proponent, MSWD based on a review of the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Once the sewer pipelines and laterals have been installed, and once the septic systems have been abated, it is not anticipated that the project would substantially interfere with groundwater recharge as the aboveground surfaces

will be returned to their original condition. As the aboveground drainage patterns and impervious areas would be maintained, and as the project does not propose to extract groundwater from the underlying groundwater basin, it is not anticipated that the project would decrease groundwater supplies. Further, the purpose of the proposed project is to protect groundwater quality from degradation by discharges from septic tank leach-fields. Thus, the project's purpose would result in furtherance of continued sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. Therefore, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

c.

(i). *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed installation of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement could alter the existing drainage patterns of the aboveground drainage patterns. Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed as the ground surfaces will be returned to their original or better condition and no operational impact would occur. However, the sewer pipeline and lateral alignments may traverse through compacted dirt easements and ROW, and the septic abatement would occur within residential property that may or may not be covered with landscaping, which may pose a greater potential to significantly alter the drainage pattern of the project footprint. The construction of proposed sewer pipeline and lateral alignments would require activities such as pavement breaking, trenching, drilling, excavation and demolition, which would temporarily alter each site's existing ground surface and drainage patterns. For projects that are greater than one acre in size, compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or the Riverside County MS4 Permit (WQMP), where applicable, would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. Through compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites greater than one acre in size, potential onsite and offsite erosion would be reduced and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.

For future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, if anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Mitigation (**MM HYD-1**) is necessary to enforce BMPs is provided below to minimize potentially significant impacts at sites that are less than an acre and are therefore not subject to the CGP or SWPPP. **MM HYD-1** would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact under this issue. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of mitigation, BMPs and compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, potential onsite and offsite erosion would be reduced and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.

Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed, as the aboveground area will be returned to

their original or better condition, which would minimize the potential for substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite. Operational impacts would be less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

c

(ii). *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed installation of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement could alter the existing aboveground drainage patterns. Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed as the ground surfaces will be returned to their original or better condition and no operational impact would occur. However, the sewer pipeline and lateral alignments may traverse through compacted dirt easements and ROW, and the septic abatement would occur within residential property that may or may not be covered with landscaping, which may pose a greater potential to significantly alter the drainage pattern of the project footprint. The construction of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require activities such as pavement breaking, ditching, drilling, excavation and demolition, which would temporarily alter each site's existing ground surface and drainage patterns. For projects that are greater than one acre in size, compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or Riverside County MS4 Permits (WQMP), where applicable, would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. Through compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites greater than one acre in size, potential on- or off-site flooding would be minimized to a less than significant level.

For future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, if anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Mitigation (**MM HYD-1**) is necessary to enforce BMPs is provided below to minimize potentially significant impacts at sites that are less than an acre and are therefore not subject to the CGP or SWPPP. **MM HYD-1** would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact under this issue. This measure would control urban runoff and thereby reduce potential on- and off-site flooding. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of mitigation and BMPs, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, and retention of runoff on site where feasible, the potential for on- or off-site flooding would be reduced to less than significant levels and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed, as the aboveground area will be returned to their original or better condition, which would minimize the potential for flooding on- or off-site. Operational impacts would be less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

c

(iii). *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed installation of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement could alter the existing aboveground drainage patterns. Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed as the ground surface will be returned to their

original or better condition and no operational impact would occur. However, the sewer pipeline and lateral alignments may traverse through compacted dirt easements and ROW, and the septic abatement would occur within residential property that may or may not be covered with landscaping, which may pose a greater potential to significantly alter the drainage pattern of the project footprint. The construction of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require activities such as pavement breaking, trenching, drilling, excavation and demolition, which would temporarily alter each site's existing ground surface and drainage patterns. For projects that are greater than one acre in size, compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or Riverside County MS4 Permits (WQMP), where applicable, would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. Through compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites that are greater than one acre in size, potential increase in the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff would be reduced and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.

For future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, if anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Mitigation (**MM HYD-1**) is necessary to enforce BMPs is provided below to minimize potentially significant impacts at sites that are less than an acre and are therefore not subject to the CGP or SWPPP. **MM HYD-1** would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact under this issue. This measure would control urban runoff and thereby reduce potential on- and off-site flooding. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of mitigation and BMPs, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, and retention of runoff on site where feasible, the potential to 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 would be reduced to less than significant levels and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant through the implementation of mitigation.

Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed as the aboveground surfaces will be returned to their original or better condition, which would minimize the potential to 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. Operational impacts would be less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

c

(iv). *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – According to the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Flood Hazard Map (**Figure X-2**), the proposed project traverses through various portions of the City that contain flood hazards. The majority of the project area is located within Zone X (areas of 0.2% annual change flood (500-year flood and areas of 1% annual chance flood

with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual flood chance), with only limited areas that are not located within flood hazard zones (portions of Area I-10 and portions of area D-3). Further, there are also limited areas within the project footprint that are located within Zone A (Area A, Area I-10), and Zone AO (Area A, Area G, and Area K), which are within the 1% annual flood (100-year flood). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) Panels for the project footprint include 06065C0885G, 06065C0905G, and 06065C0895G are shown on **Figures X-3 through X-5**, and demonstrate further details on these flood zones. The construction activities associated with subsurface facilities, such as pipelines, could temporarily impact flows and would require coordination with Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and other applicable regulatory agencies before implementation if proposed facilities cross or are installed within jurisdictional waters or adjacent to flood control channels and easements. However, all other impacts would be the same as those discussed under questions c(i), c(ii), and c(iii).

The construction of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require activities such as pavement breaking, ditching, drilling, excavation and demolition, which would temporarily alter each site's existing ground surface and drainage patterns. For projects that are greater than one acre in size, compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or Riverside County MS4 Permits (WQMP), where applicable, would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. Through compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites that are greater than one acre in size, the potential for exceeding the capacity of local stormwater drainage systems and thereby impeding or redirecting flows would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.

For future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, if anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Mitigation (**MM HYD-1**) is necessary to enforce BMPs is provided below to minimize potentially significant impacts at sites that are less than an acre and are therefore not subject to the CGP or SWPPP. **MM HYD-1** would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact under this issue. This measure would control urban runoff and thereby reduce potential on- and off-site flooding. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of mitigation and BMPs, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, and retention of runoff on site where feasible, the potential to impede or redirect flood flows would be reduced to less than significant levels and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

Development of sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would result in minimal changes in the aboveground drainage pattern once installed as the aboveground surfaces will be returned to their original or better condition, which would minimize the potential to create or contribute runoff water which would minimize the potential to impede or redirect flood flows. Operational impacts

would be less than significant.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As stated above under issue X(c[iv]), the proposed project is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs, City of Palm Springs, and Unincorporated Riverside County. As shown on the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan Flood Hazard Map (**Figure X-2**), the proposed project traverses through various portions of the City that contain flood hazards. The majority of the project area is located within Zone X (areas of 0.2% annual change flood (500-year flood and areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual flood chance), with only limited areas that are not located within flood hazard zones (portions of Area I-10 and portions of area D-3). Further, there are also limited areas within the project footprint that are located within Zone A (Area A, Area I-10), and Zone AO (Area A, Area G, and Area K), which are within the 1% annual flood (100-year flood). The FEMA FIRM Panels for the project footprint include 06065C0885G, 06065C0905G, and 06065C0895G are shown on **Figures X-3 through X-5**, and demonstrate further details on these flood zones. The project site is not located near any large bodies of water, so impacts associated with seiche or tsunami cannot occur.

Compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or Riverside County MS4 Permits (WQMP), where applicable, would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets, thereby minimizing the risk of release of pollutants due to flooding for projects undertaken that are larger than 1 acre in site. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

For future individual projects under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella, if anticipated disturbance is less than one acre, the CGP would not apply to construction. Mitigation (**MM HYD-1**) is necessary to enforce BMPs is provided below to minimize potentially significant impacts at sites that are less than an acre and are therefore not subject to the CGP or SWPPP. **MM HYD-1** would require implementation of BMPs for projects of less than one acre in size that would be comparable to the requirements of the CGP and SWPPP, which are required for larger projects, thereby avoiding a potentially significant impact under this issue. This measure would control urban runoff and thereby reduce potential on- and off-site flooding. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from construction sites and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of mitigation and BMPs, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, and retention of runoff on site where feasible, the potential to risk of release of pollutants during construction due to flooding on or offsite is less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

The sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would remain located belowground once installed; underground pipelines within floodplains are common and are often constructed further underground to avoid future negative impacts in the event of flood or inundation events. No housing or structures are proposed as part of this sewer pipeline and lateral installation and septic abatement project. Therefore, given that pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would not generally be susceptible to significant adverse effects associated with flooding, and though damage to these facilities can occur, a pipeline/lateral can be repaired and placed back into operation with no loss of human life. Additionally, once constructed, the roadways, easements, and access roads within which

the pipeline will be installed will be returned to their original condition, as will the surface aboveground the abated septic systems, and therefore, the project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation from flooding or seiche during operation. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located within the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. The Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins have been designated as medium-priority, and the Desert Hot Springs Subbasin has been designated as very low-priority, by the DWR.[6] The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) "requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline."[7] The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) has been designated an "exclusive" Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) over its service area by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in the Indio Subbasin. Desert Water Agency (DWA), Coachella Water Authority (CWA), and Indio Water Authority (IWA), were also designated GSAs in the Indio Subbasin over their respective service areas. The four agencies are working collaboratively to implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in the Indio Subbasin. The Indio Subbasin GSAs prepared the 2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan Update (2022 Alternative Plan Update). The GSAs adopted the 2022 Alternative Plan Update following a public hearing on December 7, 2021 and submitted it to DWR on December 29, 2021.

Further, the Desert Hot Springs Subbasin is considered very low priority, and as a result, no conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan is anticipated for activities within this Subbasin.

The three water agencies located within the Mission Creek Subbasin have formed the Management Committee. CVWD and DWA are each exclusive GSAs that oversee and manage portions of the Mission Creek Subbasin that overlay each of their respective service areas. These agencies coordinate with MSWD, a managing partner, to develop the Mission Creek Subbasin Alternative Plan Update.[8] The Alternative Plan was approved by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) on July 17, 2019. With this approval, DWR made several recommendations for new information and a requirement that the first Alternative Plan Update be prepared by January 1, 2022. The mission statement of the Alternative Plan is: *"The purpose of the Mission Creek and Garnet Hill Water Management Plan is to manage the water resources to meet demands reliably and protect water quality in a sustainable and cost-effective manner."* As the project proponent (MSWD) is a managing partner of the Mission Creek Subbasin Alternative Plan and subsequent updates thereof, and as the proposed project would not demand substantial water resources once operational, nor water resources during construction beyond the District's supply and demand into the future, it is

[6] CVWD, 2025. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. https://www.cvwd.org/357/Sustainable-Groundwater-Management-Act (Accessed 12/15/25)
[7] California Department of Water Resources, 2025. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma/about_sgma.html (Accessed 12/15/25)
[8] Mission Creek Subbasin SGMA, 2025. Management Committee. http://www.missioncreeksubbasinsgma.org/#Management-Committee (Accessed 12/15/25)

not anticipated that the project would obstruct groundwater recharge efforts within or surrounding the project area, no conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan is anticipated.

Given that the project would not require a connection to MSWD water supply beyond the use of water for dust control during construction, and as state above, given that the project would not require water resources during construction beyond the District's supply and demand into the future, and that the project would not obstruct groundwater recharge efforts within or surrounding the project area, no conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan is anticipated. Further, the purpose of the proposed project is to protect groundwater quality from degradation by discharges from septic tank leach-fields. Thus, the project's purpose would result in furtherance of continued sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Thus, it is anticipated that the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

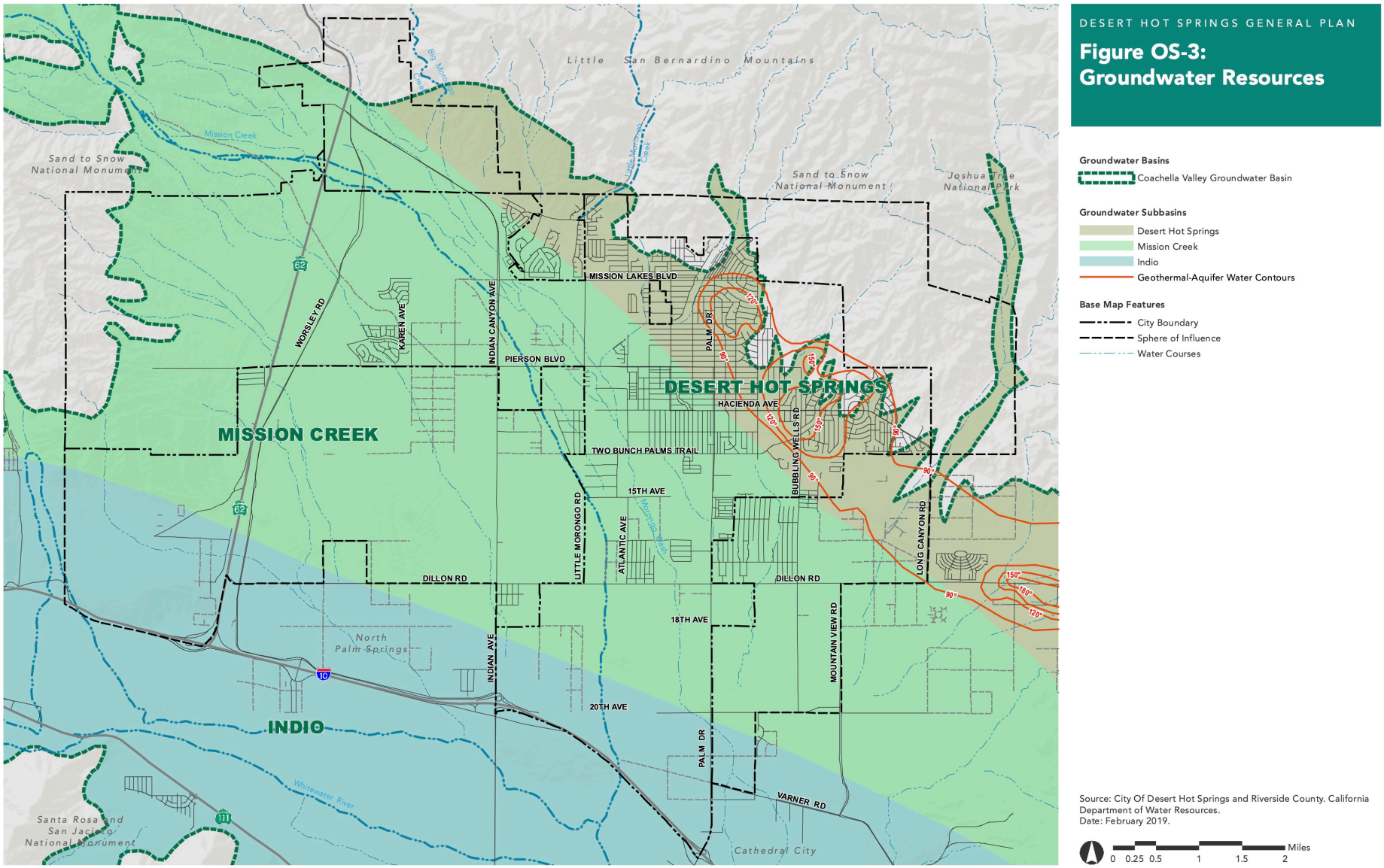


FIGURE X-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Groundwater Resources Map

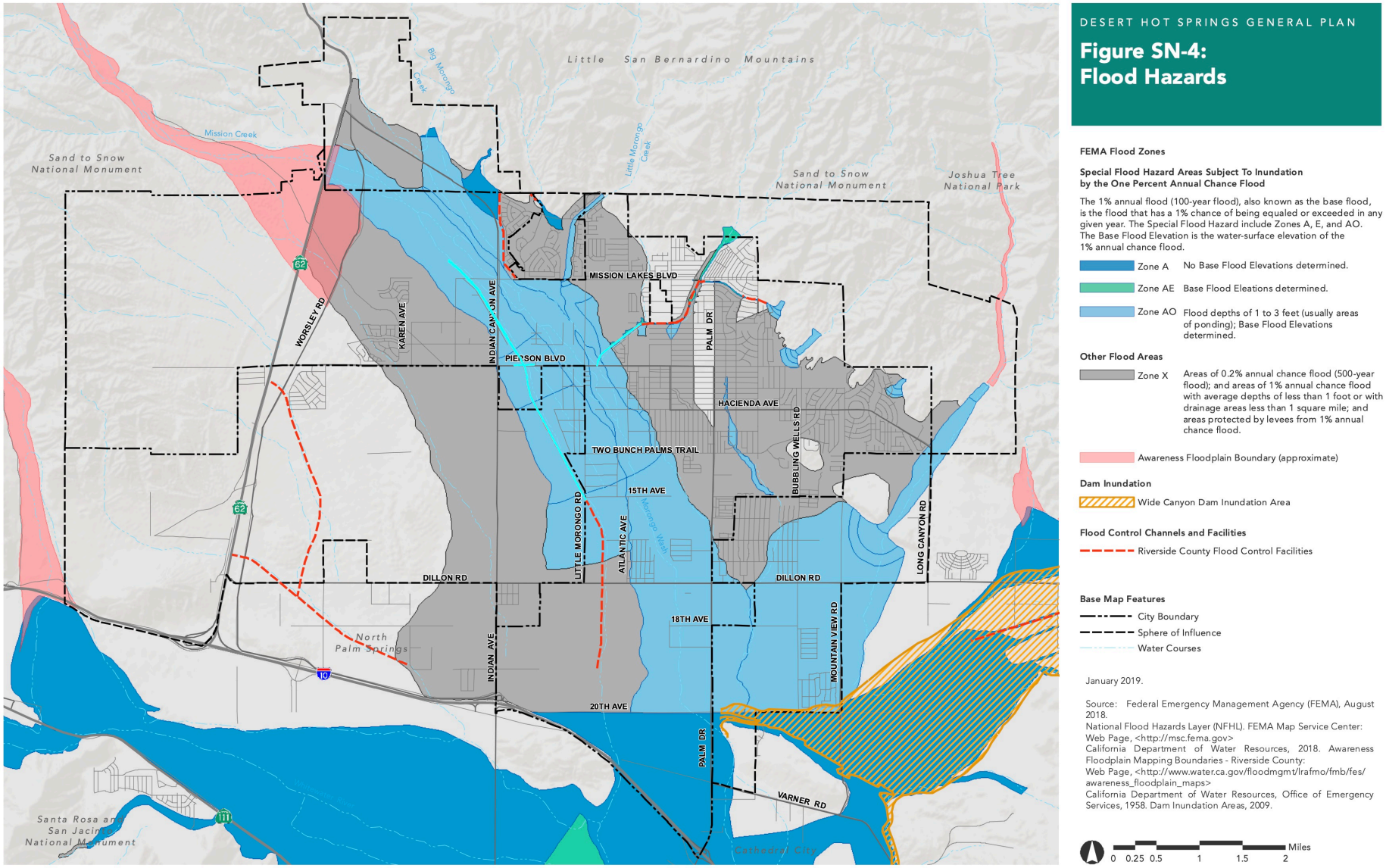


FIGURE X-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Flood Hazards Map

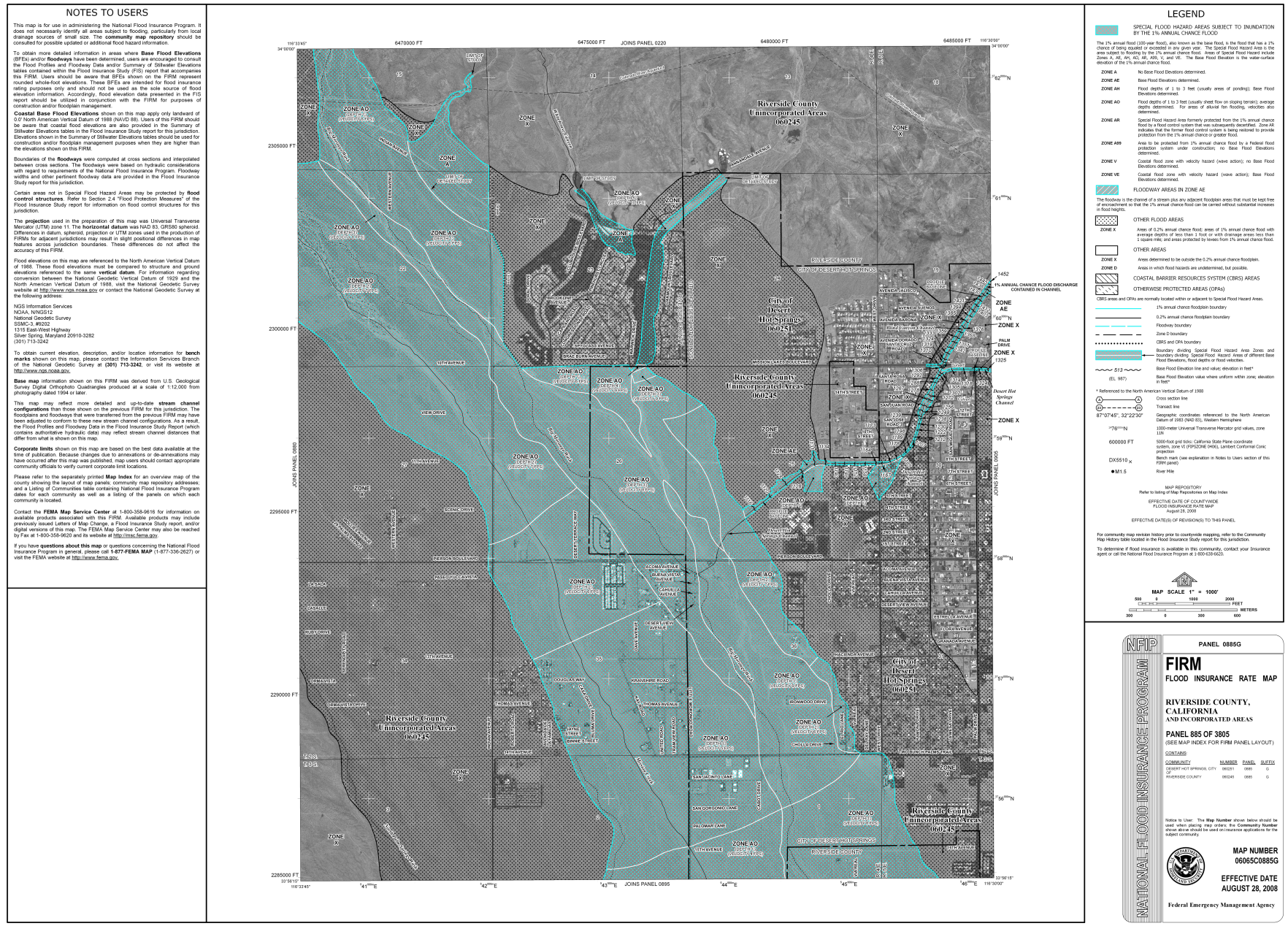


FIGURE X-3

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Areas A and D-3

NOTES TO USERS

This map is for use in administering the National Flood Insurance Program. It does not necessarily identify all areas subject to flooding, particularly from local drainage sources of small size. The **community map repository** should be consulted for possible updated or additional flood hazard information.

To obtain more detailed information in areas where **Base Flood Elevations** (BFEs) and/or **floodways** have been determined, users are encouraged to consult the Flood Profiles and Floodway Data and/or Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables contained within the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report that accompanies this FIRM. Users should be aware that BFEs shown on the FIRM represent rounded whole-foot elevations. These BFEs are intended for flood insurance rating purposes only and should not be used as the sole source of flood elevation information. Accordingly, flood elevation data presented in the FIS report should be utilized in conjunction with the FIRM for purposes of construction and/or floodplain management.

Coastal Base Flood Elevations shown on this map apply only landward of 0.0' North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88). Users of this FIRM should be aware that coastal flood elevations are also provided in the Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction. Elevations shown in the Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables should be used for construction and/or floodplain management purposes when they are higher than the elevations shown on this FIRM.

Boundaries of the **floodways** were computed at cross sections and interpolated between cross sections. The floodways were based on hydraulic considerations with regard to requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. Floodway widths and other pertinent floodway data are provided in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction.

Certain areas not in Special Flood Hazard Areas may be protected by **flood control structures**. Refer to Section 2.4 "Flood Protection Measures" of the Flood Insurance Study report for information on flood control structures for this jurisdiction.

The **projection** used in the preparation of this map was Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) zone 11. The **horizontal datum** was NAD 83, GRS80 spheroid. Differences in datum, spheroid, projection or UTM zones used in the production of FIRMs for adjacent jurisdictions may result in slight positional differences in map features across jurisdiction boundaries. These differences do not affect the accuracy of this FIRM.

Flood elevations on this map are referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988. These flood elevations must be compared to structure and ground elevations referenced to the same **vertical datum**. For information regarding conversion between the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 and the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, visit the National Geodetic Survey website at http://www.ngs.noaa.gov or contact the National Geodetic Survey at the following address:

NGS Information Services
NOAA, N/NGS12
National Geodetic Survey
SSMC-3, #9202
13115 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282
(301) 713-3242

To obtain current elevation, description, and/or location information for **bench marks** shown on this map, please contact the Information Services Branch of the National Geodetic Survey at **(301) 713-3242**, or visit its website at http://www.ngs.noaa.gov.

Base map information shown on this FIRM was derived from U.S. Geological Survey Digital Orthophoto Quadrangles produced at a scale of 1:12,000 from photography dated 1994 or later.

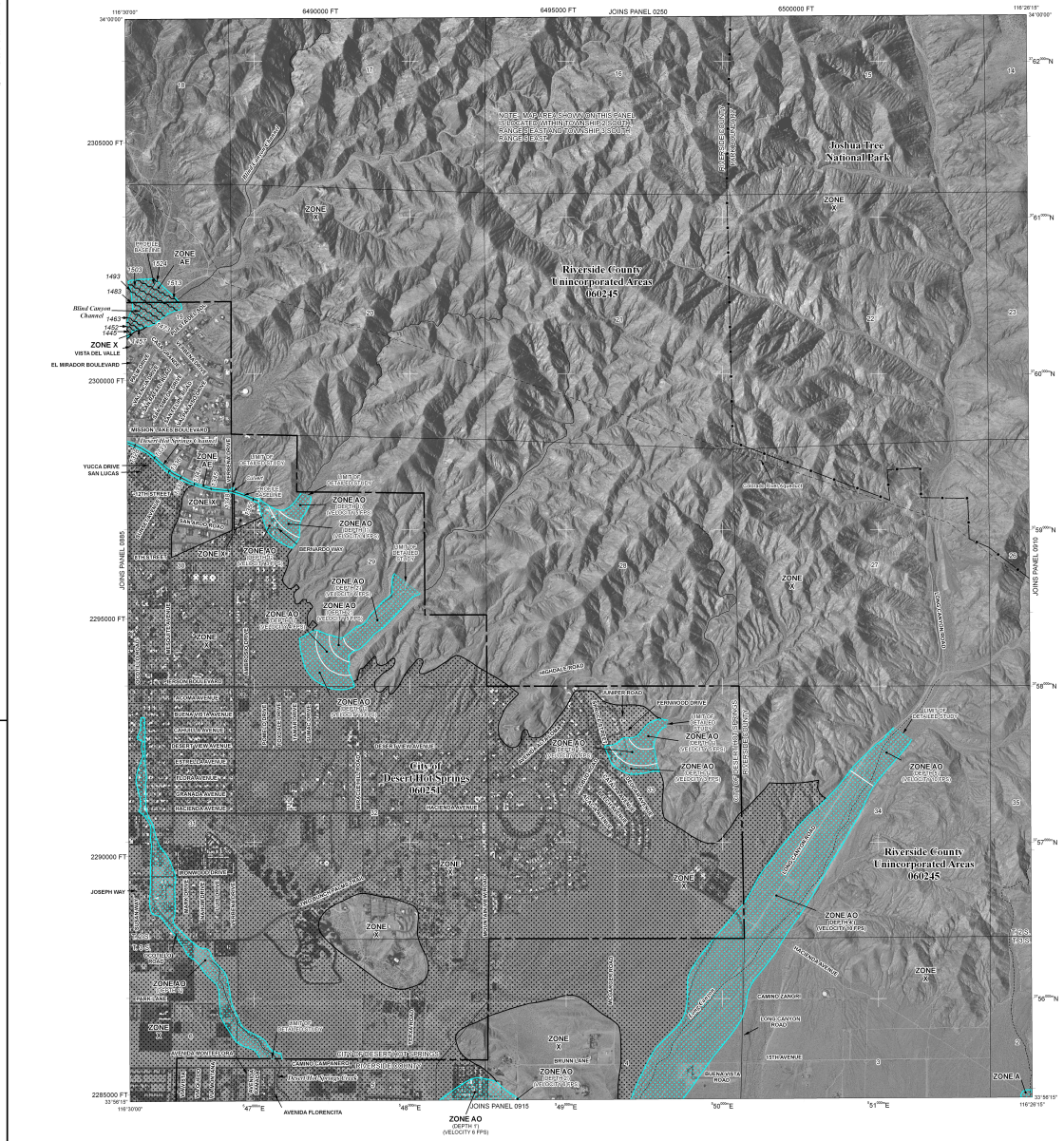
This map may reflect more detailed and up-to-date **stream channel configurations** than those shown on the previous FIRM for this jurisdiction. The floodplains and floodways that were transferred from the previous FIRM may have been adjusted to conform to these new stream channel configurations. As a result, the Flood Profiles and Floodway Data in the Flood Insurance Study Report (which contains authoritative hydraulic data) may reflect stream channel distances that differ from what is shown on this map.

Corporate limits shown on this map are based on the best data available at the time of publication. Because changes due to annexations or de-annexations may have occurred after this map was published, map users should contact appropriate community officials to verify current corporate limit locations.

Please refer to the separately printed **Map Index** for an overview map of the county showing the layout of map panels; community map repository addresses; and a Listing of Communities table containing National Flood Insurance Program dates for each community as well as a listing of the panels on which each community is located.

Contact the **FEMA Map Service Center** at 1-800-358-9616 for information on available products associated with this FIRM. Available products may include previously issued Letters of Map Change, a Flood Insurance Study report, and/or digital versions of this map. The FEMA Map Service Center may also be reached by Fax at 1-800-358-9620 and its website at http://msc.fema.gov.

If you have **questions about this map** or questions concerning the National Flood Insurance Program in general, please call **1-877-FEMA MAP** (1-877-336-2627) or visit the FEMA website at http://www.fema.gov.



LEGEND

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD

The 1% annual flood (100-year flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The Special Flood Hazard Area is the area subject to flooding by the 1% annual chance flood. Areas of Special Flood Hazard include Zones A, AE, AH, AO, AR, AR/A, AR/AE, AR/AH, AR/AO, A99, V, and VE. The Base Flood Elevation is the water-surface elevation of the 1% annual chance flood.

- **ZONE A** — No Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AE** — Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AH** — Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually areas of ponding); Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AO** — Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain); average depths determined. For areas of alluvial fan flooding, velocities also determined.
- **ZONE AR** — Special Flood Hazard Area formerly protected from the 1% annual chance flood by a flood control system that was subsequently decertified. Zone AR indicates that the former flood control system is being restored to provide protection from the 1% annual chance or greater flood.
- **ZONE A99** — Area to be protected from 1% annual chance flood by a Federal flood protection system under construction; no Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE V** — Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); no Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE VE** — Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); Base Flood Elevations determined.

FLOODWAY AREAS IN ZONE AE

The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights.

OTHER FLOOD AREAS

- **ZONE X** — Areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood.

OTHER AREAS

- **ZONE X** — Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.
- **ZONE D** — Areas in which flood hazards are undetermined, but possible.

COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES SYSTEM (CBRS) AREAS

OTHERWISE PROTECTED AREAS (OPAs)

CBRS areas and OPAs are normally located within or adjacent to Special Flood Hazard Areas.

- 1% annual chance floodplain boundary
- 0.2% annual chance floodplain boundary
- Floodway boundary
- Zone D boundary
- CBRS and OPA boundary
- Boundary dividing Special Flood Hazard Area Zones and boundary dividing Special Flood Hazard Areas of different Base Flood Elevations, flood depths or flood velocities.
- 513 — Base Flood Elevation line and value; elevation in feet*
- (EL 987) — Base Flood Elevation value where uniform within zone; elevation in feet*

* Referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988

- A — A — Cross section line
- 23 — 23 — Transect line
- 87°07'45", 32°22'30" — Geographic coordinates referenced to the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83), Western Hemisphere
- 3776000 FT N — 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid values, zone 11N
- 600000 FT — 5000-foot grid ticks: California State Plane coordinate system, zone VI (FIPSZONE 0406), Lambert Conformal Conic projection
- DX5510 — Bench mark (see explanation in Notes to Users section of this FIRM panel)
- M1.5 — River Mile

MAP REPOSITORY
Refer to listing of Map Repositories on Map Index

EFFECTIVE DATE OF COUNTYWIDE FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP
August 28, 2008

EFFECTIVE DATE(S) OF REVISION(S) TO THIS PANEL

For community map revision history prior to countywide mapping, refer to the Community Map History table located in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction.

To determine if flood insurance is available in this community, contact your Insurance agent or call the National Flood Insurance Program at 1-800-638-6620.

MAP SCALE 1" = 1000'
500 0 1000 2000 FEET
300 0 300 600 METERS

NFIP
NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

PANEL 0905G

FIRM
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA AND INCORPORATED AREAS

PANEL 905 OF 3805
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT)

CONTAINS:

COMMUNITY	NUMBER	PANEL	SUFFIX
DESERT HOT SPRINGS, CITY OF	060251	0905	G
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	060245	0905	G

Notice to User: The **Map Number** shown below should be used when placing map orders; the **Community Number** shown above should be used on insurance applications for the subject community.

MAP NUMBER 06065C0905G

EFFECTIVE DATE AUGUST 28, 2008

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIGURE X-4

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Areas H, I, J-2, K



FIGURE X-5

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

FEMA Flood Hazard Map Covering Area I-10

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING: 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *No Impact* – MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. The project footprint occurs mostly within roadways, which have no General Plan Land Use Designation because roadways are considered essential infrastructure. However, the proposed project includes septic abatement within properties that would be connected to MSWD's municipal sewer service as a result of the proposed project. This would occur at existing septic tanks, and would have no bearing on project land use.

As construction would only occur for a short duration, it would not result in a permanent change to the environment beyond that which is discussed below as a result of operation of the proposed facilities. Furthermore, construction activities are routine within suburban/urban areas, and the presence of construction would not physically divide an established community, particularly given that access to any community within which the sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement would occur would be maintained for the duration of construction. Thus, construction activities associated with implementation of the proposed project would not physically divide an established community. No impacts are anticipated.

Once in operation, the pipelines and laterals and abated septic systems would be located belowground, and therefore, would have no potential to physically divide an established community, as the surfaces aboveground would be returned to their original conditions. As such, the proposed project would have no potential to divide the community within which the easement would be installed. This is because the whole of the project would operate belowground. Thus, there are no features of the proposed project that would create a barrier or physically divide an established community. No impacts are anticipated.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under issue X(a) above. The proposed project would occur over the various GQPP Sub Areas located throughout the City of Desert Hot

Springs, City of Palm Springs, and Unincorporated Riverside County, overlapping within an area of about 2,000 acres. As a result, the mix of land uses that occur within the project area includes nearly all of the land uses that could be found within the City of Desert Hot Springs; and further, within the City of Palm Springs, the land use is generally Industrial (IND) in nature, with some areas designated for Open Space Desert (OS-D), and a small area designated for Medium Density Residential (MDR). Within Unincorporated Riverside County, the predominant land uses are Medium Density Residential, Commercial Retail, Open Space Recreation, Conservation, and Medium High Density Residential. Within all "lettered" Sub Areas, the predominant land uses are residential in nature.

The three General Plans that pertain to the area within which the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project is located support the provision of adequate infrastructure to support the communities, including expanding access to municipal sewer collection services, such as that which is proposed by this project. Construction of these facilities is necessary to operate said infrastructure to support MSWD's service area. Furthermore, construction is temporary in nature, and as such, the presence of construction equipment and workers supporting construction would not result in any permanent impacts beyond those that are discussed below under operation. Therefore, construction of the facilities proposed by this project would have no potential to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. No impacts are anticipated.

The project footprint occurs mostly within roadways, which have no General Plan Land Use Designation because roadways are considered essential infrastructure. However, the proposed project includes septic abatement within properties that would be connected to MSWD's municipal sewer service as a result of the proposed project. This would occur at existing septic tanks, and would have no bearing on project land use. As stated above, the City of Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs, and Riverside County each have adopted General Plans that support the provision of adequate infrastructure, and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) Connect SoCal also promotes this goal. In addition, MSWD would coordinate directly with local and regional agencies with jurisdiction to ensure compatibility with existing adjacent land uses and consistency with adopted plans. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to 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. As the sewer pipelines, laterals, and abated septic systems would be located belowground, it is not anticipated that any land use conflicts would occur. Impacts would be less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES: 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *No Impact* – The proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs, Unincorporated Riverside, and City of Palm Springs. The project footprint occurs mostly within roadways; however, the proposed project includes septic abatement within properties that would be connected to MSWD's municipal sewer service as a result of the proposed project. This would occur at existing septic tanks, and would occur within existing occupied land uses. According to the Mineral Resources map prepared for the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan (**Figure XII-1**), the only area that overlaps with a designated mineral resource zone (MRZ) occurs within Area A. Within Area A, MRZ-2a occurs in the northerly portion of this area, and MRZ-2a indicates areas where available geologic data indicates that significant measured or indicated mineral resources are present.

Construction of the project, and the facilities proposed therein, will not cause the loss of a known mineral resource of value to the region or residents of the state or the loss of access to locally important mineral resource recovery sites. This is because construction would not conflict with existing mining, or preclude the areas containing mineral resources (within Area A, as described above) to be utilized for future mineral resource extraction, the installation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement has minimal potential to have a direct adverse impact on mineral resources. As such, construction of the proposed project facilities will not have a significant adverse potential to 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. No impacts are anticipated.

Similarly, operation of the pipelines and laterals will not cause the loss of a known mineral resource of value to the region or residents of the state or the loss of access to locally important mineral resource recovery sites. This is because no mining development has been proposed to date within the parcels within which the septic abatement is proposed, and further, the remainder of the project activities would occur within roadway or other ROW in already developed areas. The project does not propose a use that would preclude future mining activities or be anticipated to be within a site that would be suitable for future mining activities as a result of existing uses of the project footprint. Therefore, the operation of the proposed project has minimal potential to have a direct adverse impact on mineral resources. As such, implementation of the project will not have a significant adverse potential to 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. No impacts are anticipated.

b. *No Impact* – As previously stated, according to the Mineral Resources map prepared for the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan (**Figure XII-1**), the only area that overlaps with a designated MRZ occurs within Area A. Within Area A, MRZ-2a occurs in the northerly portion of this area. Construction of the proposed project has almost no potential to interfere with existing mining of mineral resources. According to the **Figure XII-1**, there are no existing mining operations within the project area. Furthermore, as discussed above, the construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not preclude future mining operations from occurring within areas designated as MRZ-2a within the project footprint. As such, as no mining operations exist within the project footprint, and no areas within the project footprint are designated for mineral extraction by the respective General Plan, the construction of the proposed project would not 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. No impacts are anticipated.

Operation of the proposed project has almost no potential to interfere with existing mining of mineral resources. According to the Mineral Resources map prepared for the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan (**Figure XII-1**), the only area that overlaps with a designated MRZ occurs within Area A. Further, this map indicates that there are no existing mining operations within the project footprint. Furthermore, as discussed above, the implementation of the proposed project would not preclude future mining operations from occurring within areas designated as MRZ-2a within the project footprint. As no areas within the project footprint are designated for mineral extraction, and as the proposed pipelines and laterals would operate belowground generally within roadways and other ROW, the operation proposed project would not 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. No impacts are anticipated.

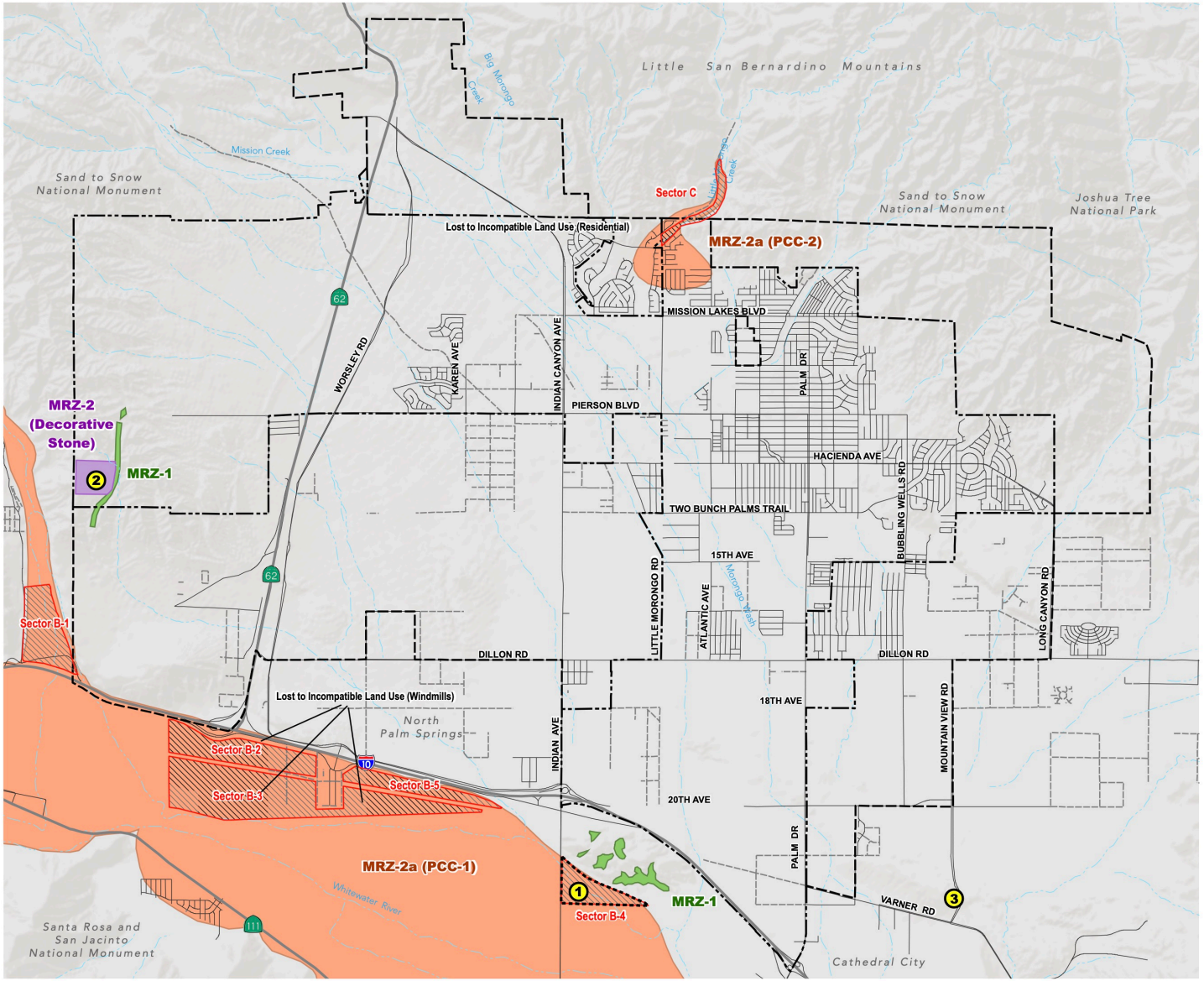


FIGURE XII-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIII. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of a 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Mission Springs Noise and Vibration Analysis* (NVA) prepared by Urban Crossroads, dated March 2026. This NVA is provided as **Appendix 6** to this Initial Study.

Background

Noise is generally described as unwanted sound. Sound becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, when it causes actual physical harm or when it has adverse effects on health. Noise is measured on a logarithmic scale of sound pressure level known as a decibel (dB). A-weighted decibels (dBA) approximate the subjective response of the human ear to broad frequency noise source by discriminating against very low and very high frequencies of the audible spectrum. They are adjusted to reflect only those frequencies which are audible to the human ear. **Exhibit XIII-1** presents a summary of the typical noise levels and their subjective loudness and effects that are described in more detail below.

Since the range of intensities that the human ear can detect is so large, the scale frequently used to measure intensity is a scale based on multiples of 10, the logarithmic scale. The scale for measuring intensity is the decibel scale. Each interval of 10 decibels indicates a sound energy ten times greater than before, which is perceived by the human ear as being roughly twice as loud. The most common sounds vary between 40 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud). Normal conversation at three feet is roughly at 60 dBA, while loud jet flyover noises equate to 110 dBA at approximately 1,000 feet, which can cause serious discomfort. Another important aspect of noise is the duration of the sound and the way it is described and distributed in time.

Exhibit XIII-1: Typical Noise Levels

COMMON OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	COMMON INDOOR ACTIVITIES	A - WEIGHTED SOUND LEVEL dBA	SUBJECTIVE LOUDNESS	EFFECTS OF NOISE
THRESHOLD OF PAIN		140	INTOLERABLE OR DEAFENING	HEARING LOSS
NEAR JET ENGINE		130		
		120		
JET FLY-OVER AT 300m (1000 ft)	ROCK BAND	110		
LOUD AUTO HORN		100	VERY NOISY	
GAS LAWN MOWER AT 1m (3 ft)		90		
DIESEL TRUCK AT 15m (50 ft), at 80 km/hr (50 mph)	FOOD BLENDER AT 1m (3 ft)	80		SPEECH INTERFERENCE
NOISY URBAN AREA, DAYTIME	VACUUM CLEANER AT 3m (10 ft)	70	LOUD	
HEAVY TRAFFIC AT 90m (300 ft)	NORMAL SPEECH AT 1m (3 ft)	60		
QUIET URBAN DAYTIME	LARGE BUSINESS OFFICE	50	MODERATE	SLEEP DISTURBANCE
QUIET URBAN NIGHTTIME	THEATER, LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM (BACKGROUND)	40		
QUIET SUBURBAN NIGHTTIME	LIBRARY	30	FAINT	NO EFFECT
QUIET RURAL NIGHTTIME	BEDROOM AT NIGHT, CONCERT HALL (BACKGROUND)	20		
	BROADCAST/RECORDING STUDIO	10	VERY FAINT	
LOWEST THRESHOLD OF HUMAN HEARING	LOWEST THRESHOLD OF HUMAN HEARING	0		

Significance Criteria

Noise Level Increases

Under CEQA, consideration must be given to the magnitude of the increase, the existing baseline ambient noise levels, and the location of receivers to determine if a noise increase represents a significant adverse environmental impact. This approach recognizes that there is no single noise increase that renders the noise impact significant.

This is primarily because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and differing individual experiences with noise. Thus, an important way of determining a person's subjective reaction to a new noise is the comparison of it to the existing environment to which one has adapted—the so-called ambient environment.

Operational Noise

The approach used in this noise study recognizes that there is no single noise increase that renders a noise impact significant, based on a 2008 California Court of Appeal ruling on Gray v. County of Madera. (20) For example, if the ambient noise environment is quiet (<60 dBA) and the new noise source greatly increases the noise levels, an impact may occur if the noise criteria may be exceeded. Therefore, for this analysis, a readily perceptible 5 dBA or greater project-related noise level increase is considered a significant impact when the without-project noise levels are below 60 dBA. Per the FICON, in areas where the without project noise levels range from 60 to 65 dBA, a 3 dBA barely perceptible noise level increase appears to be appropriate for most people. When the without project noise levels already exceed 65 dBA, any increase in community noise louder than 1.5 dBA or greater is considered a significant impact if

the noise criteria for a given land use is exceeded, since it likely contributes to an existing noise exposure exceedance.

The FICON guidance provides an established source of criteria to assess the impacts of substantial temporary or permanent increase in baseline ambient noise levels. Based on the FICON criteria, the amount to which a given noise level increase is considered acceptable is reduced when the without Project (baseline) noise levels are already shown to exceed certain land-use specific exterior noise level criteria. The specific levels are based on typical responses to noise level increases of 5 dBA or readily perceptible, 3 dBA or barely perceptible, and 1.5 dBA depending on the underlying without Project noise levels for noise-sensitive uses. These levels of increases and their perceived acceptance are consistent with guidance provided by both the Federal Highway Administration and Caltrans.

Construction Noise

To evaluate the noise-generating construction activities, the temporary noise level increases over the existing ambient conditions must be considered under CEQA Significance Threshold A. The City of Desert Hot Springs and City of Palm Springs limit the hours of construction activities, however, the County has not adopted a noise increase limit for construction sources in relation to temporary noise level increases over the existing ambient conditions.

In 2024, the City of Los Angeles adopted a temporary construction noise increase threshold for the review and preparation of environmental analysis under CEQA. The City of Los Angeles CEQA threshold document was developed based on input from technical experts, including a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of noise consultants and experts with decades of experience in preparing noise studies, and included a public process and review of noise thresholds used by other state and local agencies. The City of Los Angeles supported by substantial evidence found that 10 dBA construction noise increase thresholds previously employed in the City of Los Angeles to be overly conservative, especially in the context of impacts on public health that often results in significant impact determination, even for routine construction activities that are expected to occur in an urban environment. Based on these findings, City of Los Angeles identified a daytime 80 dBA $L_{eq(8hr)}$ absolute construction noise threshold and a 5 dBA nighttime construction noise increase threshold with no increase threshold for daytime construction activities. In developing its thresholds, the City of Los Angeles noted that an 80 dBA $L_{eq(8hr)}$ absolute threshold could result in 10 to 25 dBA increases over ambient, which would be noticeable, but temporary.

Although noise ordinances vary by jurisdiction, many cities and counties in California—including Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco—establish absolute construction noise limits in the range of 75 to 80 dBA L_{eq} and generally restrict construction activities to daytime hours. In contrast, operational noise standards are more stringent because they apply to continuous, long-term noise sources that can substantially affect quality of life. As a result, establish daytime operational noise limits around 60 dBA L_{eq}. This indicates that a temporary increase of up to 20 dBA above the daytime operational limit may be reasonably tolerated without resulting in significant adverse effects. While this analysis relies on the 20 dBA L_{eq} ***substantial*** noise increase threshold, it is important to recognize that other jurisdictions within the State, including the City of Los Angeles, no longer maintain any daytime noise increase thresholds. Therefore, if the Project-related construction noise levels generate a temporary noise level increase over the existing daytime ambient noise levels of more than 20 dBA L_{eq} or 5 dBA L_{eq} over the existing nighttime ambient noise levels, then the Project construction noise increases will be considered a ***significant*** impact.

Construction Vibration Threshold

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground-borne vibration, depending on the equipment and methods used, distance to the affected structures and soil type. Construction vibration is generally associated with pile driving and rock blasting. Other construction equipment such as air compressors, light trucks, hydraulic loaders, etc., generates little or no ground vibration. To analyze vibration impacts originating from the operation and construction, the Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, Table 19, vibration damage is used in this noise study to assess potential temporary construction-related impacts at adjacent building locations. The nearest noise sensitive buildings adjacent to the project site can best be described as "older residential structures" with a maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold of 0.3 PPV (in/sec).

Significance Criteria Summary

Noise impacts shall be considered significant if any of the following occur as a direct result of the proposed development. Table XIII-1 shows the significance criteria summary matrix that includes the allowable criteria used to identify potentially significant incremental noise level increases.

Table XIII-1: Significance Criteria Summary

Analysis	Receiving Land Use	Condition(s)	Significance Criteria	
			Daytime	Nighttime
Off-Site Traffic	Noise-Sensitive[1]	If ambient is < 60 dBA CNEL	≥ 5 dBA CNEL Project increase	
		If ambient is 60 - 65 dBA CNEL	≥ 3 dBA CNEL Project increase	
		If ambient is > 65 dBA CNEL	≥ 1.5 dBA CNEL Project increase	
Operational	Noise-Sensitive	Residential Exterior Noise Level[2]	65 dBA L_{eq}	45 dBA L_{eq}
		If ambient is < 60 dBA Leq[1]	≥ 5 dBA L_{eq} Project increase	
		If ambient is 60 - 65 dBA Leq[1]	≥ 3 dBA L_{eq} Project increase	
		If ambient is > 65 dBA Leq[1]	≥ 1.5 dBA L_{eq} Project increase	
Construction	Noise-Sensitive	Noise Level Threshold[3]	80 dBA L_{eq}	70 dBA L_{eq}
		Exterior Noise Level Increase	20 dBA L_{eq}	5 dBA L_{eq}
		Vibration Level Threshold[4]	0.30 PPV (in/sec)	

[1] FICON, 1992.
[2] Country of Riverside, General Plan Policy 4.1.
[3] Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.
[4] Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Manual, April 2020 Table 19
"Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Noise Measurement Results

The noise measurements presented below focus on the equivalent or the hourly energy average sound levels (L_{eq}) to describe the existing ambient conditions. XIII-2 provides the (energy average) noise levels used to describe the hourly daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) noise levels at each noise level measurement location. The equivalent sound level (L_{eq}) represents a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given sample period. The daytime and nighttime equivalent noise levels represent the average of all hourly noise levels observed during these time periods expressed as a single number.

Table XIII-2 provides the equivalent noise levels used to describe the daytime and nighttime ambient conditions for each of the measurements.

Table XIII-2: Ambient Noise Level Measurements

Location[1]	Description	Energy Average Noise Level (dBA L_{eq})[2]		CNEL
		Daytime	Nighttime	
L1	Located near the residence at 9045 Clubhouse Blvd.	55.7	53.2	57.5
L2	Located near the residence at 64537 Spyglass Ave.	59.2	55.4	59.2
L3	Located near the residence at 9100 Oakmount Blvd.	57.6	57.2	60.8
L4	Located near the residence at 66334 San Juan Rd.	49.8	47.7	52.9
L5	Located near the residence at 66402 Cactus Dr.	56.2	55.6	59.2
L6	Located near the residence at 12256 Ambrosio Dr.	62.3	57.2	61.8
L7	Located near the residence at 12550 Tamar Dr.	54.9	54.4	59.4
L8	Located near the residence at 12780 Agua Cayendo Rd.	48.4	45.3	51.4
L9	Located near the residence at 67600 Monterey Rd.	59.0	47.6	57.1
L10	Located near the residence at 13080 Agua Cayendo Rd.	52.2	48.7	54.8
L11	Located near the residence at 12550 Hidalgo St.	50.5	45.4	51.3
L12	Located near the residence at 13666 Hermano Way.	56.6	51.5	58.6
L13	Located near the residence at 68272 C. Blanco.	51.9	53.0	57.7
L14	Located near the residence at 12100 Highland Ave.	53.4	50.5	54.9
L15	Located near the residence at 12690 Avenida Alta Loma.	56.8	52.3	58.3
L16	Located near the residence at 12110 Redbud Rd.	46.9	43.4	49.4
L17	Located near the residence at 12565 Skyline Dr.	53.3	57.9	53.1
L18	Located near the residence at 12775 Beech Ave.	50.3	44.0	51.0
L19	Located near the residence at 64050 18th Ave.	65.3	65.7	69.7
L20	Located near the residence at 17725 Covey St.	61.7	60.3	65.6

[1] See **Figure XIII-1** for the noise level measurement locations.
[2] Energy (logarithmic) average levels. The long-term 24-hour measurement worksheets are included in Appendix 5.2 in the NVA. "Daytime" = 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; "Nighttime" = 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Receiver Locations

To assess the potential for long-term operational and short-term construction noise impacts, the following receiver locations, as shown on **Figure XIII-2**, were identified as representative locations for analysis. The selection of receiver locations is based on FHWA guidelines and is consistent with additional guidance provided by Caltrans and the FTA. Sensitive receivers are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could otherwise adversely affect the use of the land. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include schools, hospitals, single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, churches, libraries, and recreation areas. Moderately noise-sensitive land uses typically include multi-family dwellings, hotels, motels, dormitories, out-patient clinics, cemeteries, golf courses, country clubs, athletic/tennis clubs, and equestrian clubs. Land uses that are considered relatively insensitive to noise include business, commercial, and professional developments. Land uses that are typically not affected by noise include: industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, undeveloped land, parking lots, warehousing, liquid and solid waste facilities, salvage yards, and transit terminals.

To describe the potential off-site project noise levels, twenty receiver locations in the vicinity of the project site were identified. Other sensitive land uses in the project study area that are located at greater distances than those identified in this noise study will experience lower noise levels than those presented in this report due to the additional attenuation from distance and the shielding of intervening structures.

R1 Location R1 represents the existing residence 9045 Clubhouse Blvd. Receiver R1 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L1, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R2 Location R2 represents the existing residence at 64537 Spyglass Ave. Receiver R2 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L2, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R3 Location R3 represents the existing residence at 9100 Oakmount Blvd. Receiver R3 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L3, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R4 Location R4 represents the existing residence at 66334 San Juan Rd. Receiver R4 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L4, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R5 Location R5 represents the existing residence at 66402 Cactus Dr. Receiver R5 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L5, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R6 Location R6 represents the existing residence at 12256 Ambrosio Dr. Receiver R6 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L6, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R7 Location R7 represents the existing residence at 12550 Tamar Dr. Receiver R7 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L7, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R8 Location R8 represents the existing residence at 12780 Agua Cayendo Rd. Receiver R8 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L8, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R9 Location R9 represents the existing residence at 67600 Monterey Rd. Receiver R9 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L9, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R10 Location R10 represents the existing residence at 13080 Agua Cayendo Rd. Receiver R10 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L10, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R11 Location R11 represents the existing residence at 12550 Hidalgo St. Receiver R11 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was

taken near this location, L11, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R12 Location R12 represents the existing residence at 13666 Hermano Way. Receiver R12 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L12, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R13 Location R13 represents the existing residence at 68272 C. Blanco. Receiver R13 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L13, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R14 Location R14 represents the existing residence at 12100 Highland Ave. Receiver R14 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L14, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R15 Location R15 represents the existing residence at 12690 Avenida Alta Loma. Receiver R15 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L15, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R16 Location R16 represents the existing residence at 12110 Redbud Rd. Receiver R16 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L16, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R17 Location R17 represents the existing residence at 12565 Skyline Dr. Receiver R17 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L17, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R18 Location R18 represents the existing residence at 12775 Beech Ave. Receiver R18 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L18, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R19 Location R19 represents the existing residence at 64050 18th Ave. Receiver R19 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L19, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

R20 Location R20 represents the existing residence at 17725 Covey St. Receiver R20 is placed in the private outdoor living area (backyard) facing the project site. A 24-hour noise measurement was taken near this location, L20, to describe the existing ambient noise environment.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated –*

Operational Noise Analysis

The project would construct new sewer lines and abate existing septic systems. None of the new systems would represent new long-term noise sources, nor would they generate new traffic on local

roadways. Therefore, operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Construction Noise Analysis

This section analyzes potential impacts resulting from the short-term construction activities associated with the development of the project. **Figure XIII-3** shows the on-site construction noise source activity, including the off-site roadway and utility improvements, in relation to the nearest sensitive receiver locations previously described above.

Construction Noise Levels

The FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual recognizes that construction projects are accomplished in several different stages and outlines the procedures for assessing noise impacts during construction. Each stage has a specific equipment mix, depending on the work to be completed during that stage. As a result of the equipment mix, each stage has its own noise characteristics; some stages have higher continuous noise levels than others, and some have higher impact noise levels than others. The project construction activities are expected to occur in the following stages:

- Pavement Removal/Demolition
- Road Base/Trenching
- Pipeline Placement
- Paving
- Septic System Abatement

Construction Reference Noise Levels

To describe construction noise activities, this construction noise analysis was prepared using reference construction equipment noise levels from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which published the Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM), which includes a national database of construction equipment reference noise emission levels. The RCNM equipment database provides a comprehensive list of the noise-generating characteristics of specific types of construction equipment. In addition, the database provides an acoustical usage factor to estimate the fraction of time each piece of construction equipment is operating at full power (i.e., its loudest condition) during a construction operation. According to the EPA, FTA, and FHWA, the overall construction noise level is governed primarily by the noisiest pieces of equipment. The quieter pieces do not affect the overall level, but they do reduce the magnitude of the fluctuations in the noise level. Therefore, a rough estimate of the noise level needs only include the noisiest pieces of equipment expected at the site. Consistent with FHWA and FTA guidance for detailed construction noise assessment, Table XIII-3 presents the combined noise levels for the loudest construction activities expected for each stage, assuming all equipment operates simultaneously.

Table XIII-3: Construction Reference Noise Levels

Construction Stage	Reference Construction Equipmnet[1]	Reference Noise Level @ 50 Feet (dBA L_{eq})	Composite Reference Noise Level (dBA L_{eq})	Reference Power Level (dBA L_w)
	Concrete Saw	83	84.1	115.7
	Backhoe	74		

Construction Stage	Reference Construction Equipmnet[1]	Reference Noise Level @ 50 Feet (dBA L_{eq})	Composite Reference Noise Level (dBA L_{eq})	Reference Power Level (dBA L_w)
Pavement Removal/ Demolition	Front End Loader	75		
Road Base/ Trenching	Excavator	77	79.5	111.2
	Compactor (ground)	76		
	Dozer	22		
Pipeline Placement	Excavator	77	79.6	111.3
	Front End Loader	75		
	Welder/Torch	70		
Paving	Paver	74	77.8	109.5
	Dump Truck	72		
	Roller	73		
Septic System Abatement	Backhoe	74	74.0	105.6

[1] FHWA Road Construction Noise Model.
[2] Update of noise database for prediction of noise on construction and open site expressed in hourly average L_{eq} based on estimated usage factor.

Construction Noise Results (Daytime)

Construction projects involve various stages, and activities frequently shift from one location to another. For example, during site preparation and grading, noise-generating activities may concentrate in an area for a short period to remove an obstruction, while the majority of the grading involves the equipment moving back and forth in a predictable pattern throughout the site; building construction and foundation work generally concentrate near the building footprint, while paving generally involves a predictable pattern of movement throughout the site. Therefore, construction activities are best evaluated as multiple moving point sources within the construction area since the speed and power of the equipment vary, and the equipment constantly changes position in terms of its distance and direction relative to the receivers. Using the reference construction equipment noise levels and the CadnaA noise prediction model, calculations of the project construction noise level impacts by phase at the nearby sensitive receiver locations were completed. To account for the dynamic nature of construction activities, the CadnaA construction noise analysis evaluates the noise source activities as multiple moving point sources, or construction crews, within the limits of construction. Construction impacts are based on the loudest activity and the highest noise level calculated at each receiver location. As shown in Table XIII-4, the construction noise levels are expected to range from 48.0 to 61.1 dBA Leq at the nearby receiver locations.

Daytime Sewer Pipeline Construction Noise Level Compliance

To evaluate whether the project will generate potentially significant short-term noise levels at the nearest receiver locations, a construction-related daytime noise level threshold of 80 dBA Leq is used as a reasonable threshold to assess the daytime construction noise level impacts. The construction noise analysis shows that the nearest receiver locations will satisfy the reasonable daytime 80 dBA Leq significance threshold during project construction activities, as shown in Table

XIII-5. Therefore, the noise impacts due to the project construction noise are considered less than significant at all receiver locations.

Table XIII-4: Daytime Construction Equipment Noise Level Summary

Receiver Location[1]	Pavement Removal/ Demolition	Road Base/ Trenching	Pipeline Placement	Paving	Highest Levels[2]
R1	66.5	62.0	62.0	60.3	66.5
R2	74.1	69.6	69.6	67.9	74.1
R3	71.4	66.9	66.9	65.2	71.4
R4	74.5	70.0	70.0	68.3	74.5
R5	71.5	67.0	67.0	65.3	71.5
R6	75.2	70.7	70.7	69.0	75.2
R7	72.3	67.8	67.8	66.1	72.3
R8	72.4	67.9	67.9	66.2	72.4
R9	72.3	67.8	67.8	66.1	72.3
R10	72.2	67.7	67.7	66.0	72.2
R11	63.8	59.3	59.3	57.6	63.8
R12	70.7	66.2	66.2	64.5	70.7
R13	71.8	67.3	67.3	65.6	71.8
R14	69.5	65.0	65.0	63.3	69.5
R15	70.4	65.9	65.9	64.2	70.4
R16	70.9	66.4	66.4	64.7	70.9
R17	71.2	66.7	66.7	65.0	71.2
R18	72.5	68.0	68.0	66.3	72.5
R19	45.9	41.4	41.4	39.7	45.9
R20	44.6	40.1	40.1	38.4	44.6

[1] Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on **Figure XIII-3**.
[2] Construction noise level calculations based on distance from the construction activity, which is measured from the project site boundary to the nearest receiver locations. CadnaA construction noise model inputs are included in Appendix 8.1 of NVA.

Table XIII-5: Construction Noise Level Compliance

Receiver Location[1]	Construction Noise Levels (dBA L_{eq})		
	Highest Construction Noise Levels[2]	Threshold[3]	Threshold Exceeded?[4]
R1	66.5	80	No
R2	74.1	80	No
R3	71.4	80	No
R4	74.5	80	No
R5	71.5	80	No
R6	75.2	80	No

Receiver Location[1]	Construction Noise Levels (dBA L_{eq})		
	Highest Construction Noise Levels[2]	Threshold[3]	Threshold Exceeded?[4]
R7	72.3	80	No
R8	72.4	80	No
R9	72.3	80	No
R10	72.2	80	No
R11	63.8	80	No
R12	70.7	80	No
R13	71.8	80	No
R14	69.5	80	No
R15	70.4	80	No
R16	70.9	80	No
R17	71.2	80	No
R18	72.5	80	No
R19	45.9	80	No
R20	44.6	80	No

[1] Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown in **Figure XIII-3**.
[2] Highest construction noise level calculations based on distance from the construction noise source activity to the nearest receiver locations, as shown in Table XIII-5.
[3] Construction noise level thresholds as shown in Table XIII-1
[4] Do the estimated Project construction noise levels exceed the construction noise level threshold?

Sewer Pipelines Daytime Construction Noise Level Increases

To describe the temporary project construction noise level contributions to the existing ambient noise environment, the project construction noise levels were combined with the existing ambient noise levels measurements at the nearest off-site receiver locations. The difference between the combined project-construction and ambient noise levels is used to describe the construction noise level contributions. Temporary noise level increases that would be experienced at sensitive receiver locations when project construction noise is added to the ambient daytime conditions are presented in Table XIII-6. A temporary noise level increase of 20 dBA is considered a potentially significant impact, which is used to assess the project-construction noise level increases.

As indicated in Table XIII-6, the project will contribute to construction noise increases ranging from less than 0.1 to 19.9 dBA L_{eq} during the daytime hours at the nearest receiver locations. The unmitigated construction noise analysis shows that the nearest receiver locations will not exceed the 20 dBA L_{eq} substantial noise level increase significance threshold during project construction activities. The temporary construction noise level increase analysis shows that the noise impacts due to the project construction noise are considered less than significant.

Table XIII-6: Daytime Construction Noise Level Summary

Receiver Location[1]	Typical Project Construction Noise Level[2]	Measurement Location[3]	Reference Ambient Noise Levels[4]	Combined Project and Ambient[5]	Project Increase[6]	Increase Criteria[7]	Increase Criteria Exceeded?
R1	49.1	L1	55.7	56.6	0.9	20	No
R2	56.7	L2	59.2	61.1	1.9	20	No
R3	54.0	L3	57.6	59.2	1.6	20	No
R4	57.1	L4	49.8	57.8	8.0	20	No
R5	54.1	L5	56.2	58.3	2.1	20	No
R6	57.8	L6	62.3	63.6	1.3	20	No
R7	54.9	L7	54.9	57.9	3.0	20	No
R8	55.0	L8	48.4	55.9	7.5	20	No
R9	54.9	L9	59.0	60.4	1.4	20	No
R10	54.8	L10	52.2	56.7	4.5	20	No
R11	46.4	L11	50.5	51.9	1.4	20	No
R12	53.3	L12	56.6	58.3	1.7	20	No
R13	54.4	L13	51.9	56.3	4.4	20	No
R14	52.1	L14	53.4	55.8	2.4	20	No
R15	53.0	L15	56.8	58.3	1.5	20	No
R16	53.5	L16	46.9	54.4	7.5	20	No
R17	53.8	L17	53.3	56.6	3.3	20	No
R18	55.1	L18	50.3	56.3	6.0	20	No
R19	28.5	L19	65.3	65.3	0.0	20	No
R20	27.2	L20	61.7	61.7	0.0	20	No

[1] Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown in **Figure XIII-3**.
[2] Typical project daytime construction noise levels as shown in Table XIII-5.
[3] Reference noise level measurement locations as shown on Exhibit XIII-1.
[4] Observed daytime ambient noise levels as shown in Table XIII-1.
[5] Represents the combined ambient conditions plus the project construction activities.
[6] The noise level increase expected with the addition of the proposed project construction activities.
[7] Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol.

Construction Noise Results (Nighttime)

It is our understanding that nighttime activities may occur as part of the project pipeline construction activities. Nighttime activities are often required to reduce traffic impacts in the area during daytime hours.

Nighttime Construction Reference Noise Levels

To estimate the noise levels due to nighttime activities, sample reference noise level measurements were taken from Table XIII-3. However, due to the known high noise levels associated with construction activity, no nighttime construction would occur within 500 feet of residential land uses, no nighttime construction would occur, additionally, no demolition or pavement removal would occur during nighttime hours. While the project noise levels will depend on the actual duration of activities and specific equipment fleet in use at the time of construction, the reference sound power

level of 95.3 dBA Lw is used to describe the expected project nighttime construction activities at 500 feet.

Nighttime Construction Noise Level Compliance

As shown in Table XIII-7, the noise levels associated with the nighttime construction activities are estimated to range from 24.2 to 54.4 dBA Leq and will satisfy the MSWD stationary-source nighttime exterior hourly average L_{eq} residential noise level threshold at all the receiver locations. Based on the results of this analysis, all the nearest noise receiver locations will experience less than significant impacts due to the project-related nighttime construction activities.

Table XIII-7: Nighttime Noise Level Compliance

Receiver Location[1]	Nighttime Construction Noise Levels (dBA L_{eq})		
	Exterior Noise Levels[2]	Threshold[3]	Threshold Exceeded?[4]
R01	44.2	70	No
R02	48.6	70	No
R03	50.3	70	No
R04	53.2	70	No
R05	50.8	70	No
R06	54.4	70	No
R07	51.3	70	No
R08	50.4	70	No
R09	51.5	70	No
R10	50.2	70	No
R11	48.1	70	No
R12	48.9	70	No
R13	51.1	70	No
R14	48.9	70	No
R15	49.6	70	No
R16	50.1	70	No
R17	49.1	70	No
R18	51.1	70	No
R19	25.5	70	No
R20	24.2	70	No

[1] Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on **Figure XIII-3**.
[2] Nighttime noise model inputs are included in Appendix 8.2 of the NVA.
[3] Construction noise level thresholds as shown in Table XIII-3.
[4] Do the estimated project construction noise levels exceed the construction noise level threshold?

To describe the nighttime noise-level contributions from construction activity, the nighttime construction noise levels were combined with the existing nighttime ambient noise levels measurements at the nearest off-site receiver locations. The difference between the combined project-construction and ambient noise levels is used to describe the construction noise level increases. Temporary noise increases that would be experienced at sensitive receiver locations when

the typical project construction-source noise is added to the ambient conditions are presented in Table XIII-8. As indicated in Table XIII-8, the project nighttime construction activities will contribute to noise increases ranging from less than 0.1 to 5.0 dBA Leq during the nighttime hours at the nearest receiver locations. The unmitigated nighttime construction noise analysis shows that the nearest receiver locations will not exceed the nighttime 5 dBA noise increase threshold during nighttime construction activities. Therefore, the nighttime construction noise increase analysis shows that the noise impacts due to project nighttime construction noise are less than significant.

Table XIII-8: Nighttime Construction Noise Increases

Receiver Location[1]	Typical Project Construction Noise Level[2]	Measurement Location[3]	Reference Ambient Noise Levels[4]	Combined Project and Ambient[5]	Project Increase[6]	Increase Criteria[7]	Increase Criteria Exceeded?
R1	44.2	L1	53.2	53.7	0.5	5	No
R2	48.6	L2	55.4	56.2	0.8	5	No
R3	50.3	L3	57.2	58.0	0.8	5	No
R4	53.2	L4	52.4	55.8	3.4	5	No
R5	50.8	L5	55.6	56.8	1.2	5	No
R6	54.4	L6	57.2	59.0	1.8	5	No
R7	51.3	L7	54.4	56.1	1.7	5	No
R8	50.4	L8	47.1	52.1	5.0	5	No
R9	51.5	L9	54.6	56.3	1.7	5	No
R10	50.2	L10	50.7	53.5	2.8	5	No
R11	48.1	L11	45.4	50.0	4.6	5	No
R12	48.9	L12	51.5	53.4	1.9	5	No
R13	51.1	L13	53.0	55.2	2.2	5	No
R14	48.9	L14	50.5	52.8	2.3	5	No
R15	49.6	L15	52.3	54.2	1.9	5	No
R16	50.1	L16	49.4	52.8	3.4	5	No
R17	49.1	L17	57.9	58.4	0.5	5	No
R18	51.1	L18	51.0	54.1	3.1	5	No
R19	25.5	L19	65.7	65.7	0.0	5	No
R20	24.2	L20	60.3	60.3	0.0	5	No

[1] Construction noise source and receiver locations are shown on **Figure XIII-3**.
[2] Typical project daytime construction noise levels as shown in Table XIII-5.
[3] Reference noise level measurement locations as shown on Exhibit XIII-1.
[4] Observed daytime ambient noise levels as shown in Table XIII-1.
[5] Represents the combined ambient conditions plus the project construction activities.
[6] The noise level increase expected with the addition of the proposed project construction activities.
[7] Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol.

Septic Tank Abatement

Septic tank abatement includes pumping out all contents, followed by filling it with inert material like sand or gravel. The tank is disconnected from any riser pipes or drain field parts. After the tank is properly abated, it is completely covered with soil. Equipment would include a vacuum truck to

empty the tank contents, a small backhoe to expose the tank, and a dump truck to bring the fill material. The operation of this equipment in the immediate area is likely to result in noise levels of approximately 74 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet. However, these activities would only occur during daytime hours and would be coordinated with homeowners to avoid exposing residents to excessive noise levels. Therefore, construction noise impacts during septic tank removal are considered less than significant.

Conclusion

Both long-term and temporary noise generated by project implementation would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by vibration of room surfaces is called structure borne noises. Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g. earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g. explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous or transient. Vibration is often described in units of velocity (inches per second), and discussed in decibel (VdB) units in order to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Vibration impacts related to human development are generally associated with activities such as train operations, construction, and heavy truck movements.

Construction Vibration Analysis

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment and methods employed. The operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Ground vibration levels associated with various types of construction equipment are summarized in Table 8-6. Based on the representative vibration levels presented for various construction equipment types, it is possible to estimate the potential for human response (annoyance) and building damage using the following vibration assessment methods defined by Caltrans. To describe the vibration impacts Caltrans provides the following equation: $PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.5}$

Table XIII-9: Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV (in/sec) at 25 feet
Small bulldozer	0.003
Jackhammer	0.035
Loaded Trucks	0.076
Large bulldozer	0.089
Vibratory Roller	0.210
Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual	

Using the vibration source level of construction equipment provided in Table XIII-9 and the construction vibration assessment methodology published by the FTA, it is possible to estimate the project vibration impacts. The nearest occupied residences to pavement removal and paving activities are approximately 20 feet away. At distances ranging as close as 20 feet from project construction activities, construction vibration velocity levels are estimated to range up to 0.29 PPV

in/sec. During paving activities, when vibratory rollers are used. Based on the maximum acceptable continuous vibration threshold of 0.30 PPV (in/sec), the typical project construction vibration levels will fall below the building damage thresholds at all the vibration-sensitive receiver locations. Therefore, the project-related vibration impacts are considered less than significant during typical construction activities at the project site.

c. *No Impact* – As stated under issue IX(e), the Palm Springs International Airport is the closest airport to the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project. Based on a review of Google Maps, the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project footprint is located, at a minimum, approximately 3.6 miles north of the Palm Springs International Airport, located in the City of Palm Springs. The proposed project footprint is not located within the noise contours identified in the Palm Springs International Airport section of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission's Compatibility Plan (**Figure IX-10**).[9] Given the large distance between the proposed project and nearby airports, project implementation would have no potential to expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels generated by nearby aircraft or airport operations. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

[9] Riverside County, 2005. *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document.* https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/migrated/Portals-13-PDFGeneral-plan-newplan-18--20Vol.-201-20Palm-20Springs-20International.pdf (Accessed 12/09/25)

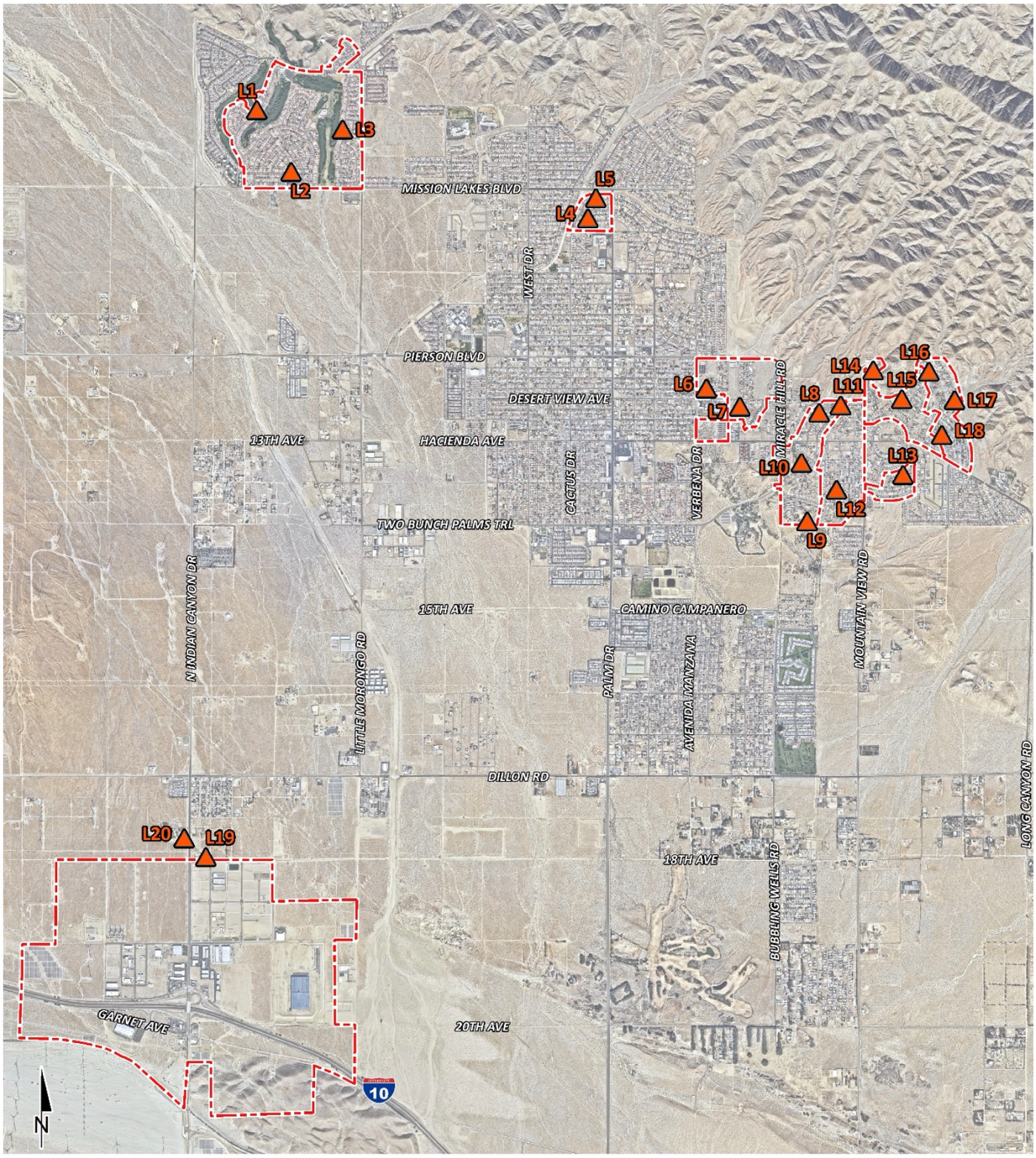


FIGURE XIII-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Noise Measurement Locations

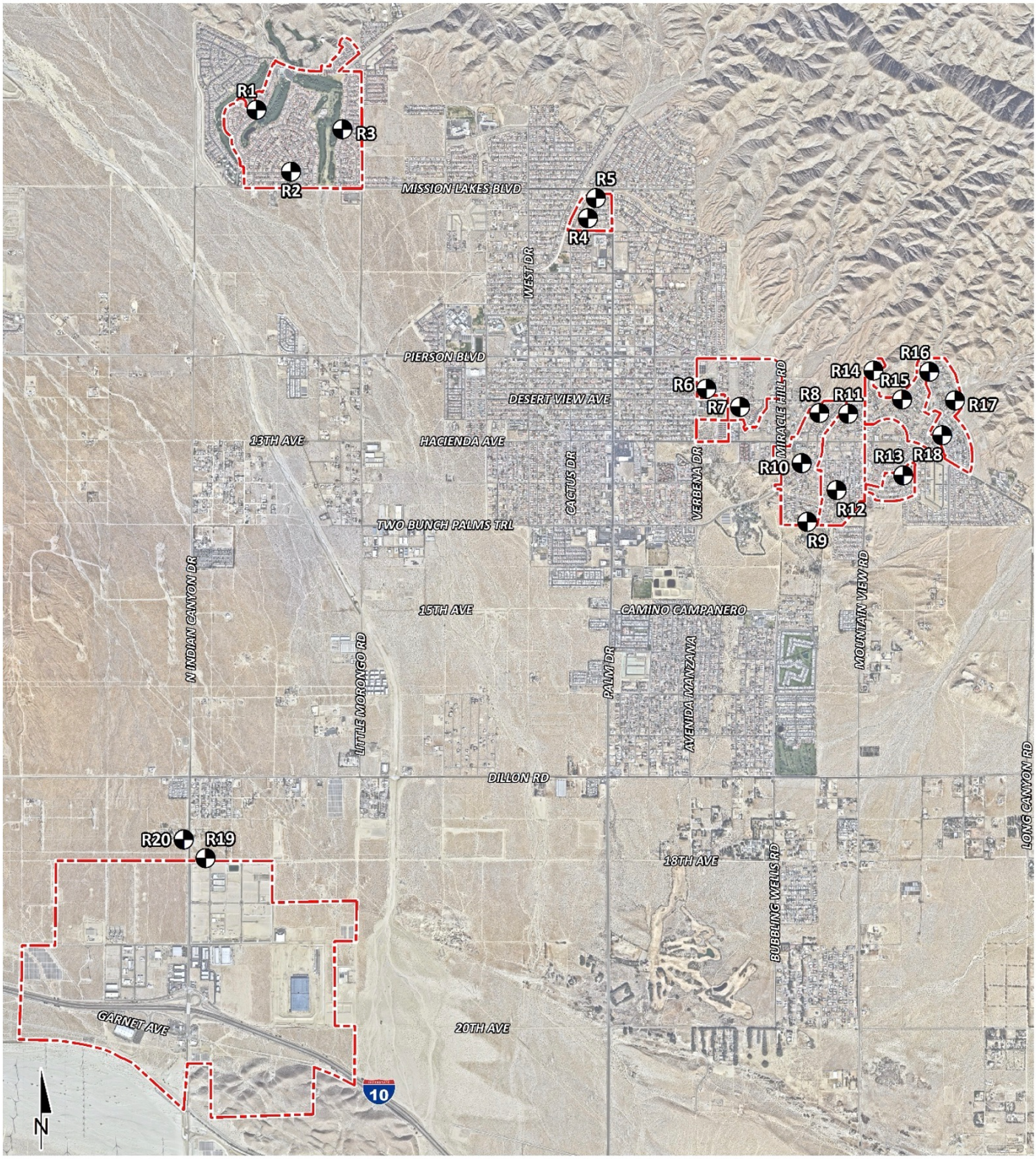
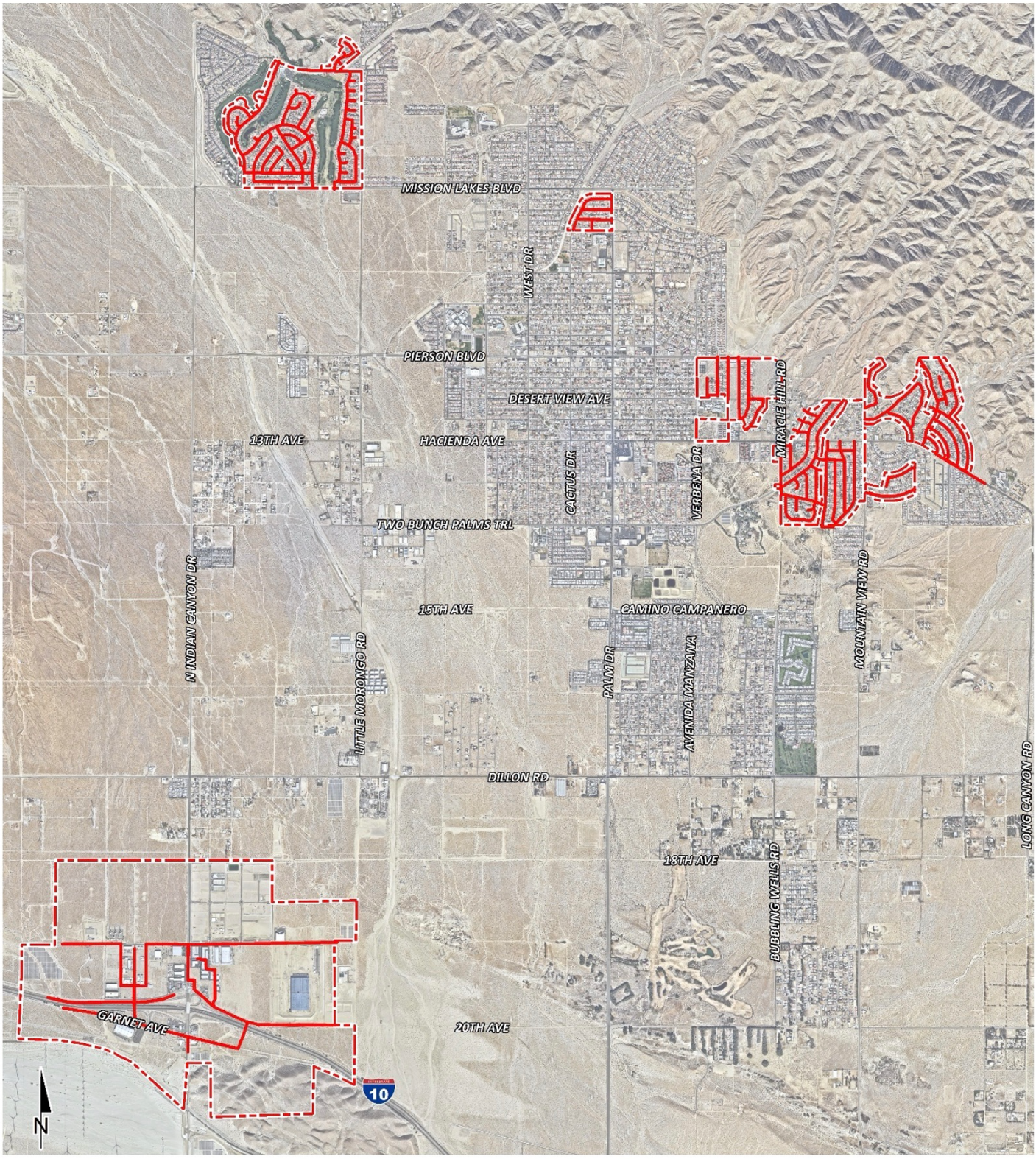


FIGURE XIII-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Noise Sensitive Receptors



LEGEND:

Site Boundary Sewer Line Construction

FIGURE XIII-3

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Construction Locations

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the project will not induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure). According to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the total population of Desert Hot Springs in 2022 was 32,276 persons.[10] SCAG indicates that the total population of the City of Palm Springs in 2022 was 44,007, while the population of Unincorporated Riverside County was 397,762 persons during this same period. The City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan notes that the City's population is anticipated to grow to 88,476 residents by 2040. The City of Palm Springs General Plan notes that the City's population is anticipated to grow to 65,340 residents by 2040 utilizing a seasonal occupancy rate of 65%. The County of Riverside General Plan notes that the County's Unincorporated population is anticipated to grow to 909,071 residents by 2035. This indicates that the City plans for population growth in the future.

Construction of the proposed infrastructure would require temporary employment. It is reasonable to assume that the majority of the construction employment opportunities would be filled by workers living within Southern California. They would become part of the Coachella Valley's temporary population during the ten year horizon of construction. Locally available temporary housing for about 21 construction employees would be required during this period of time to support project development. Adequate temporary housing resources are available within the project area that can accommodate a temporary housing population, particularly given that the City of Desert Hot Springs, City of Palm Springs, and County of Riverside plan for population growth to occur between now (2025) and 2035/2040. Therefore, the potential temporary increase in new residents within the project area is forecast to be nominal, i.e., a less than significant impact.

No additional employees will be required to support the proposed project once the sewer pipelines

[10] SCAG, 2023. Local Profiles. https://hub.scag.ca.gov/documents/7f0208030a964f7cb486d8b69daec83b/about (Accessed 12/25/25)

and laterals have been installed and are fully operational. As a result, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.

b. *No Impact* – Implementation of the project will not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The majority of the project would be installed within roadways or other ROW; however, the proposed project includes septic abatement within properties that would be connected to MSWD's municipal sewer service as a result of the proposed project. This would occur at existing septic tanks, and would have no bearing on project land use such that existing housing or persons would be displaced as a result of project implementation. Once installed the abated septic systems, pipelines, and laterals would all operate belowground, and would have no potential to impact any housing or persons. Therefore, implementation of the project as a whole will not displace any existing housing or displace a substantial number of people that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES: 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:				
a) Fire protection?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Police protection?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The City of Desert Hot Springs is currently served by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The majority of the project is located within the City of Desert Hot Springs or its Sphere of Influence (SOI) including Unincorporated Riverside County area, and thus would be served by RCFD (refer to **Figure IX-1**). The RCFD currently has two fire stations: Station #36 and Station #37, which, together, responded to approximately 5,746 calls in FY15.[11] Given that the population has not grown substantially over the last decade,[12] it is reasonable to assume that roughly the same number of calls are responded to on average yearly. These calls included medical emergencies, vegetation and structure fires, vehicle accidents, public assistance and false alarms. Station #37 and #36 are both located in the northern part of the City, located about 4-5 miles north of the project site.

Note that the City of Palm Springs is served by the Palm Springs Fire Department. It operates 5 Stations, with the closest station to the proposed project being Station 3 at 590 E Racquet Club Rd, Palm Springs, CA 92262. This station is located about 3 miles from Area I-10, which is the only Area of the proposed project that occurs within the City of Palm Springs. Palm Springs Fire Department provides a variety of public safety services, including fire protection, medical aid, rescue, hazardous materials response, and educational safety programs such as Community Emergency Response Team training. Other services include emergency alerts, the Community Risk Reduction program,

[11] City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan EIR (pg. 4.15-1)
[12] SCAG, 2023. Local Profiles. https://hub.scag.ca.gov/documents/7f0208030a964f7cb486d8b69daec83b/about (Accessed 12/25/25)

fire plan review and inspection, and wildfire preparedness. The City of Palm Springs indicates that There are a total of 21 on-duty firefighting personnel available during each 24-hour period. The Fire Department's five stations responded to approximately 12,000 calls for service in 2021.

The City of Palm Springs Fire Department records indicate that the number of responses has increased every year by approximately 5 to 7 percent. If needed, additional fire assistance can be provided by the nearby agencies and municipalities with whom Palm Springs has automatic- and mutual-aid agreements.

Construction of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require temporary employment. It is unknown whether these employees would be drawn from within or outside the jurisdictions that fall within the project area or Coachella Valley area as a whole; however, as discussed under Subsection XIV, Population and Housing, above, it is reasonable to assume that many employment opportunities would be filled by workers drawn from the project area or its close proximity.

As discussed in construction activities associated with installation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would have temporary effects on roadway vehicle flow and lane configurations at specific intersections and roadways due to potential lane and/or road closures, which would potentially impact emergency access and response times in the project area. Construction activities could also temporarily block access to some roadways and driveways that are currently used by emergency response vehicles or in emergency evacuations, which could result in a potentially significant impact. **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would require implementation of transportation control measures and coordination with emergency response providers to minimize impacts to emergency access in the project construction area(s) due to lane and/or road closures during project construction. Therefore, implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would reduce construction impacts related to fire protection and emergency response service response times to a less than significant level. Additionally, during construction, because there are areas within the northern portion of Area A that are designated as high and very high FHSZ within an SRA per CAL FIRE as demonstrated on **Figure IX-12**. As a result, construction may exacerbate fire risk temporarily as a result of accidental sparks generated by spark-producing equipment, which could result in a potentially significant impact on fire protection and emergency response. As such, the **MM WF-2** is required, which would minimize fire risk during activities that would utilize spark-producing equipment by requiring spark arrestors for construction equipment that could create a spark, and requiring construction crews and vehicles to have access to functional fire extinguishers and fire prevention equipment at all times during construction. Implementation of **MM WF-2** is required to ensure that construction of the proposed project would not significantly contribute to the need for fire protection and emergency response services. Thus, project construction activities would have a less than significant impact to contribute to the need for fire protection and emergency response services with the implementation of mitigation.

Operation and maintenance of the proposed infrastructure would be anticipated to be provided primarily by existing water and wastewater agency personnel. Thus, there would be no potential increase in potential new residents within the project area that would contribute to a minimal increased demand for fire protection services. Implementation of this project is not forecast to change land uses or otherwise create activities that could increase demand for additional fire protection services beyond that anticipated in the General Plans of the local jurisdictions within the

project area (City of Desert Hot Springs, Unincorporated Riverside County, and City of Palm Springs). Operation of the project would not result in any hazardous conditions that could involve fire protection or emergency response. Thus, there would be no impacts as a result of project sewer pipeline and laterals operation. As a result, no new fire protection facilities or altered facilities would be required.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project site is located within the southern portion of the City of Desert Hot Springs. The City of Desert Hot Springs Police Department provides the citizens of its Planning Area with police services and protection, which includes the City's SOI within which Area A is located. According to the City's General Plan EIR, Service is primarily provided from the Police Department Office at 65-950 Pierson Blvd, which is about 4 miles north of the project footprint. Additional personnel are provided at a satellite office at the Police Neighborhood Office at 66140 West Arroyo located in Tedesco Park. Police services are dispatched from the Police Department Office, but the satellite office is centrally located for greater police presence in the neighborhood and efficient response.

The City of Palm Springs is served by the Palm Springs Police Department,[13] which offers response service, criminal investigation, traffic enforcement, and preventive patrol for the City. Although many private, gated communities have internal security for their residents, the Police Department still provides all law enforcement services. The Police Department's two divisions, Operations and Support Services, employ 100 sworn and 49 civilian personnel. Operations include patrol, jail, and airport operations. Support services include investigation, records, animal control, and communications. According to the City of Palm Springs General Plan, in 2021, the Department responded to 75,395 calls for service, an increase of approximately 35,000 calls since 2010. The desired response times for priority one calls (emergencies) and priority two calls (non-emergencies) are 5 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively. The Palm Springs Police Department has mutual-aid agreements with other local law enforcement agencies in the event of a major incident that exceeds the Department's resources.

Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require temporary employment. It is unknown whether these employees would be drawn from within or outside the project area; however, as discussed under Subsection XIV, Population and Housing, it is reasonable to assume that many employment opportunities would be filled by workers drawn from the project area or its close proximity. Similar to the discussion under issue (a) above, the development of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not cause a substantial temporary increase in population that would substantially increase demand for police protection services. Construction of the project is not forecast to change land uses or otherwise create activities that could increase demand, even temporarily, for additional police protection services beyond that which is anticipated in the respective jurisdiction's General Plan. It is anticipated that the construction equipment and active construction areas would be fenced in and contain security lighting, which would minimize the future need for police protection from trespass, furthermore, many of the proposed facilities would be installed within existing facilities, which presently receive police protection services. Though a significant demand for police protection services is not anticipated, **MM PS-1** is proposed to address trespass issues, and thereby minimize

[13] City of Palm Springs. Palm Springs 2040 General Plan Safety Element. https://www.palmspringsca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/91803/638829838553230000 (Accessed 12/23/25)

the potential for increased police protection service demands. Thus, impacts would be less than significant through the implementation of mitigation.

PS-1 ***The project construction equipment shall be fenced or otherwise have access controlled at the close of each work day. Furthermore, the project shall include security lighting to deter illegal trespass to attractive nuisances as part of construction. The security lighting shall be shielded from adjacent sensitive receptors in accordance with the jurisdiction within which construction occurs Municipal Code.***

Operation of the sewer pipelines and laterals is not forecast to require any new permanent employees. Similar to the discussion under issue (a) above, the development of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would not cause a substantial increase in population that would substantially increase demand for police protection services. Implementation of the project is not forecast to change land uses or otherwise create activities that could increase demand for additional police protection services beyond that which is anticipated in the respective jurisdiction's General Plan. Overall levels of police service would be increased based upon the future population growth and demands of the local agencies within the City of Desert Hot Springs, Unincorporated Riverside County, and City of Palm Springs. Operational activities associated with the sewer pipelines and laterals, as these facilities are located belowground, are unlikely to increase the demand for police protection services, and is not anticipated to require police department service. Thus, no impacts are anticipated.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located within the Palm Springs Unified School District (refer to **Figure XV-1**). Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require temporary employment. It is unknown whether these employees would be drawn from within or outside the project area; however, as discussed under Subsection XIV, Population and Housing, it is reasonable to assume that many employment opportunities would be filled by workers drawn from the project area or its close proximity. Similar to the discussion under issue (a) above, the development of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement are not forecast to change existing land uses or increase either the number of residential units located within the project area or the number of students generated from the project Valley area beyond those which are anticipated by the local jurisdictions' General Plans. The Palm Springs Unified School District has adopted classroom loading standards (number of students per classroom) and collects development fees per square foot of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Because the construction of the project would only create a temporary workforce, and would not increase housing, or create activities that can increase demand for additional school capacity beyond that anticipated in the local jurisdictions' General Plans, and because there are adopted standards and development fees are collected for new development, construction impacts related to demand for school services would be less than significant.

Similar to the discussions under Fire and Police Protection (issues [a] and [b]), above, the development of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not cause a substantial increase in demand for schools. As discussed above, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any new permanent employees, and therefore would not create an increase in demand for school services. The Palm Springs Unified School District has adopted classroom loading standards (number of students per classroom) and collects development fees per square foot of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Because the project is not forecast to

consist of any of these types of land use, as it would not change land uses, increase housing, or create activities that can increase demand for additional school capacity beyond that anticipated in the local jurisdictions' General Plans, and because there are adopted standards and development fees are collected for new development, impacts related to demand for school services as a result of project operation would be less than significant.

d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project would not include construction of new homes or businesses. Therefore, the implementation of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not result in a direct increase in population or create a substantial number of new permanent jobs that would result in a substantial number of new residents within the project area. Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require temporary employment. As discussed under Subsection XIV, Population and Housing, it is reasonable to assume the majority of the construction employment opportunities would be filled by workers living within the project area or in close proximity. The nominal potential increase in temporary new residents within the project area may contribute to a minimal, less than significant increased demand for parks. No impacts are anticipated.

Operation and maintenance of the proposed infrastructure would be anticipated to be provided primarily by existing water and wastewater agency personnel. Implementation of the proposed project will not impact any current or planned park use, as the project would not permanently alter the status of any existing land use within which septic abatement occurs, and further, the remainder of the project site would occur within roadways and other ROW. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse physical impact to any parks within the project area. Impacts are therefore considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Other public facilities include library and general municipal services. The library system in the City of Desert Hot Springs and Unincorporated Riverside County is operated by the Riverside County Library System. The library system in the City of Palm Springs is operated by the Palm Springs Public Library System. The project would not include construction of new homes or businesses. Therefore, the implementation of proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not result in a direct increase in population or create a substantial number of new permanent jobs that would result in a substantial number of new residents within the project area. Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would require temporary employment. As discussed under Subsection XIV, Population and Housing, it is reasonable to assume the majority of the construction employment opportunities would be filled by workers living within the project area or in close proximity. Construction of the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement is not forecast to change land uses or otherwise create activities that can increase demand for library services beyond that which is anticipated in the City of Desert Hot Springs, City of Palm Springs, or Riverside County General Plans. The nominal potential increase in temporary new residents within the project area as a result of construction would not contribute to a substantial increased demand for library and other services. No impacts are anticipated.

Operation and maintenance of the proposed infrastructure would be anticipated to be provided primarily by existing MSWD personnel. Implementation of the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement is not forecast to change land uses or otherwise create activities that can increase demand for library services beyond that which is anticipated in the City of Desert Hot Springs, City of Palm Springs, or Riverside County General Plans. The respective jurisdictions would increase

overall levels of library service based upon the future population within its jurisdiction. The implementation of the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not substantially increase demand for library or other public services and impacts would be less than significant.

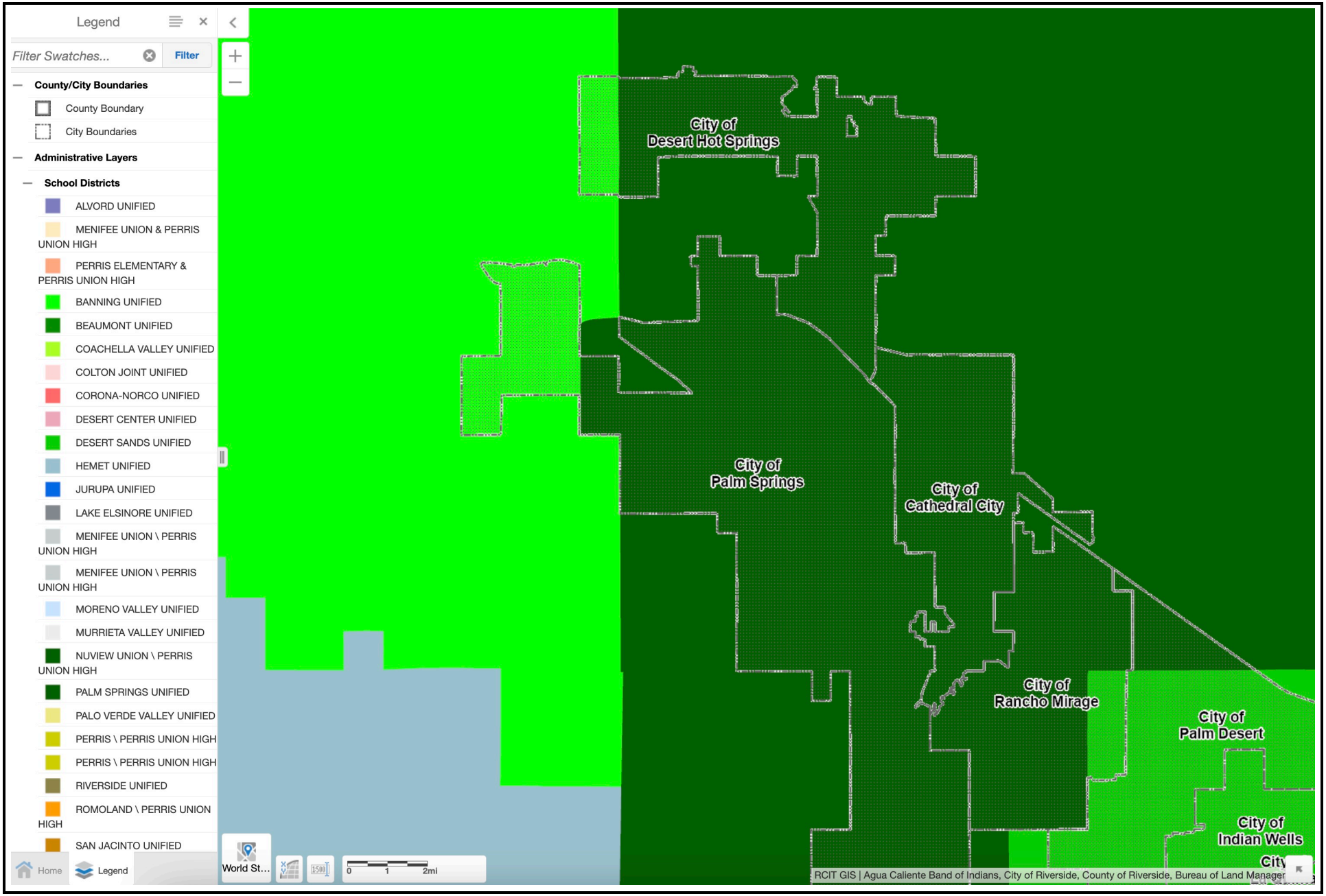


FIGURE XV-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Schools Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVI. RECREATION:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *No Impact* – As previously discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing and Section XV, Public Services, construction of the proposed infrastructure would require temporary employment. As discussed previously, it is reasonable to assume the majority of the construction employment opportunities would be filled by workers living within the project area or in close proximity. The nominal potential increase in new residents within the project area may contribute to a minimal increased demand for parks and other recreational facilities. Nonetheless, because this proposed project would not substantially temporarily increase the population within the project area, construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would not substantially increase use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities. Thus, no impacts are anticipated.

The project would not include construction of new homes or businesses. Therefore, this project would not result in a direct increase in population or create a substantial number of new permanent jobs that would result in an increase in residents within the project area. Operation and maintenance of the proposed infrastructure would be anticipated to be provided by existing MSWD personnel. Because the project would not substantially increase the population within the project area, the project would not substantially increase use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities.

Furthermore, analysis contained in Subsection XV(d) determined whether the project would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities and physical deterioration thereof. As stated under Subsection XV(d), implementation of the proposed project will not impact any current or planned park or recreation use, as the project would not permanently alter the status of any existing land use within which septic abatement occurs, and further, the remainder of the project site would occur within roadways and other ROW. Thus, no impacts are anticipated.

b. *No Impact* – The proposed project does not include recreational facilities, nor does it require the

construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would primarily be installed within roadways and other ROW. However, the laterals would connect to a variety of parcels that are presently utilizing septic, and would be altered in a minor way such that septic abatement would occur at over 2,040 locations within the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project footprint. None of these locations are anticipated to be located within recreational facilities or sites designated for such use. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely impact existing parks or recreational facilities. Because the proposed improvements would not adversely impact existing parks or recreational facilities, no new or expanded park or recreational facility would be required with the implementation of the proposed facilities. Therefore, no adverse physical effect on the environment would occur related to new or expanded park or recreational facilities because the proposed improvements would not require new or expanded park or recreational facilities. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

No new or expanded park or recreational facilities are proposed as part of the operation of the project. Therefore, no adverse physical effect on the environment would occur related to the inclusion of recreational facilities as part of project operations which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVII. TRANSPORTATION: Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) 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 inter-sections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* — MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way.

The proposed project would occur within the Cities of Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, and Unincorporated Riverside County. A majority of the project is shown on maps prepared for the City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan, as a majority of the project area is within the City or its SOI. **Figure XVII-1** depicts the City of Desert Hot Springs Roadway Plan, and indicates that there are several primary, Secondary, and Collector streets within which construction of pipelines would occur as part of the proposed project. **Figure XVII-2** depicts the City of Desert Hot Springs Bicycle Plan Map and indicates that there are several roadways containing bike lanes within which construction of pipelines would occur as part of the proposed project. **Figure XVII-3** depicts the City of Desert Hot Spring Pedestrian Plan Map and indicates that there are several priority streets within which construction of pipelines and laterals would occur as part of the proposed project. Finally, **Figure XVII-4** depicts the City of Desert Hot Spring Transit Plan Map and indicates that there are several established and potential future bus routes along which construction of pipelines and laterals would occur as part of the proposed project.

In the City of Palm Springs, the City designates the only roadways within the project area as Major Throughfare and Secondary Throughfare as shown on the Palm Springs General Plan Circulation Plan Map **(Figure XVII-5).** Further, in the City of Palm Springs, there are no existing bikeways within the project area, but there are proposed Class III and Class II bikeways within the project area, as

shown on the Palm Springs General Plan Bikeways and Recreational Trails Map **(Figure XVII-6).**

It should be noted that the worker, vendor and hauling trips shown on Table III-2 represents all proposed areas of construction. This table is repeated from Subsection III, Air Quality.

Table III-2: Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Construction Activity	Worker Trips Per Day	Vendor Trips Per Day	Hauling Trips Per Day
Pipeline Installation	26	2	11
Septic Tanks Abatements	20	2	2
Linear, Paving	3	0	0

The above indicates that the project would generate up to approximately 66 trips per day during construction of the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic tank abatement. The construction workers are expected to arrive at and depart from each day's work sites during a one-hour period at the start and end of the work day, respectively, while truck trips would be spread over the course of the work day. Both the worker trips and truck trips would be spread over different roads that provide access to the locations of the sewer alignment corridors.

In addition to the increased traffic on area roadways, the installation of sewer pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would temporarily reduce the capacity of roadways along the pipeline alignment(s) due to open-trenching within existing roadway ROWs and the resulting temporary lane closures on the affected roadways. Construction would be temporary in nature, and construction within roadways in particular would not hinder existing modes of transportation from utilizing the roadways within which the proposed pipelines and laterals would be installed. Project construction could result in other short-term circulation effects such as temporary alteration of the movement and circulation of roadway vehicles, public transit, bicycles, and/or pedestrians within the project area, as lane and/or road closures could be required temporarily where the project would be installed in public roadway ROW and construction disturbance could traverse under existing transit, bicycle, and/or pedestrian thoroughfares.

Impacts would vary based on the component being installed as well as the configuration of the circulation system surrounding each of the impacted ROW, such as the proximity of intersections and whether the ROW is a main thoroughfare. In addition, construction equipment and materials may be staged temporarily within the public ROW, or more likely, adjacent to construction areas during construction, which may in turn impact transit stops, bicycle, and/or pedestrian facilities. However, at no point during construction would transit stops, bicycle lanes, or sideways be completely blocked without an alternative or detour option for these modes of transport. Furthermore, construction activities associated with the project could also result in accidental damage to the existing roadway network, including pavement, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and drainage structures. As a result, construction-related transportation circulation system impacts could be potentially significant. Implementation of **MM TRAN-1**, which includes development and implementation of a construction TMP, would minimize potential conflicts with all modes of transportation as a result of project implementation, and would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Maintenance vehicles would continue to be utilized as needed by MSWD to access and maintain the sewer pipelines and laterals. Once infrastructure is installed, operation would not require visits to the facilities unless unforeseen circumstances arise that would require maintenance or repair of project facilities. These trips would occur as needed and are anticipated to require one trip per maintenance event, with an anticipated maximum of two maintenance trips per month. No new employees would be required to support project facilities.

Public roadway ROW and portions of the project area's circulation system impacted during construction would be returned to pre-construction conditions upon completion of installation of each Area planned for sewer pipeline and lateral installation, and septic abatement. The pipeline alignments and laterals would be installed underground, and septic abatement would also occur belowground within existing parcels that presently utilize septic for sewage disposal. As the project would operate entirely belowground, the project would not physically interfere with the transportation circulation system during operation. Operational impacts would be less than significant.

b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – MSWD proposes to install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. The CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 identifies the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the State's preferred method of evaluating Transportation-related impacts. City of Desert Hot Springs recommends the use of the Riverside County Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service Vehicle Miles Traveled (County Guidelines), which is also applicable within the County. Further, the City of Palm Springs adopted analytical procedures, screening tools, and impact thresholds for VMT, which are documented in its adopted City of Palm Springs Transportation Impact Analyses Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled And Level of Service Assessment.

The proposed project will require minimal vehicle miles traveled to accomplish once constructed. In the short term, construction of the proposed facilities will result in the generation of up to about 66 trips per day on the adjacent roadways by construction personnel, by construction vendors, and by construction haulers. The vehicle miles traveled in these instances would likely average less than 80 miles round trip. The same trucks that haul material onto the site would also carry material off of the site. VMT standards, which are intended to monitor and address long-term transportation impacts resulting from future development, do not apply to the temporary impacts associated with construction activities. Therefore, no construction impact associated with VMT per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 would occur.

Once constructed, no greater traffic would be generated by this project than that which occurs at present or is otherwise planned to occur as part of area development. Other than maintenance to inspect and maintain the proposed sewer pipeline and laterals when necessary, no operational trips are anticipated. This would therefore result in minimal vehicle miles traveled once the pipelines and laterals are installed and are operational. As both the City of Palm Springs Transportation Impact Analyses Guidelines and Riverside County Transportation Analysis Guidelines identify that projects

generating less than 110 trips per day would be screened from further VMT Analysis and presumed to have a less than significant impact, development of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project and its average less than two trips per month on an as needed maintenance basis to the pipeline and lateral alignments is not anticipated to result in a significant impact related to vehicle miles travelled, and thus would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b). Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – During construction, the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project could temporarily change the built configuration of intersections and roadways within the project area as described above. Lane and/or road detours or closures may be required where the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would be installed within public ROW. Construction equipment and materials may also be staged temporarily within the public ROW. Lane detours or closures have the potential to increase conflicts between vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians; however, implementation of existing regulations and policies for road closures and lane detours within active construction areas would reduce the potential for project construction to increase hazards in the project area. However, although construction of the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project could temporarily increase the type of vehicles (i.e., trucks) that could be incompatible with predominantly automobile vehicles on local roadways, the change to the mix of vehicles would stop when GQPP Septic to Sewer Project construction is completed. The potential conflicts between construction trucks and automobiles on local roadways would be considered a potentially significant impact. The implementation of **MM TRAN-1** would reduce the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project's contribution to potential construction traffic hazard impacts to less than significant. The above measure would reduce traffic hazards by requiring all construction activities to be conducted in accordance with an approved construction TMP. As a result, implementation of **MM TRAN-1** would reduce construction transportation circulation system impacts to a less than significant level.

The GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not include alterations to existing roadway alignments or intersections in the project area, and therefore, would not include sharp curves or unsafe designs that would increase transportation-related hazards. Once the pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement occurs belowground, it is not anticipated that any aboveground hazards would remain once the sewer pipelines and laterals are operational. Therefore, no operational impacts related to transportation hazards would occur. No impacts are anticipated.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Please refer to the discussions under issue XVII(a) and XVII(c), above. Project construction activities would have temporary effects on roadway vehicle flow and lane configurations at specific intersections and roadways due to potential lane and/or road closures, which would potentially impact emergency access and response times in the project area. Construction activities could also temporarily block access to some roadways and driveways that are currently used by emergency response vehicles or in emergency evacuations. Therefore, construction impacts related to emergency access would be potentially significant. **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would require implementation of transportation control measures and coordination with emergency response providers to minimize impacts to emergency access in the project construction area(s) due to lane and/or road closures during GQPP Septic to Sewer Project construction. Implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1**, would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Operation of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not block roadways or driveways as the

proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would be installed belowground. Therefore, no operational impacts related to emergency access would occur.

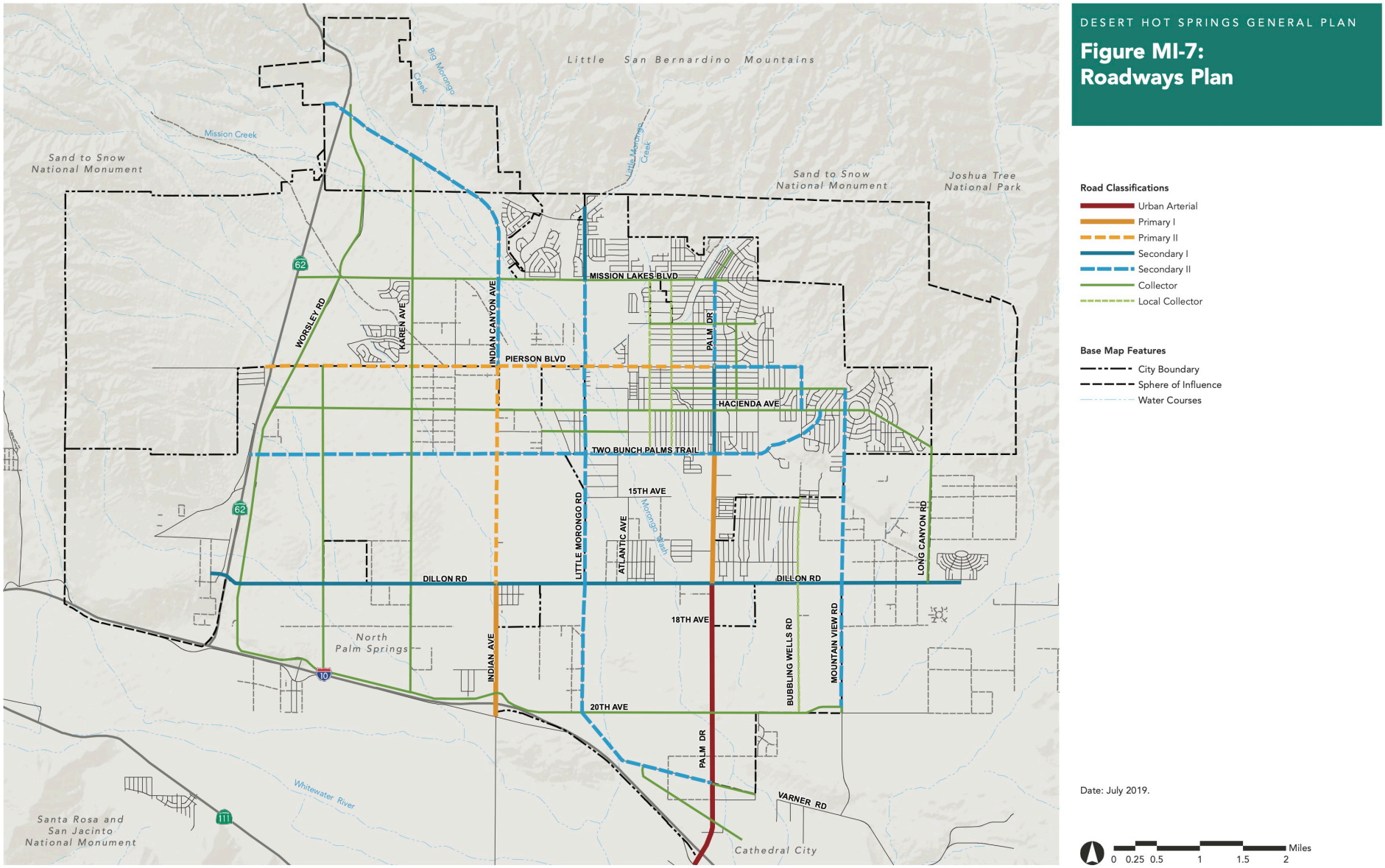


FIGURE XVII-1

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Desert Hot Springs Roadways Plan

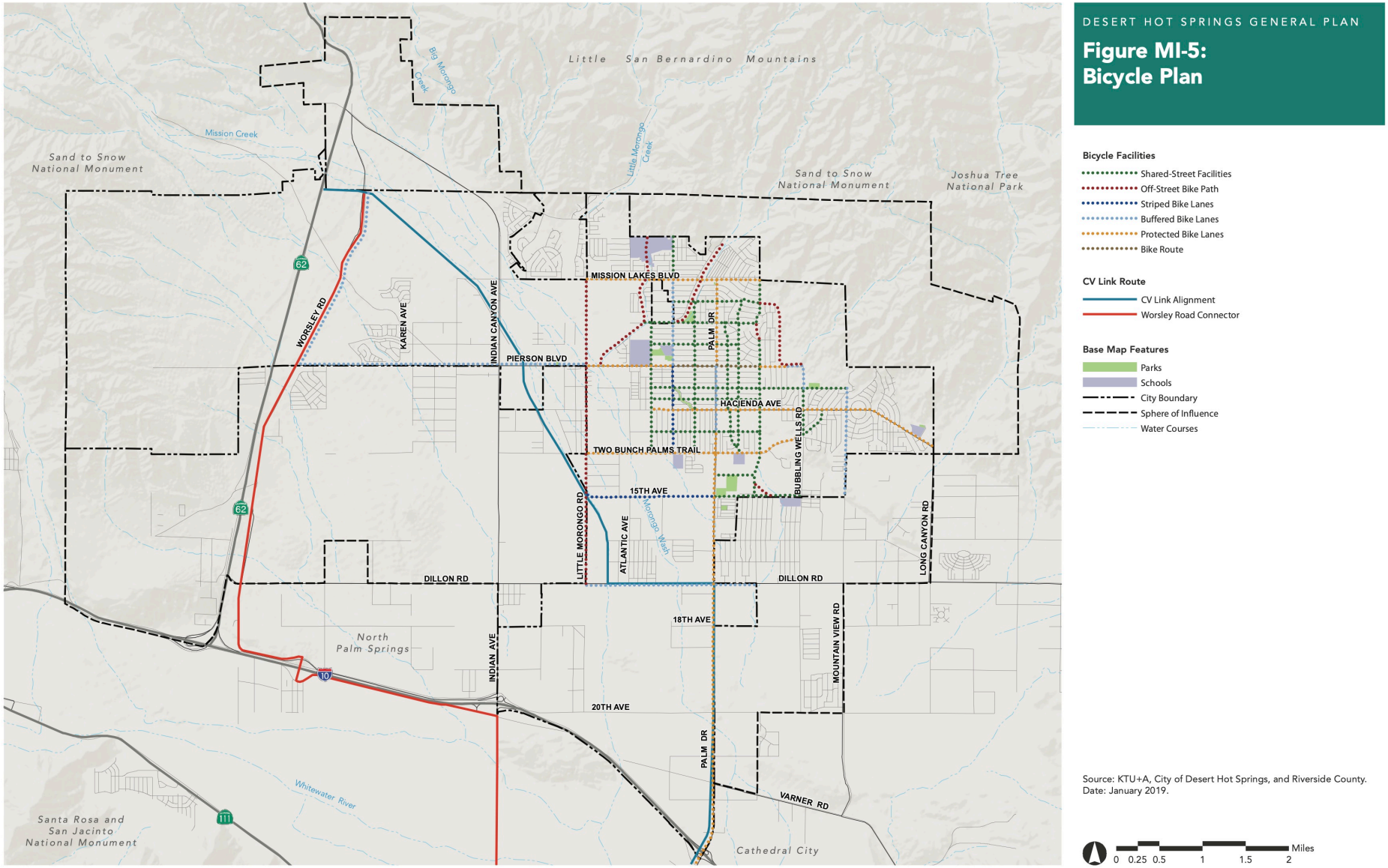
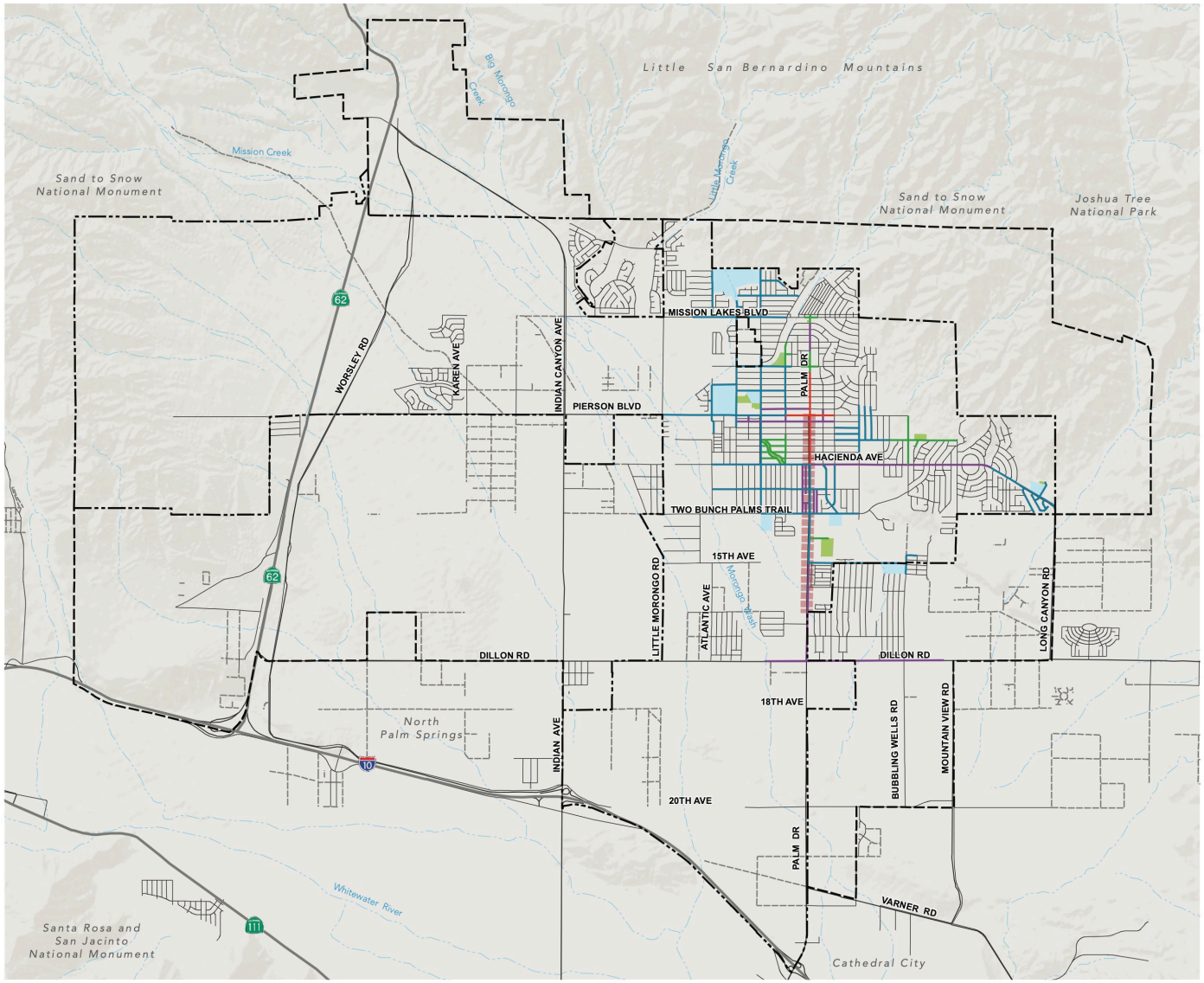


FIGURE XVII-2

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Desert Hot Springs Bicycle Plan



DESERT HOT SPRINGS GENERAL PLAN

Figure MI-1: Pedestrian Plan

Pedestrian Plan - Priorty Streets
- Safe Routes to School
- Safe Routes to Parks
- Downtown Safe Streets
- Mixed-Use/Visitor-Serving Safe Streets

Safety Enhancement Zone
- Safety Enhancement Zone

Base Map Features
- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Water Courses
- Parks
- Schools

Date: July 2019.

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

FIGURE XVII-3

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Desert Hot Springs Pedestrian Plan

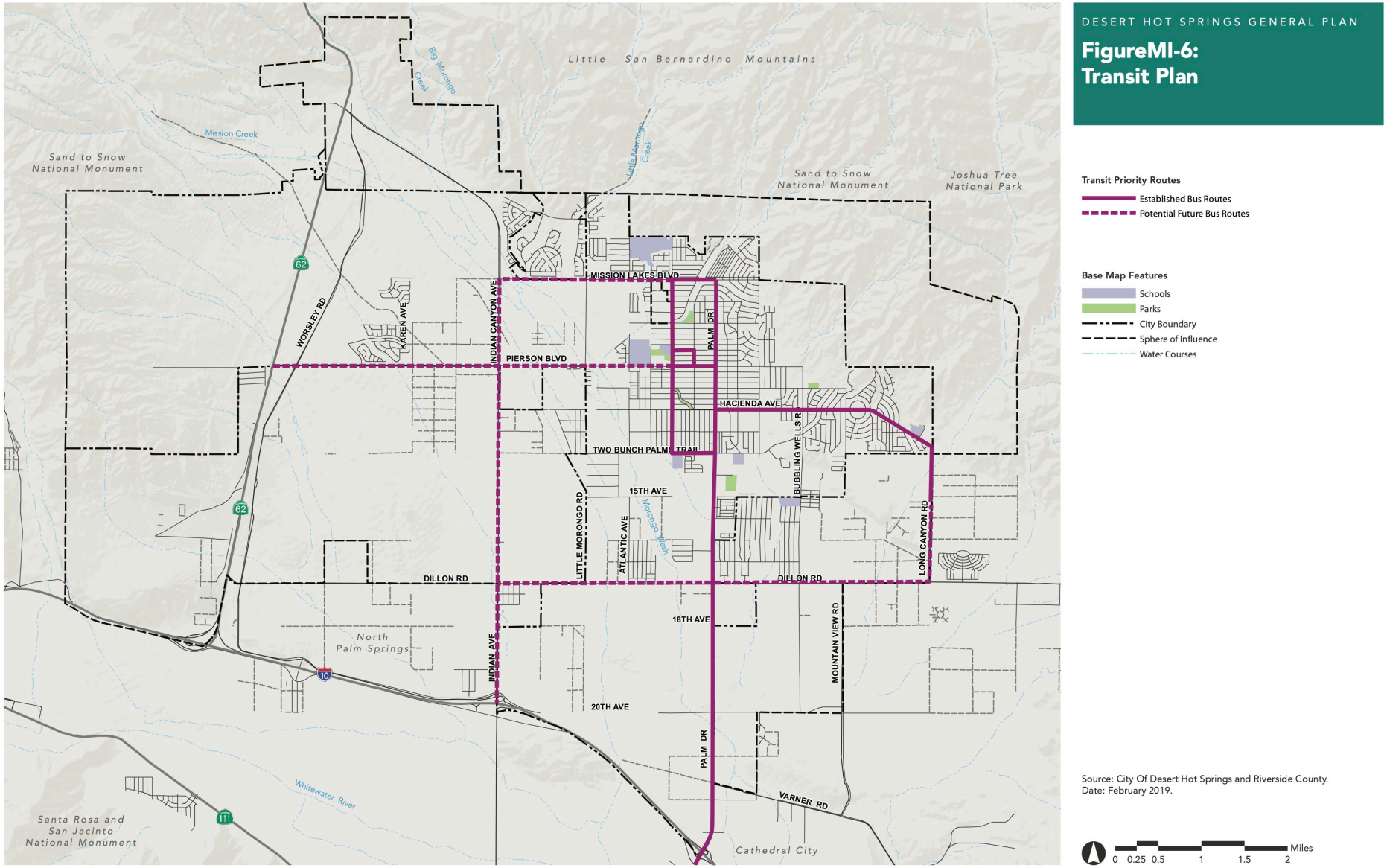


FIGURE XVII-4

Tom Dodson & Associates
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Desert Hot Springs Transit Plan

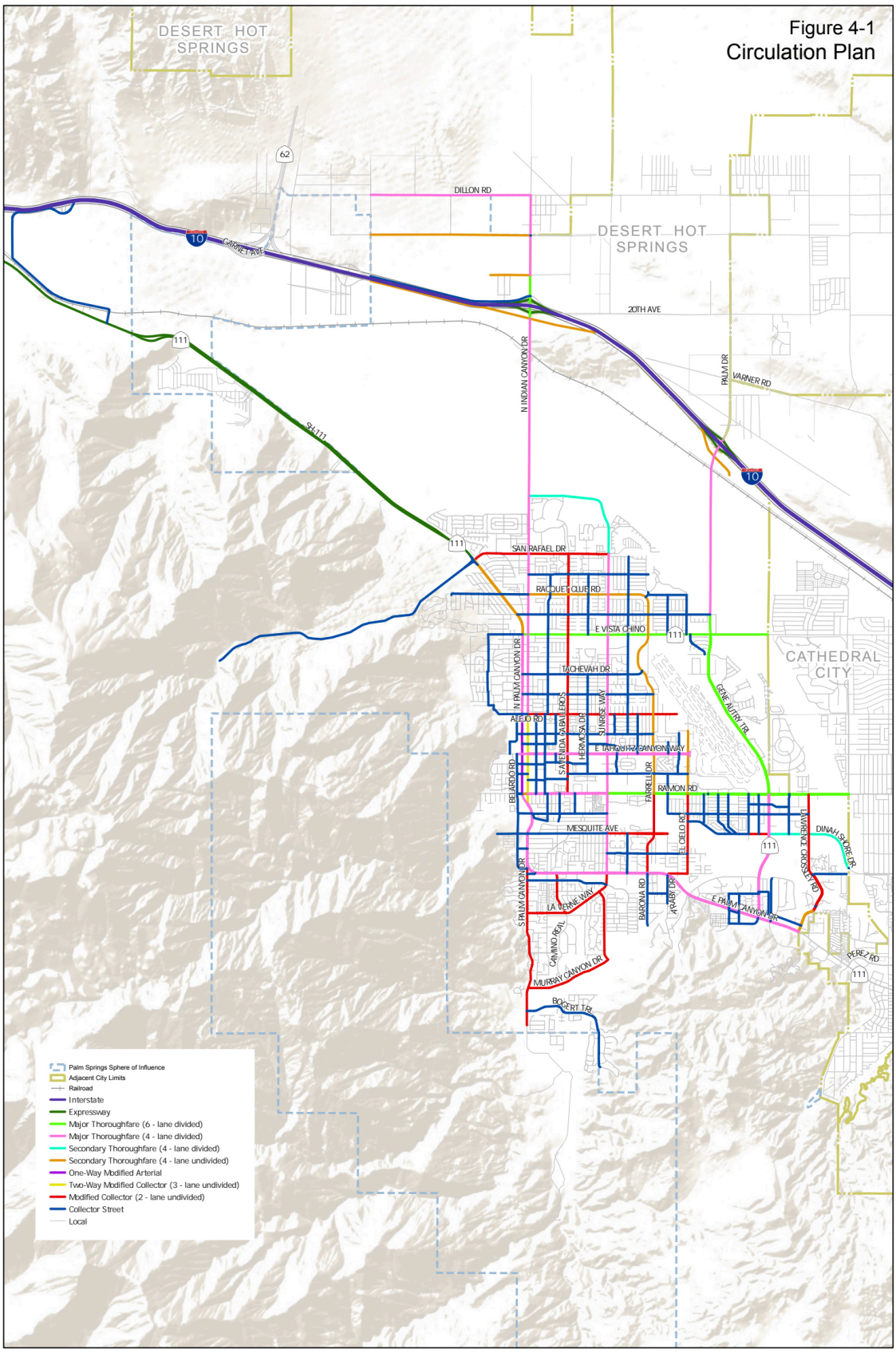

FIGURE XVII-5

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Palm Springs Circulation Plan

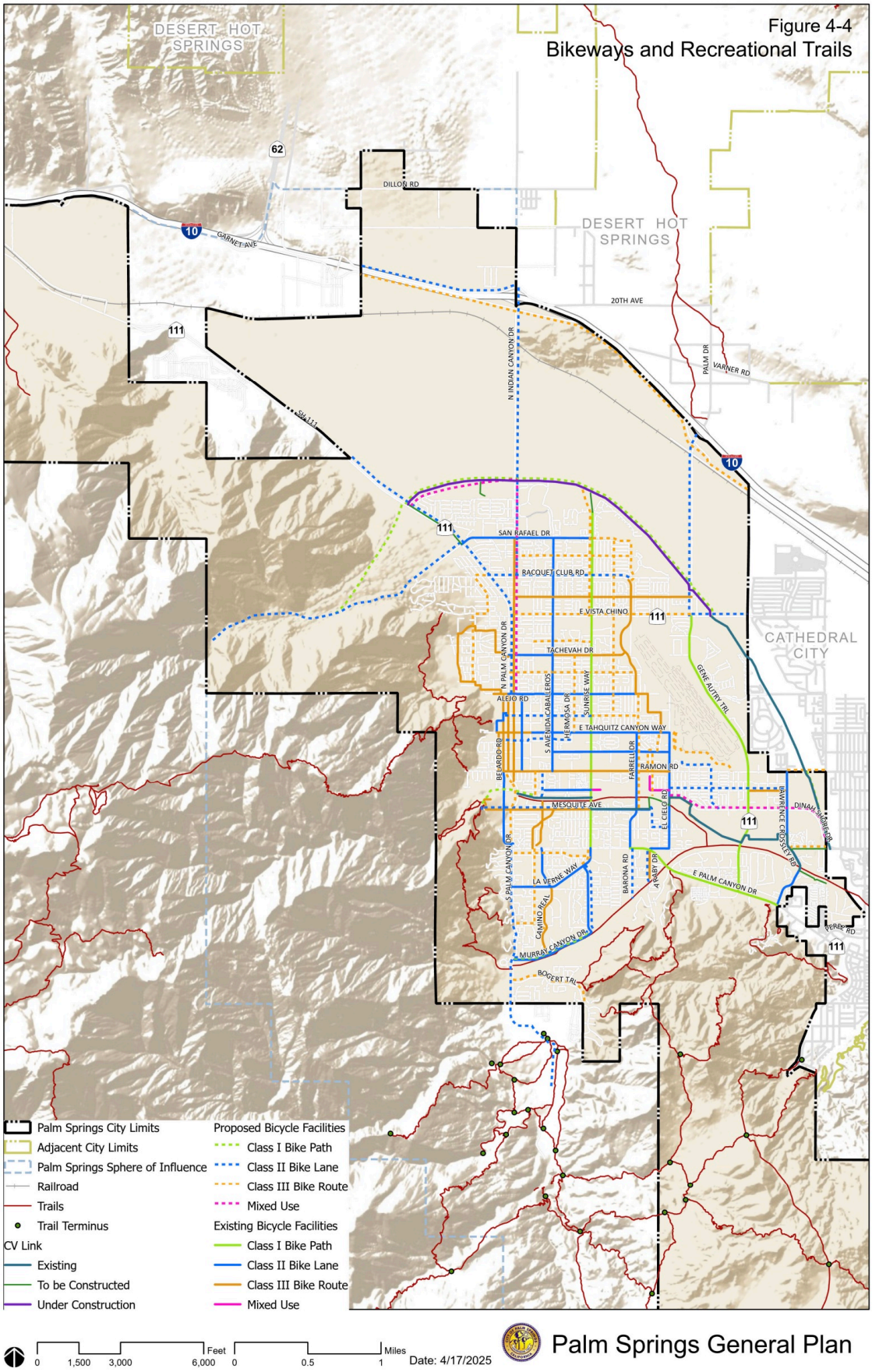

FIGURE XVII-6

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Palm Springs Bikeways and Recreational Trails

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographic-ally defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to the California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) 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	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in sub-division (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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Only one tribe has requested consultation with the District under AB 52, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. AB 52 consultation letters were sent on July 24, 2025. The Tribe responded on July 24, 2025 requesting several items:

- Copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with this project.
  - A copy of the Cultural Report (**Appendix 3**) was provided to the Tribe on December 24, 2025.
- A copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration report.
  - A copy will be sent to the Tribe once the Mitigated Negative Declaration (this document) is published
- Formal government to government consultation under AB 52
  - This item has been conducted as documented herein
- A meeting with the Lead Agency
  - A meeting was conducted on January 6th between the Tribe and MSWD

The result of the December 24,2025 meeting was a request for specific mitigation language to be incorporated into the project as part of this Initial Study to ensure protection of Tribal Cultural Resources. These mitigations address (1) the requirement for a Native American cultural monitor to be present for construction, (2) protocol for inadvertent discoveries of tribal cultural resources, (3)

reburial protocol, and (4) discovery of human remains. Thus, the following mitigation measures implementing the above principles that would protect tribal cultural resources are required to ensure that a significant tribal cultural resource impact does not occur:

TCR-1 *Native American Cultural Monitor: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, MSWD shall develop an agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians-Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the appropriate number of Native American Cultural Monitor(s). The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall attend the pre-construction meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall be on site during ground disturbing activities on undisturbed soils and disturbance of section G, H, and I including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading and trenching. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.*

TCR-2 *Inadvertent Discoveries: MSWD or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If during ground disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed: All ground disturbance activities within 50 feet of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and a meeting shall be convened between the Native American tribal representative and MSWD to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting with the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the consulting Tribe(s), as to the appropriate treatment (documentation, recovery, avoidance etc.) for the cultural resource. A Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist shall be retained if deemed necessary by the parties involved. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.*

TCR-3 *Reburial Protocol: Prior to issuance of grading permits: the developer/applicant shall come to an agreement with the consulting tribes indicating an area on-site which will be used, if needed, for reburial of any artifacts that have been identified during the duration of the project and cannot be avoided. The location has to be kept confidential and in an area that will not be disturbed in the future.*

TCR-4 *Human Remains: Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, in the event of discovery of any human remains on the project site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains, until the County Coroner has examined the remains. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of Native American, the coroner shall contact the NAHC within 24-hours, and the NAHC will be responsible for identifying the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) and contacting them for ongoing consultation and resolution. The project will be subject to these requirements during all construction and excavation activities. Compliance with the California Health and Safety Code will ensure that should there be a discovery of any human remains during project construction activities, impacts*

would be reduced to less than significant levels.

With the implementation of these mitigations, which require continued consultation with the Tribe, AB 52 consultation has concluded.

As previously discussed, as part of the effort to prepare the **Appendix 3**, and as part of the written request to the State of California NAHC for a records search in the commission's SLF, five of the tribes have responded to the inquiry in writing, and three others have provided their comments by telephone. Among them, the Augustine Band, the Quechan Indian Tribe, and the Santa Rosa Band expressed no concerns over this undertaking. The Quechan Indian Tribe deferred to other tribes in closer proximity to the APE, while the Soboba Band and the Torres Martinez band deferred specifically to the Agua Caliente Band. The Agua Caliente Band also consider the APE a part of their traditional use area. In addition, the Agua Caliente Band reported that there were several tribal cultural resources adjacent to the APE. Therefore, the tribe requested to review all cultural resources documentation generated for this undertaking, including the records search results, which has since been provided as described in the first paragraph above.

The Twenty-Nine Palms Band stated that they were unaware of any cultural resources in the APE, and the Yuhaaviatam found the area to be low in sensitivity for cultural resources. Both tribes, however, consider the project location to be a part of their traditional territory. The Twenty-Nine Palms Band requested that MSWD protect tribal cultural and cultural resources. Based on the fact that a Native American monitor will be present during construction, and that the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians put forth protocol for treatment of such resources, MSWD believes that this request by the Twenty-Nine Palms Band has been met. Note that this tribe has not requested formal consultation under AB 52. The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN) indicated that it wished to engage in in government-to-government consultation pursuant to AB 52. However, the Tribe has not sent the initial formal consultation request pursuant to AB 52 to MSWD that would require consultation. Regardless, on January 9th, 2026, Mr. Eric Weck of MSWD reached out to the contact at YSMN that was contacted by CRM TECH (refer to **Appendix 3**) to ascertain whether the Tribe wished to provide MSWD with an initial consultation request from the Tribe pursuant to PRC 21080.3.1(b). To date, MSWD has not received a response back, and therefore considers that no formal AB 52 consultation with the YSMN is required. However, as with the Twenty-Nine Palms Band, a Native American monitor will be present during construction, and MSWD will be required to implement mitigation that the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians put forth addressing protocol for treatment of tribal cultural resources.

Furthermore, the mitigation identified to protect archaeological resources under Section V Cultural Resources (**MM CUL-2**), would require an archaeological monitor to be onsite for ground disturbing activities, and calls for the creation of and adherence to a Monitoring and Treatment Plan. The coordination between the archaeological and tribal monitors would ensure protection of tribal cultural resources. As such, through the implementation of **MMs TCR-1 through TCR-4,** and **CUL-2,** the project has a less than significant potential to cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, 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 the California Native American tribe and that is either **a)** 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 **b)** 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. No further mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a. Water

No Impact – The proposed project will not develop any housing or human-occupied structures that would require connection to MSWD's water distribution system. The GQPP Septic to Sewer Project will install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The proposed project will install the new sewer pipeline and laterals belowground within existing roadways, and compacted dirt right-of-way. Therefore, with no connections to MSWD's water distribution system required beyond the temporary use of water during construction as discussed under issue X(b), the proposed project is not forecast to require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities in order to serve the project.

Wastewater

Less Than Significant Impact – The GQPP Septic to Sewer Project will install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. The purpose of the project is to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. As demonstrated throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project will not result in any significant impacts from the installation of the new wastewater collection system that will connect to MSWD's existing wastewater collection system. MSWD has planned for and anticipates the additional wastewater flow generated by GQPP Septic to Sewer Project, and has available capacity to treat this additional wastewater at their existing wastewater treatment plants. Therefore, while the proposed project would construct new wastewater collection facilities, development of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Stormwater

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated under issue X (c[i-iii]), implementation the proposed project is not forecast to significantly alter the volume of surface/stormwater runoff that will be generated from the project footprint. The roadways within which the pipelines and laterals will be installed will be returned to their original condition upon completion of the placement of each section of sewer pipeline, as will the area of compacted dirt within which a portion of the alignment will be installed. Further, in the locations that septic abatement occurs, the aboveground surface will be recompacted and returned to its original condition upon completion of septic abatement. The roadways and overall project footprint will generate essentially the same amount of stormwater as they do at present because no expansion of roadway or change in drainage patterns are anticipated. Given that no new stormwater collection facilities are required to implement the proposed project, and that the existing stormwater collection facilities will remain in place under the proposed project, development of the project will not require or result in the construction of new or expansion of existing stormwater drainage facilities. Any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Electric Power

No Impact – Development of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not require the installation of electrical services or substantial additional energy beyond that which is currently required to operate MSWD's wastewater collection facilities and Dos Palmas Lift Station. The proposed project would install sewer pipeline and laterals that will be connected to MSWD's existing wastewater collection system. The project may require some additional energy use at existing transmission facilities to accommodate the additional wastewater collected within the project Areas. However, this increase in energy demand would fall within existing electrical capacities from energy providers (i.e. SCE and MSWDs own Solar Arrays). Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

Natural Gas

No Impact – Development of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not require installation of

natural gas, nor any connections thereof. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

Telecommunications

No Impact – Development of the GQPP Septic to Sewer Project would not require installation of wireless internet service or phone service, nor any connections thereof. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded telecommunication facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

b. *No Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under issues X(b) and XIX(a) above. The GQPP Septic to Sewer Project will install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. This project also includes abating more than 2,040 septic tanks, and connecting 2,600 parcels to the District's sewer collection system, as well as installation of an estimated 2,500 new 4- to 6-inch service laterals. Construction would require up to 5,000 gallons of potable water each day for a maximum of about 6,469 working days, which equates to the installation of the project requiring up to 3,234,500 gallons of water per year (9.9-acre feet per year) during construction. This amount is considered nominal when compared to the availability of supply from the project proponent, MSWD based on a review of the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP. Once the sewer pipelines and laterals have been installed, and once the septic systems have been abated, it is not anticipated that the project would require water use or water connections to enable project operation. No aboveground features are proposed as part of this project that would require the use of potable water to operate. Thus, implementation of the proposed project will have access to sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under X(b) and XIX(a) above. The GQPP Septic to Sewer Project will install 142,000 LF of 8-inch sewer pipeline within Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and along the I-10 corridor to eliminate septic tanks that threaten contamination of potable groundwater supplies by expanding MSWD's wastewater collection system. MSWD has planned for and anticipates the additional wastewater flow generated by Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and the I-10 corridor, and has available capacity to treat this additional wastewater at their existing/planned wastewater treatment plants. Therefore, while the proposed project would construct new sewer facilities, the connection of Areas A, D-3, G, H, I, J-2, K, and the I-10 corridor to MSWD's service area would not create a demand of wastewater treatment services that would impact the provider's ability to collect and treat wastewater within their existing commitments. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will generate construction waste from the removal of soil and pavement. The inert wastes can be disposed of at existing municipal solid waste facilities, which have adequate capacity to accept inert wastes generated by this project, or can be recycled onsite. Any construction and demolition (C & D) waste, which in this case is generally anticipated to consist of onsite soils, will be recycled to the maximum extent feasible and any residual materials will be delivered to one of several C & D disposal sites in the area surrounding the project site. Many of these C & D materials can be reused or recycled, thus prolonging our supply of natural resources and potentially saving money in the process.

In accordance with CALGreen code 5.408.4, 100 percent of trees, stumps, rocks and associated vegetation and soils resulting primarily from land clearing must be reused or recycled. As this is a mandatory requirement, no mitigation is required to ensure compliance by MSWD for this project.

Because of increased construction recycling efforts resulting from CalGreen and other regulations, opportunities for construction recycling are becoming easier to find, such as one in Palm Desert that accepts a wide range of construction and demolition debris materials: asphalt, concrete, drywall, gravel, reusable/ deconstructed material, pallets, sand, soil, and wood. There are additional facilities that accept C&D materials located in the surrounding areas[14] including facilities in Coachella, Thousand Palms, Indio, Palm Springs, and Cathedral City that accept a wide range of materials.

The facilities that accept C&D materials, combined with the landfills in the surrounding area, have adequate capacity to serve the proposed project. Solid waste will be disposed of in accordance with existing regulations at an existing licensed landfill. The Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill and Badlands Landfill serve the project area. The Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill has a maximum permitted daily capacity of 5,000 tons per day, with a permitted capacity of 38,935,653 cubic yards (CY), with 19,242,950 CY of capacity remaining.[15] The Badlands landfill has a maximum permitted daily capacity of 5,000 tons per day, with a permitted capacity of 82,300,000 CY, with 7,800,000 CY of capacity remaining.[16]

Pipelines would require demolition of sections of roadway and/or compacted dirt and/or landscaped areas in order to install sewer pipelines and laterals and septic abatement belowground and within ROW, but would not require a large area of construction. Each of the individual areas undertaken by MSWD to implement the proposed project would include the preparation of a construction and demolition solid waste management plan as required by Riverside County for all new construction projects. Information provided in this waste management plan would include how the waste would be managed, hauler identification, and anticipated material wastes. Each plan would demonstrate a minimum of at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse per the current CalGreen Code. Compliance with this requirement is mandatory. Regardless, approximately 42,000 tons of asphalt[17] may be disposed of as a result of sewer pipeline installation, which is proposed to be disposed of over the approximately 10 year duration of construction. As such, given the large amount of material that could be required to be hauled off site in support of the installation of the sewer pipeline and laterals, generation of solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or impairment of the attainment of solid waste reduction goals could occur. As such, mitigation (**MM UTIL-1 and UTIL-2**) to ensure that the asphalt and other construction and demolition materials disposed of as part of the sewer pipeline and lateral installation, and septic abatement is recycled

[14] Riverside County, 2025. Construction Demolition Debris Recyclers https://rcwaste.org/sites/g/files/aldnop376/files/migrated/Portals-0-Files-Planning-CD-DebrisRecyclers.pdf (accessed 12/20/25)
[15] CalRecycle, 2025. SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill (33-AA-0007) https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2246?siteID=2368 (Accessed 12/20/25)
[16] CalRecycle, 2025. SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details Badlands Sanitary Landfill (33-AA-0006) https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2245?siteID=2367 (Accessed 12/20/25)
[17] Utilizing the following calculator assuming a depth of 12 inches, width of 4 feet, and a length of 142,000 feet. https://reevescc.com/asphalt-calculator/ Also assuming that asphalt weighs about 2 ton per cubic yard. https://www.aws-fd.com/weight-calculator (Accessed 12/20/25)

beyond the minimum of at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse per the current CalGreen Code, is necessary to reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

UTIL-1 ***The contract with demolition and construction contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall include the requirement that all materials that can feasibly be recycled shall be salvaged and recycled. This includes but is not limited to wood, metals, concrete, road base, soil and asphalt. The contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall submit a recycling plan to the implementing agency for review and approval prior to issuance of permits for the construction of demolition/construction activities.***

UTIL-2 ***The contract with demolition and construction contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall include the requirement that all soils that are planned to be exported from the site that can be recycled shall be recycled for re-use; alternatively, soils shall be reused on site to balance soil import/export.***

Also, note that the septic abatement would require disposal of septic sewage in advance of filling the tanks up with sand or slurry, and that the septic tank itself would be left in place. The septic sewage would be handled in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to handling of sewage, and would be pumped by a properly licensed pumping and hauling company and disposed of legally. Mission Springs Water District does not have the processes in place to treat septic sewage. The licensed pumper shall submit pumping tickets to the District quantifying the volume of septic sewage and identifying the facility receiving the septic sewage. The District does not accept septic sewage from abandoned septic tanks.

Operation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would not generate solid waste beyond the sewage collected and treated by MSWD at its wastewater treatment plants, the capacity of which is sufficient to handle the sewage collected by this project. Therefore, the project would have no potential to generate solid waste in excess of Federal, State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Thus, no impacts are anticipated.

e. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Construction of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would comply with all applicable City, County, and State construction and demolition requirements during construction of the proposed facilities including AB 939, which requires diversion of solid waste from landfills at 50% by 2000; SB 1383. California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Regulations, which establishes methane reduction targets for California. SB 1383 sets goals to reduce disposal of organic waste in landfills, including edible food, including reducing organic waste disposal 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025, and recovering at least 20% of currently disposed surplus edible food by 2025[18]; and, the CALGreen Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 11) requires that at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous

[18] CalRecycle, 2025. California's Organic Waste Reduction SB 1383 Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy. https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/ (Accessed 12/20/25)

construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. All excavated soil would be hauled offsite by truck to an appropriately permitted solid waste facility. The amount of soil to be disposed per day would not exceed the maximum permitted throughput for each waste type (i.e., non-hazardous and hazardous). Furthermore, other solid waste would be disposed of at an appropriately permitted solid waste facility. The daily amount of solid waste to be disposed per day would not exceed the maximum permitted throughput for each waste type (i.e., non- hazardous and hazardous). Any hazardous materials collected during construction would be transported and disposed of by a permitted and licensed hazardous materials service provider. Also, note that the septic abatement would require disposal of septic sewage in advance of filling it up with sand or slurry, and that the septic tank itself would be left in place. The septic sewage would be handled in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to handling of septic waste, and would be pumped by a properly licensed pumping and hauling company and disposed of legally. Mission Springs Water District does not have the processes in place to treat septic sewage. The licensed pumper shall submit pumping tickets to the District quantifying the volume of septic sewage and identifying the facility receiving the septic sewage. The District does not accept septic sewage from abandoned septic tanks.

In order to ensure full compliance above and beyond Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and avoid a potentially significant impact thereof, the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement would be required, through the implementation of **MM UTIL-1** to recycle construction and demolition materials beyond the mandated 65 percent diversion required by the current CalGreen Code. Furthermore, **MM UTIL-2** would require further diversion through the recycling of soils where possible. Thus, construction impacts would be less than significant through the implementation of mitigation.

Operation of the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would not result in the generation of solid waste beyond the sewage collected and treated by MSWD at its wastewater treatment plants, the capacity of which is sufficient to handle the sewage collected by this project. Therefore, the proposed project operation would comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. No operational impacts under this issue are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XX. WILDFIRE: 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 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

Background

CAL FIRE designates most of the areas within the project area as being located within moderate fire hazard severity zones (FHSZs) within a LRA due to the project's location within the City of Desert Hot Springs, Unincorporated Riverside County, and the City of Palm Springs, outside of higher fire risk areas in the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains and Mount San Jacinto (**Figures IX-11 and IX-12**). However, there are areas within the northern portion of Area A that are designated as high and very high FHSZ within a State Responsibility Zone (SRA) per CAL FIRE as demonstrated on **Figure IX-12**.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed pipelines would be constructed primarily within paved roadway ROW, with some areas of the sewer pipeline located in undisturbed areas, such as an area that is not paved, consisting of compacted dirt to connect sewer pipeline from Hidalgo Street to Quinta Way as previously described. As discussed under issue IX(f), pipeline installed within public roadways could impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The Desert Hot Springs General Plan Wildfire Hazards Map (**Figure IX-1**) indicates the emergency evacuation routes within the project vicinity. The proposed sewer pipeline alignments have generally been designed to avoid conflicts with these roadways, with the exception of connecting a pipeline within Hacienda Avenue (Areas H, J-2, and K), and the short section of sewer pipeline located within Indian Canyon Avenue. At no time during the installation of pipeline

will the entirety of this roadway be closed. The project would require one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented. Thus, in order to ensure adequate emergency circulation during construction of the proposed pipelines, implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would be required. This is because this construction activity, and other anticipated construction activities associated with sewer pipeline alignments, could potentially block access to roadways and driveways for emergency vehicles. The construction-related impacts, although temporary, could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. However, at no time during the installation of the proposed sewer pipeline alignments and associated laterals will the entirety of the roadways be closed. To minimize potential conflicts between construction deliveries and potential emergency evacuation periods, and thereby avoid a potentially significant impact, MSWD shall establish access protocols with its construction contractors that will require deliveries to be postponed during a declared fire emergency. Thus, through the implementation of **MM WF-1** potential conflicts between Conveyance Facility construction traffic and a potential fire emergency can be avoided. It is anticipated that the installation of the proposed sewer pipeline alignments and associated laterals within road ROW would require only one lane to be closed, which would allow for through-traffic so long as a traffic management plan is developed and implemented, which shall be enforced through the implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1**.

The construction-related impacts, although temporary, could potentially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be potentially significant. Therefore, mitigation is necessary to minimize impacts. **MM WF-1**, which requires consistency with the Riverside County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan (RCOAE), as well as review and approval by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW, would be required to reduce these potential temporary significant impacts to a less than significant level. The RCOAE provides wildfire mitigation efforts that include the goal of continuing to reduce fire hazards in Riverside County, and generally coordinates evacuation in the event of an area emergency, which includes area wildfires. The implementation of **MMs TRAN-1 and WF-1** would require the preparation and implementation of a TMP with comprehensive strategies to reduce potential disruption to emergency evacuation or an emergency response plan during construction. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan through the implementation of mitigation identified above.

Following construction, the operation of the pipelines would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan as they would be located underground. Thus, the potential for significant impairment of any emergency response or evacuation plans is minimal, or less than significant.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – During construction, because a small portion of Area A sewer pipeline and laterals, and septic abatement would be installed or undertaken in locations designated as high and very high FHSZ, construction may exacerbate fire risk temporarily as a result of accidental sparks generated by spark-producing equipment. As such, the proposed installation of sewer pipeline, laterals, and septic abatement require the implementation of **MM WF-2,** which would minimize fire risk during activities that would utilize spark-producing equipment by requiring spark arrestors for construction equipment that could create a spark, and requiring

construction crews and vehicles to have access to functional fire extinguishers and fire prevention equipment at all times during construction. **MM WF-2** would require fire reduction measures to be incorporated into the fire management plan/fuel modification plan for the proposed facility, and shall be implemented during construction and over the long-term for protection of the site to avoid potentially significant wildfire risks. Therefore, **MM WF-2** shall be implemented for pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement occurring within high and very high FHSZs, which is generally limited to Area A. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

The pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would be installed in areas that are either flat or have shallow slopes. Implementation of the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would not substantially exacerbate wildfire risks, as once construction is completed, the pipelines would be located belowground.

Smoke from wildfires that may occur in the very high and high FHSZs surrounding the project area may generally impact air quality throughout the Coachella Valley region during a fire. Thus, workers in the project area could be exposed to the plume of smoke from a wildfire in the San Bernardino Mountains to the east, Mount San Jacinto to the south/southwest, or Little San Bernardino Mountains surrounding the project area, but the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement will not contribute to any substantial increase in this exposure. Due to the character of the facilities (belowground), the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement would not contribute substantially to the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Thus, operational impacts would be less than significant.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – At this time, sewer pipeline and laterals within a small portion of Area A are proposed for an area designated as high or very high FHSZs on the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps provided on (**Figures IX-11 and IX-12**). The potential that such pipelines could exacerbate fire risk or cause short- or long-term impacts to the environment related to this hazard is minimal because existing roadways and dirt compacted ROW within which the sewer pipelines and laterals would be installed are periodically maintained under existing conditions. Further, the septic abatement would occur within existing parcels and the disturbance of the small area within which septic abatement would occur are maintained by the property owners. The construction of proposed project high fire risk locations could exacerbate fire risk in these areas as a result of spark-producing equipment use during operations and construction, and could therefore result in both temporary and ongoing impacts on the environment. However, the implementation of **MM WF-2** under such circumstances would be available to reduce any project contribution to greater fire risk to a less than significant impact level. The implementation of **MM WF-2** would require the preparation of a fire management plan/fuel modification plan for project infrastructure proposed within very high FHSZs, and it would identify comprehensive strategies to reduce fire potential during construction and over long-term operation. Additionally, over the long-term, the pipelines will be essentially passive and will not contribute to increased access or other activities that could contribute to greater fire risk in the future. Thus, the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse short- or long-term wildfire impacts. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

The sewer pipelines and laterals would be installed belowground. The potential for operational wildfire impacts would be negligible given that these facilities would convey sewage belowground, and as such, would operate in a passive manner. Therefore, no operational impacts are anticipated.

d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – While the proposed pipelines, laterals, and septic abatement have a small surface footprint that can be constructed within existing paved roadways, compacted ROW, and compacted and potentially landscaped surfaces within which septic abatement would occur to minimize potential fire hazards, the installation could 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. Thus, implementation of **MM WF-2** is required; it would require the preparation of a fire management plan/fuel modification plan with comprehensive strategies to reduce fire potential during construction within high and very high FHSZs. Based on this evaluation, the construction of the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement can be accomplished without causing potentially significant impacts through the implementation of **MM WF-2**. Further, the proposed project will not install any structures, habitable or otherwise. Based on the above discussion, implementation of **MM WF-2** is required to minimize the potential for development of the sewer pipelines and laterals, and septic abatement to 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 to a level of less than significant.

The pipelines and laterals would be installed belowground, and the septic abatement activities would occur belowground. The potential for operational wildfire impacts would be negligible given that, once operational, the proposed sewer pipelines and laterals would convey wastewater belowground, and as such, would operate in a passive manner. Therefore, no operational impacts are anticipated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

SUBSTANTIATION

The analysis in this Initial Study and the findings reached indicate that the proposed project can be implemented without causing any new project specific or cumulatively considerable unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts. Mitigation is required to control potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant impact level. The following findings are based on the detailed analysis of the Initial Study of all environmental topics and the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the previous text and summarized following this section.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project has potential to cause a significant impact to any biological or cultural resources without the implantation of mitigation. As previously stated under issue IV, Biological Resources, within the I-10 corridor, the project would require pipeline installation through an area consisting of native desert. It is not anticipated that any operational activities would occur within this area once the pipeline is installed beyond in the event of an emergency, in which case, a biological monitor would be called upon to be present during any repairs to ensure that any unforeseen impacts to special status species would be less than significant. This shall be enforced through implementation of **MM BIO-1**. Further, during construction or operation near environmentally sensitive areas, such as within the more sparsely developed areas, such as around the I-10 corridor, or along areas that border the CVMSHCP Conservation areas, such as the I-10 corridor, Area A, Area J-2, and Area K, wildlife exclusion fencing shall be installed as

appropriate to deter wildlife from entering the project area, thereby protecting special status wildlife species from potential project-related impacts through **MM BIO-2**. Implementation of **MMs BIO-3 through BIO-7** will ensure that project construction impacts, both direct, and indirect, to sensitive biological resources and potential special status species and habitats, including the potential effects of invasive species, are reduced to a level of insignificance. **MM BIO-8** would ensure that direct impacts to the special status species are mitigated through avoidance, mitigation or compensation in accordance with regulatory requirements including compliance with CDFW and USFWS through the acquisition of incidental take permits where required. This would avoid or compensate for potential "take" of such species. **MM BIO-9** would ensure that the protective mitigation measures for BUOW provided herein are successfully implemented for the duration of construction and operation of future individual projects under the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella. If BUOW are determined to be present within the project area prior to project implementation, then any potential project related impacts to BUOW would need to be avoided and coordination with the CDFW may be required. **MM BIO-9** would ensure protection of this species in light of project implementation. MSWD will likely be required to obtain the following regulatory approvals prior to impacts occurring within the identified jurisdictional areas: Corps Approved Jurisdictional Determination/Waiver; Regional Board CWA Section Report of Waste Discharge; and CDFW Section 1602 SAA, as a result, **MM BIO-10** would be required to ensure that these permits and the mitigation specified therein are obtained and implemented to protect jurisdictional features. The State does protect all migratory and nesting native birds. Further, the project APE and surrounding area consists of habitat that is suitable to support nesting birds. Thus, the project area may include areas that function as nesting locations for native birds. To avoid impacting nesting birds as required by the MBTA and California FGC, **MM BIO-11** shall be implemented. The project will need to conform with the Guidelines for projects that are adjacent CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. Thus, the proposed project shall be required to adhere to the CVMSHCP guidelines through the implementation of **MM BIO-12**. These mitigation measures will ensure that the project would not degrade the quality of the natural environment, substantially reduce 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

.As previously stated under issue V, Cultural Resources, since the APE lies predominantly within the paved roadbeds of existing public roads or on adjacent private properties, standard subsurface exploration procedures known as Extended Phase I do not appear to be a feasible approach to determine the presence or absence of subsurface cultural remains in the vertical APE. In order to identify such remains in a timely manner and, if necessary, protect them from project impact, it is recommended that excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils) in the archaeologically sensitive areas be conducted under the direction and close observation of a qualified archaeologist. If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations should be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a Phase II archaeological testing program. **MMs CUL-1 through CUL-3** would ensure that impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant. Please see biological and cultural sections of this Initial Study.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Based on the analysis in this Initial Study, the proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project has the potential to cause impacts that are individually or cumulatively considerable. There are no other projects in the vicinity to which this project would

make a cumulatively considerable impact, furthermore the provision of wastewater collection is generally viewed as a benefit to the community. The issues of Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and ensure that cumulative effects are not cumulatively considerable. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts without implementation of mitigation. The potential cumulative environmental effects of implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than considerable through the implementation of mitigation and thus, less than significant impacts.

c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will achieve long-term community goals by protecting water quality of the upper Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin through septic abatement by way of sewage collection. The short-term impacts associated with the project, which are mainly construction-related impacts, are less than significant with mitigation, and the proposed project is compatible with long-term environmental protection. The issues of Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Wildfire require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce potential human impacts to a less than significant level. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts on humans without implementation of mitigation. The potential for direct human effects from implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than significant.

Conclusion

This document evaluated all CEQA issues contained in the Initial Study Checklist form. The evaluation determined that either no impact or less than significant impacts would be associated with the issues of Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, and Recreation. The issues of Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The required mitigation has been proposed in this Initial Study to reduce impacts for these issues to a less than significant impact and the MSWD will implement these measures.

Based on the findings in this Initial Study, the MSWD proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Mission Springs Water District GQPP Septic to Sewer Project. A Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI) will be issued for this project by the MSWD. The Initial Study and NOI will be circulated for 30 days of public comment. At the end of the 30-day review period, a final MND package will be prepared and it will be reviewed by MSWD for possible adoption at a future Board meeting, the date for which has yet to be determined. If you or your agency comments on the MND/NOI for this project, you will be notified about the meeting dates in accordance with the requirements in Section 21092.5 of CEQA (statute).

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; *Sundstrom v.*

County of Mendocino,(1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; *Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors*, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; San *Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2019
Authority: Public Resources Code sections 21083 and 21083.09
Reference: Public Resources Code sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3/ 21084.2 and 21084.3

SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

Aesthetics

AES-1 The project shall implement at least the following measures, unless they conflict with the local jurisdiction's light requirements, in which case the local jurisdiction's requirements shall be enforced:

- Use of low-pressure sodium lights where security needs require such lighting to minimize impacts of glare.
- The height of lighting fixtures shall be lowered to the lowest level consistent with the purpose of the lighting to reduce unwanted illumination.
- Directing light and shielding shall be used to minimize off-site illumination during both construction of the project.
- No light shall be allowed to intrude into sensitive light receptor areas during both construction of the project.
- Non-reflective materials and/or coatings shall be used on the exterior of all facilities if constructed in a publicly visible location (such as from a roadway or public facility).

Biological Resources

BIO-1 Exclusion barriers (e.g., silt fences) will be installed at the edge of the construction footprint and along the outer perimeter of Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Environmentally Restricted Areas as defined by the project biologist prior to the commencement of construction activities to restrict special-status species from entering the construction area during construction. The design specifications of the exclusion fencing will be determined through consultation with the USFWS and/or CDFW, as appropriate. Clearance surveys will be conducted for special-status species after the exclusion fence is installed in compliance with USFWS and/or CDFW requirements. The project biologist shall determine the frequency in which clearance surveys will be conducted to determine the efficacy of the exclusion fencing.

BIO-2 All food-related trash items (e.g., wrappers, cans, bottles, food scraps) will be disposed of in closed containers and removed at least once a week from the construction site.

BIO-3 Use of rodenticides and herbicides in the project footprint will be restricted at the direction of the project biologist. This measure is necessary to prevent poisoning of special-status species and the potential reduction or depletion of the prey populations of special–status wildlife species. Where pesticides must be used, they must be used in full accordance with use instructions for the particular chemical and at the direction of the project biologist.

BIO-4 Prior to the commencement of construction, MSWD shall identify staging areas for construction equipment to be utilized during construction that will be located outside sensitive biological resources areas, including habitat for special-status species, jurisdictional waters, and wildlife movement corridors.

During construction and operation, the contractor shall eliminate all nonessential lighting throughout the project area and avoid or limit the use of artificial light during the hours of dawn

and dusk when many wildlife species are most active. The contractor shall ensure that construction lighting for project activities is shielded, cast downward, and does not spill over onto other properties or upward into the night sky. The contractor shall ensure use of LED lighting with a correlated color temperature of 3,000 Kelvins or less, proper disposal of hazardous waste, and recycling of lighting that contains toxic compounds with a qualified recycler.

BIO-5 Plastic mono-filament netting (erosion-control matting) or similar material will not be used in erosion control materials to prevent potential harm to wildlife. Materials such as coconut coir matting or tackified hydroseeding compounds will be used as substitutes.

BIO-6 All excavated, steep-sided holes or trenches more than 8 inches deep will be covered at the close of each working day with plywood or similar materials, or a minimum of one escape ramp constructed of earth fill for every 10 feet of trenching will be provided to prevent the entrapment of wildlife. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they will be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. All culverts or similar enclosed structures with a diameter of 4 inches or greater will be covered, screened, or stored more than 1 foot off the ground to prevent use by wildlife. Stored material will be cleared for common and special-status wildlife species before the pipe is subsequently used or moved.

BIO-7 Pre-Construction Consultations. Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to consult with a biologist to determine the need for site-specific biological surveys. Where an area under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella has been determined to require a site-specific survey by a biologist, in any case in which the project will affect undeveloped land, site surveys shall be conducted by a biologist. If sensitive species are identified as a result of the survey for which mitigation/compensation must be provided in accordance with regulatory requirements, all work must stop in the area until the following subsequent mitigation actions are taken:

1. MSWD shall provide compensation for sensitive habitat acreage lost by acquiring and protecting in perpetuity (through property or mitigation bank credit acquisition) habitat for the sensitive species at a ratio of not less than 1:1 for habitat lost. The property acquisition shall include the presence of at least one animal or plant per animal or plant lost at the development site to compensate for the loss of individual sensitive species.
2. The final mitigation may differ from the above values based on negotiations between the project proponent and USFWS and CDFW for any incidental take permits for listed species. MSWD shall retain a copy of the incidental take permit as verification that the mitigation of significant biological resource impacts at a project site with sensitive biological resources has been accomplished.
3. Preconstruction botanical surveys for special-status plant communities and special- status plant species will be conducted when needed in areas that were not previously surveyed because of access or timing issues or project design changes. Pre-construction surveys for special-status plant communities and special-status plant species will be conducted before the start of ground-disturbing activities during the appropriate blooming period(s) for the species.

BIO-8 Each area or project considered under this GQPP Septic to Sewer Update umbrella shall be required to conduct focused burrowing owl surveys. The burrowing owl surveys shall be

conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012 or most recent version) prior to any construction activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If burrowing owls are detected during the focused surveys, the qualified biologist and MSWD shall begin coordination with CDFW and USFWS immediately, and shall submit the results of focused surveys to CDFW and USFWS as soon results become available and before commencement of any project activities, including any vegetation- or ground- disturbing activities. The information included in the survey results should be consistent with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, including a detailed map showing locations of all burrowing owls, burrowing owl sign, potential burrows, and occupied burrows (occupied means at least one burrowing owl or its sign has been observed within the last three years; may be indicated by owl sign including feathers, pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance or perch site); a description of the behavior of burrowing owls during surveys; a description of survey methods; and other items listed in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation under "Survey Reports." Consultation with CDFW and USFWS must be completed prior to commencement of any Project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities. If impacts to occupied burrowing owl habitat or burrow(s) or burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs cannot be avoided, appropriate NCCP (Fish and Game Code section 2835) or CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081(b)) should be obtained from CDFW prior to commencement of project activities, including vegetation- or ground-disturbing activities.

BIO-9 For the Little Morongo Creek crossing at Augusta Avenue, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) shall be notified pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602. If CDFW determines that the Project may substantially affect fish and wildlife resources, then CDFW shall issue a Streambed Alternation Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement shall include measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources.

Through an Agreement from CDFW and/or other agencies (Corps, Regional Board [regulatory agencies]) with jurisdiction over impacts to jurisdictional waters, the District shall minimize discharge of fill to the extent feasible, and any discharge of fill not avoidable and all impacts to Fish and Game Code section 1602 resources shall be authorized and mitigated through compensatory mitigation in an Agreement. Mitigation shall be provided by restoration of temporary impacts, enhancement of existing resources, or for permanent impacts as follows: purchasing into CDFW, Corps, or Regional Board authorized mitigation bank; or by selecting a site near the Project site and enhancing it with a native riparian habitat or invasive species removal in accordance with a habitat mitigation plan approved by regulatory agencies; or by acquiring sufficient compensating habitat to meet regulatory agency requirements. Impacts to jurisdictional waters shall be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 ratio, with the ultimate compensatory mitigation ratio being determined through negotiation with regulatory agency, and never at a rate of less than 1:1. The ratio will rise based on the type of habitat, habitat quality, and presence of sensitive or listed plants or animals in the affected area. This ratio will be determined by the regulatory agency, and must be deemed sufficient by the regulatory agency issuing the permit to compensate for/offset the impacts to the jurisdictional waters and supported species and habitats therein. A Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Proposal shall be prepared by a biologist or regulatory specialist and reviewed and approved by the appropriate regulatory agencies. These agencies (Corps, Regional Board, CDFW and any other applicable regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the proposed facility improvement) can impose greater mitigation requirements

in their permits, but the District will utilize the ratios outlined above as the minimum required to offset or compensate for impacts to jurisdictional waters, riparian areas or other wetlands.

the State does protect all migratory and nesting native birds. Further, the project APE and surrounding area consists of habitat that is suitable to support nesting birds. Thus, the project area may include areas that function as nesting locations for native birds. To avoid impacting nesting birds as required by the MBTA and California FGC, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

BIO-10 Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. The buffer shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds, unless a smaller buffer is specifically determined by a qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and an established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined the young have fledged or the project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.

BIO-11 The project shall be required to comply with the provisions of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan requirements for projects adjacent to Conservation Areas, where construction occurs adjacent to Conservation Areas (the nearest Conservation Area is along the southern border of Area A and the northern border of Area K and J-2 (Upper Mission Creek Covered/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area) and the eastern border of Area I-10.

1) Drainage – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.
2) Toxics – Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate byproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation

Area.

3) Lighting – For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.
4) Noise – Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA Leq hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.
5) Invasives – Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112 [of the CVMSHCP]. The plants listed in Table 4-113 [of the CVMSHCP] shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of these facilities, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an onsite inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the District's onsite inspector. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

CUL-2 Due to the heightened cultural sensitivity of the proposed project area, a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines) shall be present for excavations and other ground-disturbing operations that will reach beyond the roadbed fill (generally speaking the uppermost five to six feet of surface and near-surface soils) in the archaeologically sensitive areas (specifically within Areas H and I). A sufficient number of archaeological monitors shall be present each work day to ensure that simultaneously occurring ground disturbing activities receive thorough levels of monitoring coverage. A Monitoring and Treatment Plan that is reflective of the project mitigation shall be completed by the archaeological consultant and submitted to the District and shall be approved by the District prior to implementation. Any and all findings will be subject to the protocol detailed within the Monitoring and Treatment Plan.

CUL-3 If any potentially significant cultural remains are encountered, the mechanical excavations shall be halted or diverted while an archaeological team recovers the materials through procedures consistent to a Phase II archaeological testing program. These procedures should include, at a minimum, the following:

- Hand excavations in the immediate vicinity of unearthed cultural remains to remove all artifacts;
- Immediate notification of the Riverside County Coroner and consultation with the NAHC

and local Native American groups if human remains or potential human remains are discovered, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and Public Resources Code §5097.98;
- Cataloguing, laboratory analysis, and permanent curation of the recovered artifacts;
- Compilation of archaeological site records and/or site record updates, as appropriate, to document any archaeological discoveries in the California Historical Resources Inventory;
- Preparation of a final report as a comprehensive record of the research procedures and study findings.

Geology and Soils

GEO-1 For each site-specific project that is less than one acre in size requiring ground disturbing activities such as grading, the implementing agencies shall identify and implement BMPs to minimize soil erosion and loss of topsoil comparable to that which would be required under a SWPPP (BMPs may include, but are not limited to hay bales, wattles, detention basins, silt fences, coir rolls, etc.) to ensure that the discharge of the storm runoff from the construction site does not cause erosion downstream of the discharge point. If any substantial erosion or sedimentation occurs as a result of discharging storm water from a project construction site, any erosion or sedimentation damage shall be restored to pre-discharge conditions.

GEO-2 All earth-moving operations reaching beyond the disturbed surface soils (generally five to six feet in depth within the existing roadbed) shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays and shall collect samples of sediments that are likely to contain fossil remains of small vertebrates or invertebrates. However, the monitor must have the power to temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens.

Collected samples of sediment shall be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.

A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when submitted to the MSWD and the USACE, would signify completion of the statutory compliance process regarding paleontological resources.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

HAZ-1 For project facilities that handle hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste, the HMBP prepared and submitted to the CUPA shall incorporate BMPs designed to minimize the potential for accidental release of such chemicals and shall meet the standards required by California law for HMBPs. The facility managers shall implement these measures to reduce the potential for accidental releases of hazardous materials or wastes. The HMBP shall be approved prior to operation of the given facility.

HAZ-2 The HMBP shall assess the potential accidental release scenarios and identify the equipment

and response capabilities required to provide immediate containment, control, and collection of any released hazardous material. Prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy, each facility shall ensure that necessary equipment has been installed and training of personnel has occurred to obtain sufficient resources to control and prevent the spread of any accidentally released hazardous or toxic materials.

HAZ-3 All hazardous materials that become waste during both operation and construction of project infrastructure shall be delivered to a licensed treatment, disposal, or recycling facility and be disposed of in accordance with State and Federal law.

HAZ-4 Before determining that an area contaminated as a result of an accidental release during project operation or construction is fully remediated, specific thresholds of acceptable clean-up shall be established and sufficient samples shall be taken and tested within the contaminated area to verify that these clean-up thresholds have been met in compliance with State and Federal law.

HAZ-5 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the local CUPA and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into SWPPP prepared for each future facility developed under the project, or where an SWPPP is not required due Project size, shall be incorporated as a BMP. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

Hydrology and Water Quality

HYD-1 Prior to the commencement of construction of any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella that will disturb less than one acre (i.e., that is not subject to the California Construction Stormwater General Permit), the Implementing Agency shall require implementation of and construction contractor(s) shall select best management practices (BMPs) to achieve a reduction in pollutants from stormwater discharge to the maximum extent practicable during construction, and to control urban runoff after each individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella is in operation. Examples of BMP(s) that would achieve a reduction in pollutants include, but are not limited to:

- The use of silt fences or coir rolls;
- The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;
- The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;
- The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;
- The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;
- The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and
- Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.

Public Services

PS-1 The project construction equipment shall be fenced or otherwise have access controlled at the close of each work day. Furthermore, the project shall include security lighting to deter illegal trespass to attractive nuisances as part of construction. The security lighting shall be shielded from adjacent sensitive receptors in accordance with the jurisdiction within which construction occurs Municipal Code.

Transportation

TRAN-1 Prepare and Implement Construction Transportation Management Plan (TMP)
A construction TMP shall be developed and implemented by the implementing agency, in coordination with the respective jurisdictions, the City of Desert Hot Springs, County of Riverside Transportation Department, and/or other relevant parties during construction of the proposed project. The TMP shall conform to Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines and shall include but is not limited to:

Construction Traffic Routes and Staging Locations: The TMP shall identify construction staging site locations and potential road closures, alternate routes for detours, and planned truck routes for construction-related vehicle trips, including but not limited to haul trucks, material delivery trucks, and equipment delivery trucks. It shall also identify alternative safe routes and policies to maintain safety along bicycle and pedestrian routes during construction. Construction vehicle routes shall avoid local residential streets and avoid peak morning and evening commute hours to the maximum extent practicable. Staging locations, alternate detour routes, and construction vehicle routes shall avoid other active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites to the maximum extent practicable.

Damage Repair: The TMP shall include the following requirements to minimize damage to the existing roadway network:

- A list of precautionary measures to protect the existing roadway network, including but not limited to pavements, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and drainage structures, shall be outlined. The construction contractor(s) shall be required to implement these measures throughout the duration of construction of the proposed sewer pipeline.
- The roadway network along the proposed sewer pipeline alignment(s) shall be surveyed prior to the start of project construction activities, and existing roadway conditions shall be summarized in a brief report.
- Any damage to the roadway network that occurs as a result of project construction activities shall be noted, and MSWD or its contractors shall repair all damage.

Coordination with Emergency Services: The TMP shall include requirements to notify local emergency response providers, including relevant police and sheriff departments, ambulance services, and paramedic services at least one week prior to the start of work within public ROW if lane and/or road closures are required. To the extent practicable, the duration of disruptions/closures to roadways and critical access points for emergency services shall be minimized.

Coordination with Active Transportation Facilities: The TMP shall require coordination with owners/operators of any affected active transportation facilities to minimize the duration of disruptions/closures to bike paths, pedestrian trails, and adjacent access points.

Coordination with Riverside Transit Agency (RTA): If the proposed project affects access to existing transit stops, the TMP shall also include temporary, alternative transit stops and directional signage, as determined in coordination with RTA.

Coordination with Caltrans: If the proposed project requires lane and/or road closures of State highways or State highway ramps, the TMP shall require coordination with Caltrans to ensure the TMP conforms with Caltrans' Transportation Management Plan Guidelines.

Coordination with Nearby Construction Sites: The TMP shall identify all active construction projects within 0.25 mile of project construction sites and require coordination with the applicants and/or contractors of these projects during all phases of construction regarding the following:

- All temporary lane and/or roadway closures shall be coordinated to limit overlap of roadway closures;
- All major deliveries and haul truck trips shall be coordinated to limit the occurrence of simultaneous deliveries and haul truck trips; and
- MSWD, its contractor(s), or its representative(s) shall meet on a regular basis with the applicant(s), contractor(s) or their representative(s) of active construction projects within 0.25 mile of the project construction sites during construction to address any outstanding issues related to construction vehicles.

Transportation Control and Safety: The TMP shall provide for roadway vehicle control measures including flag persons, warning signs, lights, barricades, cones, and/or detour routes to provide safe passage of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and access by emergency responders.

Plan Approval: The TMP shall be reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW for review and approval.

Tribal Cultural Resources

TCR-1 Native American Cultural Monitor: Prior to the issuance of grading permits, MSWD shall develop an agreement with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians-Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the appropriate number of Native American Cultural Monitor(s). The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall attend the pre-construction meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) shall be on site during ground disturbing activities on undisturbed soils and disturbance of section G, H, and I including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading and trenching. The Native American Cultural Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.

TCR-2 Inadvertent Discoveries: MSWD or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If during ground disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed: All ground disturbance activities within 50 feet of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and a meeting shall be convened between the Native American tribal representative and MSWD to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting with the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the consulting Tribe(s), as to the appropriate treatment (documentation, recovery, avoidance etc.) for the cultural resource. A Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist shall be retained if deemed necessary by the parties involved. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.

TCR-3 Reburial Protocol: Prior to issuance of grading permits: the developer/applicant shall come to an agreement with the consulting tribes indicating an area on-site which will be used, if needed, for reburial of any artifacts that have been identified during the duration of the project and cannot be avoided. The location has to be kept confidential and in an area that will not be disturbed in the future.

TCR-4 Human Remains: Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, in the event of discovery of any human remains on the project site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains, until the County Coroner has examined the remains. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of Native American, the coroner shall contact the NAHC within 24-hours, and the NAHC will be responsible for identifying the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) and contacting them for ongoing consultation and resolution. The project will be subject to these requirements during all construction and excavation activities. Compliance with the California Health and Safety Code will ensure that should there be a discovery of any human remains during project construction activities, impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Utilities and Service Systems

UTIL-1 The contract with demolition and construction contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall include the requirement that all materials that can feasibly be recycled shall be salvaged and recycled. This includes but is not limited to wood, metals, concrete, road base, soil and asphalt. The contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall submit a recycling plan to the implementing agency for review and approval prior to issuance of permits for the construction of demolition/construction activities.

UTIL-2 The contract with demolition and construction contractors for any individual project under this proposed GQPP Septic to Sewer Project umbrella shall include the requirement that all soils that are planned to be exported from the site that can be recycled shall be recycled for re-use; alternatively, soils shall be reused on site to balance soil import/export.

Wildfire

WF-1 Prior to initiating construction of proposed sewer pipeline and laterals within public ROW, MSWD shall prepare and implement a traffic control plan that contains comprehensive strategies for maintaining emergency access during construction. Strategies shall include, but are not limited to, maintaining steel trench plates at the construction sites to restore access across open trenches, flag persons and related assets to manage the flow of traffic, and identification of alternate routing around construction zones, where necessary. In addition, police, fire, and other emergency service providers (local agencies, Caltrans, and other service providers) shall be notified of the timing, location, and duration of the construction activities and the location of detours and lane closures. MSWD shall ensure that the traffic control plan and other construction activities are consistent with the County of Riverside Emergency Operations Plan, and are reviewed and approved by the local agency with authority over construction within the public ROW.

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