Exhibit C

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INITIAL STUDY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Title:	Resource Conservation District of Monterey County Master Permit
File No.:	PLN220358-DEP
Project Location:	Unincorporated Monterey County
Name of Property Owner:	N/A
Name of Applicant:	Paul Robins, Executive Director, Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
Assessor's Parcel Number(s):	Countywide
Acreage of Property:	Countywide
General Plan Designation:	N/A
Zoning District:	Countywide
Lead Agency:	County of Monterey
Prepared By:	Mary Israel
Date Prepared:	September 2023 with minor edits July 2025
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Phone Number:	(831) 755 – 5183

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

A. Description of Project

Introduction

The Resource Conservation District ("RCD") of Monterey County is proposing a Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program which would establish a Programmatic ~~Restoration~~ Permit ("Master Permit" or "EESP") for future environmental enhancement projects. The Master Permit would streamline the permitting process for voluntary environmentally beneficial projects in unincorporated Monterey County (see **Figure 1. Regional Map**). The Master Permit would facilitate 13 authorized project practice types consisting of 30 National Resource Conservation Service ("NRCS") conservation practice standards.[1] The County of Monterey would issue the Master Permit for a five-year period and may be renewed at the end of that period according to the conditions outlined in the approval. Only projects that can be implemented without causing new significant adverse effects to resources will be eligible for coverage under the Master Permit. Five projects would be covered by the Master Permit per year, and all would undergo a three-step-review process that includes the RCD, State and Federal agencies, and County of Monterey. In this way, the EESP ensures that the up-to-25 projects involved in the five-year Master Permit conform to the mitigation by design as well as state and federal environmental regulations.

Project Location

Restoration activities facilitated under the Master Permit would be located primarily on public and private agricultural land in unincorporated Monterey County (see **Figure 1. Regional Map**). Areas excluded from the Master Permit include vernal pools, federal lands, and the "original jurisdiction" of the California Coastal Commission (i.e., all State tidelands, including any lands lying below the mean high tide line, submerged lands, filled areas that previously were below the mean high tide line, coastal lagoons, estuaries, etc.). Topography throughout Monterey County is variable, ranging from flat agricultural fields to steep slopes. Elevations range from 100 feet to about 3,000 feet. Vegetation community types also vary according to the location of proposed restoration activities and may include grasslands, sandhills, chaparral, woodlands, oak savannah grasslands, and agricultural crops.

Background

Resource Conservation Districts were developed by federal legislation to address concerns regarding the capacity of federal agencies and their responsiveness to address agricultural community needs. The role of an RCD is to guide programmatic priorities of the NRCS. The RCD of Monterey County was established in 1942 as a non-regulatory special local district,

[1] The NRCS has developed conservation practice standards that identify why and where a practice is applied and sets forth the minimum planning criteria that must be met during the implementation of that practice in order for it to achieve its intended purpose(s). The standards are not to be used to plan, design, or install a conservation practice. A conservation practice must be adapted and modified by the state in which the project is located to meet state and local conservation criteria (NRCS, 2023).

authorized under Article 9 of California Public Resources Code and tasked with managing soil, water resources, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

Figure 1 –Regional Map

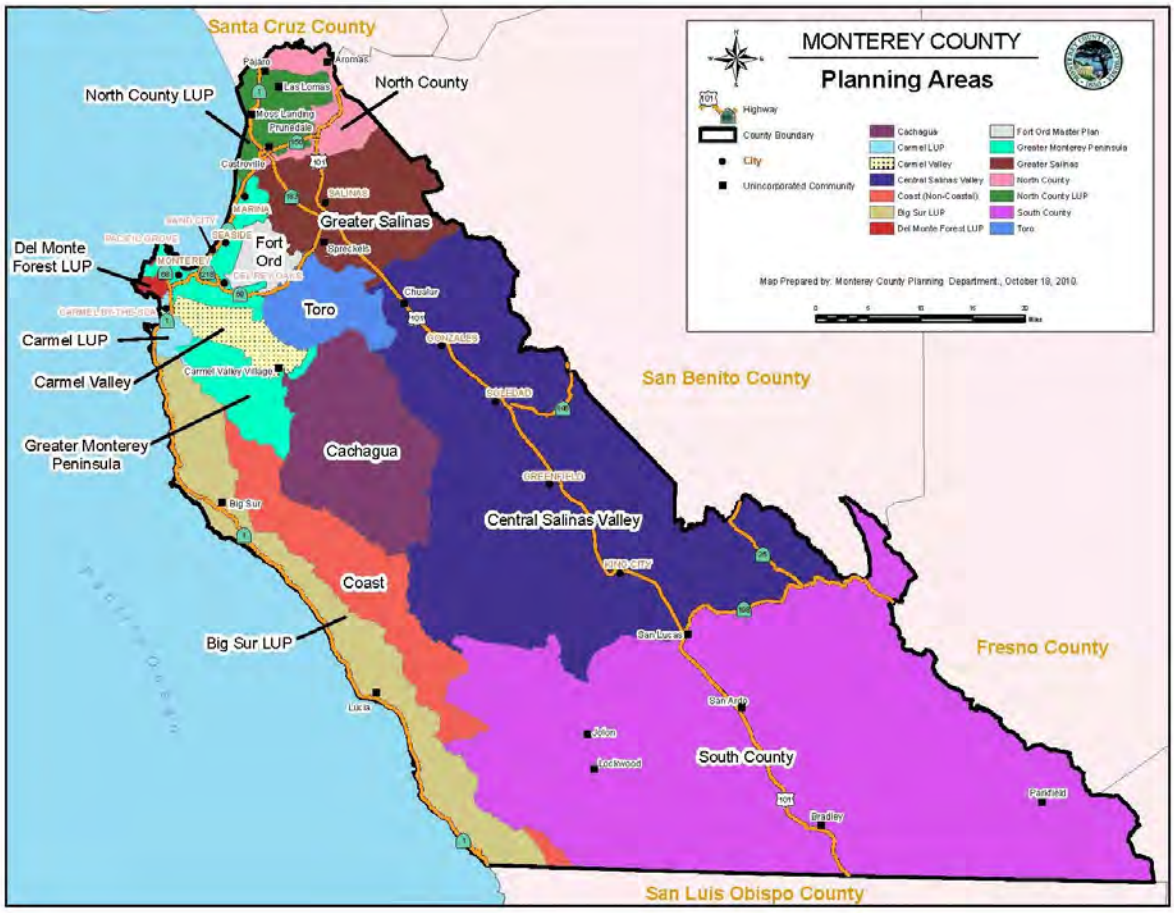

Figure 1. The County of Monterey has several Planning areas which are generally separated into Inland and Coastal areas. This figure is taken from the 2010 General Plan (Figure 3) to illustrate the region of the County and give locational context to the land use policies that are listed in Table 4 as they pertain to the environmental enhancement projects.

The RCD of Monterey County recognizes the uniqueness of the county's agriculture and has developed innovative ways to conserve natural resources while supporting farmers, ranchers, and other landowners. With a focus on the nexus between productive agriculture and environmental sustainability, the RCD of Monterey County provides services for soil stability and health, water quality management, water conservation, stream and pond management, livestock areas, weed management, and fish and wildlife habitat. Working closely with local, state, and federal agencies, the RCD of Monterey County has identified the need for a streamlined process to encourage their constituents to implement conservation projects on their properties.

Project Description

The Master Permit for environmental enhancement projects would include coverage of 13 authorized project practice types, see **Table 1**, each project practice type would consist of 30 NRCS conservation practices[2]. A detailed description of each eligible project type is provided in **Attachment A**. The Master Permit would also incorporate all standard permit requirements normally required for these individual development projects, such as discretionary permits (which would typically be Administrative or Restoration Plan Permits), encroachment permits, and grading permits in Monterey County. Building permits issued by the County of Monterey would be acquired separately. Building permits would be needed for bridges, retaining walls over 4-feet in total height and not retaining a soil surcharge, and fences over 6-feet in height. Only five projects would be covered by the Master Permit per year, with a ~~two~~three-step review process of the permitted activity to ensure the environmental enhancement meets the constraints of the Master Permit. The first review would be by RCD of Monterey County to determine that the project fits within the scope of the Master Permit and meets project-specific requirements and Programmatic General Conditions. The second step of the review process would include consultation and review by Federal and State regulatory agencies to ensure compliance with State and Federal environmental regulations (including but not limited to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), California Endangered Species Act (CESA), Fish & Game Code Section 2050 et seq. and Section 1600 et seq., Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 and Section 10, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Clean Water Act Section 10, 404 and 401). Then, RCD of Monterey County would propose all five projects with evidence that they have passed step 1 and 2 reviews for a final review and inclusion by HCD on an annual basis.

Table 1. Authorized Project Practice Types

Project Practice Type	Description
Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)	Restores land or aquatic habitats degraded by human activity; provides habitat for rare and declining wildlife species by restoring and conserving native plant communities; increases native plant community diversity; and manages unique or declining native habitats.
Critical Area Planting (352)	Stabilizes soil, reduces damage from sediment and runoff to downstream areas, and improves wildlife habitat and visual resources; includes

[2] Numbers are in parentheses indicate the conservation practice numerical code as referenced in the *NRCS Field Office Technical Guide*. Projects under the Master Permit could include a combination of several different conservation practice types that must adhere to the NRCS conservation practice standards and project size limitations.

Table 1. Authorized Project Practice Types

Project Practice Type	Description
	postconstruction planting work, replanting areas where invasive vegetation has been removed, or restoring degraded sites such as gullies.
Unique Wildlife Habitat Management (382,500,516,614,645)	Creates, restores, and/or enhances upland habitat for wildlife species by fencing/restricting livestock access to habitat areas or sensitive areas or by removing obstructions such as buildings, structures, vegetation, debris, or garbage.
Road Improvement, Relocation, or Decommissioning (560, 575, 645)	Reduces erosion from existing unpaved roads by either re-grading the road, installing rolling dips or water bars, adding stabilized drainage ditches and ditch relief outlets, or decommissioning roads. If a road is decommissioned but access is needed to the land unit, this project type can be used to relocate an existing road if a beneficial alignment exists. Construction of new roads is not covered under the Program.
Lined Waterway (362,412,468)	Provides a stable route for concentrated stormwater runoff and prevents erosion by constructing an earthen channel (grass or rock-lined) to slow and redirect excessive surface flow
Underground Outlet (620)	Reduces erosion and flooding through the installation of an underground pipe that collects surface runoff and conveys it to a suitable outlet
Water and Sediment Control Basin (350, 638)	Reduces the peak flow of stormwater runoff, traps, and stores sediment, and improves the quantity and quality of stormwater from an agricultural field through construction of excavated basins.
Bioreactor (605, 614)	Improves water quality through construction and installation of biological treatment system using a carbon source (such as woodchips) to reduce nitrate or other contaminants in agricultural drainage runoff.
Infiltration Basin (605, 638,815)	Enhances infiltration and potential groundwater recharge by collecting stormwater runoff in an off-channel impoundment with a permeable base.
Firebreak (394)	Shallow grading of a temporary strip of bare land to remove fire fuel around the perimeter of a prescribed burn in association with a project intended to restore habitats, improve rangeland, or improve wildlife habitat.
Grade Stabilization Structure (410)	Reduces erosion where the concentration or velocity of water results in head cutting or gullies through grading and installing rocks/boulders, logs, brush, or a structure in natural or artificial channels.
Stream Habitat Improvement (395, 396,578,580, 584)	Maintains, improves, or restores the physical and biological functions of a stream by restoring riparian and floodplain vegetation, protecting streambanks, and/or stabilizing stream beds; prevents loss of vegetation and soil, improves water quality by reducing sediment and organic/nutrient inputs to a stream; reduces streambank and streambed erosion; and maintains or improves existing access routes (via culverts or bridges); not used for construction of new bridges or other stream crossings.
Wetland Management (587, 644, 657, 658, 659)	Restores and enhances wetland conditions similar to those that existed prior to modification from farming, grazing, and other land use to restore hydrology and wetland ecology; creates a small wetland to support amphibian breeding; reshapes the topography, installs water level control structures to control, saturate and/or inundate land, and revegetates areas with native wetland plants.

Table 2 identifies the limitations for each qualifying project; projects may, on a case-by-case basis, minorly exceed the dimensions shown in **Table 2**. These projects would, however, be subject to additional review by the County of Monterey, state and federal regulators, and RCD of Monterey

County to determine whether they would result in additional environmental effects beyond those identified in this IS/MND.

Table 2. Limitations for Qualifying Projects by Practice Type

Project Practice Type	Area of Practice Maximum (acres)	Volume of Grading Maximum (cubic yards)	Maximum Grading Depth (feet)
Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat	5	1,500	5
Critical Area Planting	5	1,500	1
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	5	1,500	10
Road Improvement, Relocation, or Closure	5	7,500	2 - 10
Lined Waterway	2	2,000	6
Underground Outlet	0.5	1,000	10
Water and Sediment Control Basin	3	10,000	20
Bioreactor	1	4,000	10
Infiltration Basin	3	10,000	30
Firebreak*	2	2,000	2
Grade Stabilization Structure	1.5	1,000	20
Stream Habitat Improvement	5	7,500	25
Wetland Management	18	30,000	10

* The **Firebreak** project type is expected to be used in very limited circumstances to support restoration-focused burns and not fuels treatment projects. In Monterey County, fuelbreaks and other fuels treatment activities are permitted through existing mechanisms such as the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP), a Public Works program, or CalFire for prescribed burn permits; however, these permitting pathways do not cover grading activity or bare soil fire breaks. Although expected to be used rarely, the RCD has included coverage for bare soil firebreaks disturbing a minimum amount of soil solely to support controlled burns conducted for restoration purposes. Any such burns must be permitted by CalFire burn permit or local Air District smoke management permit and must undergo a separate CEQA review or qualify for an exemption prior to implementation. This program does not provide permit coverage for the prescribed burns themselves or for fire breaks that only support fuel reduction-focused burns.

RCD of Monterey County has an established tier system for their conservation practices that organizes the practices based on the complexity of the project and its potential for impacts that relate directly to the regulatory requirements. See **Attachment A** for full discussion of the project types listed in Table 2, and **Attachment A-1** for RCD of Monterey County's table expressing their three tiers. Attachment A-1 demonstrates how RCD of Monterey County would approach the second level pre-construction review and input from regulating agencies.

Qualifying environmental enhancement projects implemented under the Master Permit would be required to implement Programmatic General Conditions ("PGCs") as detailed in **Table 3**, below. These conditions would ensure that qualifying projects covered by the Master Permit minimize potential temporary construction-related effects related to air quality, archaeological and cultural resources, paleontological resources, biological resources, water quality, hazardous resources, sensitive habitat, special status species, and soil stability. In addition, the PGCs also include engineering standards, erosion control requirements, fire prevention conditions, and post construction standards. The PGCs also include a process to ensure that project design minimizes potential environmental effects to the maximum extent feasible. Finally, the PGCs also include limitations on construction equipment, the extent of earthmoving and vegetation removal, use of herbicide, and work in environmentally sensitive areas (i.e., streams, wetlands, floodplains, and permanently ponded areas). This IS/MND assumes that these measures would be implemented in connection with all environmental enhancement projects proposed under the Master Permit. If any new impacts are identified in relation to a project that are beyond those identified in this IS/MND, cumulatively or otherwise, the project will be excluded from inclusion under the Master Permit.

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

Air Quality - Dust Control Measures		**Programmatic General Conditions**
AQ-1	Water Active Construction Areas in Dry or Windy Conditions	Water all active construction areas at least twice daily as necessary and indicated by soil and air conditions.
AQ-2	Sweep Paved Roads	Sweep daily (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
AQ-3	Cover Trucks Hauling Loose Materials and Maintain Freeboard	Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials off site or require all trucks hauling off site to maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard.
AQ-4	Cover or Stabilize Disturbed or Inactive Areas	All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, will be effectively stabilized for dust emissions using water, chemical stabilizer/suppressant, covered with a tarp or other suitable protection measures.
AQ-5	Work Restrictions During High Winds	Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph).
AQ-6	Limit Driving Speeds	Limit traffic speeds to 15 miles per hour.

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

Archaeological, Historical, and Tribal Cultural Resources		Programmatic General Conditions
CUL-1	Tribal Consultation and Protection of Tribal Resources	Using the appropriate Monterey County Native American Contact List, the RCD will notify the identified Native American representatives in writing and provide details about the project location and project activities. For any Native American representatives that do not respond to the initial letter, follow-up communication, via phone call and email, will be undertaken. The goal is to identify potential impacts to Tribal cultural resources early in the project planning phase to avoid impacts to these resources (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 15064.5) to the maximum extent feasible -. Tribal cultural resources may include, but are not limited to, sites, features, landscapes, places, or objects of value to a Tribe.
CUL-2	Low Impact Project Cultural Resource Assessment	Low Impact Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program ("EESP") projects are defined as meeting the following two criteria: 1. Ground-disturbing project elements are limited to no more than 4 inches (~10 cm) below current grade outside an existing agricultural field, or ground-disturbing project elements limited to no more than 12 inches (~30 cm) below current grade within an existing agricultural field; and 2. No heavy equipment is used (i.e., backhoe, skid steer, etc.); hand tools and foot traffic only will be used to implement all project elements. For EESP projects that meet the two criteria above, a cultural resource assessment will be completed for the area where all project activities will take place. The assessment will be completed by an archaeologically trained professional include the following at minimum: ▪ Background research o Conduct a non-confidential record search at the Northwest Information Center ("NWIC") o Review historical maps and aerial imagery o Review existing historic, ethnographic, and archaeological context of the project vicinity o Conduct a Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission ▪ Pedestrian survey o Conduct surface field reconnaissance covering the entire project area, conducted via systemic transects spaced 10 meters apart, or, for rugged terrain, a coverage strategy that targets all landforms that could reasonably support the formation of archaeological sites and built environment resources. ▪ Letter report of findings

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		○ Documentation should include all information gathered during background research and pedestrian surveys tasks, as well as any pertinent information gathered (and appropriate to share) during RCD's Tribal consultation (see CUL-1). If any cultural resources are identified during the assessment, the RCD will consult with a qualified archaeologist for next steps and implement CUL-4 and CUL-5 if the resource cannot be avoided.
CUL-3	EESP Project Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory	For all EESP projects that do not meet the criteria as Low Impact projects, a Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory study will be completed for the area where all project activities will take place. The inventory will be completed by a qualified archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards and will include the following at minimum: ▪ Background research ○ Conduct a confidential record search at the NWIC ○ Review historical maps and aerial imagery ○ Review and, if needed, develop historic, ethnographic, and archaeological context of the project vicinity ○ Conduct a Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission ○ Conduct a desktop geoarchaeological sensitivity assessment for the project area ▪ Pedestrian survey ○ Conduct surface field reconnaissance covering the entire project area, conducted via systemic transects spaced 10 meters apart, or, for rugged terrain, a coverage strategy that targets all landforms that could reasonably support the formation of archaeological sites and built environment resources. ▪ Report of findings ○ Documentation will meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards and should include all information gathered during background research and pedestrian surveys tasks, as well as any pertinent information gathered (and appropriate to share) during RCD's Tribal consultation (see CUL-1).
CUL-4	Cultural Resource Extended Phase I Presence/Absence Testing	For all EESP projects that have positive Cultural Resource Assessments and positive or inconclusive Phase I Cultural Resource Inventories, and the cultural resource cannot be avoided through project re-designs, a small-scale presence/absence subsurface study will be completed by a

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		qualified archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards and will include the following at minimum: ▪ Excavation of a series of Shovel Probes (~40-cm diameter hand-dug units) to the maximum depth of project impacts. Shovel probes should be spaced across the project area in a quantity sufficient to investigate the subsurface matrix of the project area (i.e., 50–75 feet apart). ▪ Report of findings o Documentation will meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards and should include all information gathered during the presence/absence testing, as well as any pertinent information gathered (an appropriate to share) during RCD's Tribal consultation (see CUL-1).
CUL-5	Cultural Resource Evaluation and Significance Study	For all EESP projects that have positive Extended Phase I Cultural Resource Inventories, and the cultural resource cannot be avoided through project re- designs, an Evaluation and Significance Study will be completed by a qualified archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards and will include the following at minimum: ▪ Develop a research design that details the pertinent historical context and outlines important research questions and data requirements. ▪ Conduct fieldwork appropriate to the cultural resource (i.e., archaeological subsurface testing; or ethnographic interviews on site with Tribal members; or built environment field documentation) ▪ Conduct laboratory analysis and specialized studies on archaeological materials. ▪ Combine the data collected from the research design, fieldwork, and laboratory analysis to determine if the resource is a historical resource, or is a contributing element of an existing historical resource, meeting the established criteria for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5 [a]) ▪ Report of findings o Documentation will meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards and should include all information gathered during the study, as well as any pertinent information gathered (an appropriate to share) during RCD's Tribal consultation (see CUL-1). ▪ In accordance with CEQA, cultural resources within the Project Area that have the potential to be impacted by project activities and that cannot be avoided or that are

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		encountered during EESP project implementation (i.e., not previously known) will be evaluated to determine if the resource is a historical resource, or is a contributing element of an existing historical resource, meeting the established criteria for inclusion in the CRHR (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5 [a]).
CUL-6	Cultural Resources Treatment Plan	For all EESP projects that have cultural resources located within the project area that are determined eligible for listing on the CRHR, a Cultural Resources Treatment Plan (CRTP) will be developed and implemented to reduce the impacts of the Project to less than significant. The CRTP should be developed and implemented in consultation with the local Native American community and any other stakeholders to ensure their input. The CRTP should, at a minimum, include a detailed description of the project and its subsurface impacts; description of the environmental setting and precolonial/historic-era background; research questions and goals to be addressed by the investigation; detailed field strategy used to record and recover data from eligible resources; analytical methods; reporting requirements; curation plans; and appendices including site records, correspondence, artifact catalogs, etc.
CUL-7	Cultural Resource Training	Prior to any project activities commencing, the RCD Project Manager will administer a cultural resource sensitivity and awareness training on the protection of sensitive archaeological, historical, and Tribal cultural resources, to be presented to all construction crew members and site supervisors under the direct guidance of a qualified archeologist/cultural resource professional. The training will include details about the archaeological sensitivity of the general area, the legal requirements related to protecting cultural resources and maintaining confidentiality (consistent with AB 52 and Government Code Section 6254.10), a review of the kinds and types of artifacts and features that may be encountered, the importance of cultural resources to the Native American community, and the protocols to follow should cultural resources be discovered during project construction.
CUL-8	Discovery of Cultural Resources	If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction activities/installing a conservation practice, then it is CEQA policy that work be halted within a 75-foot radius of the find until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find. If the find is determined to be significant, steps will be taken to protect the find from further damage or disruption. Additionally, an appropriate mitigation plan will be developed and implemented with the concurrence of the Lead Agencies and in consultation with local Native American representatives.
CUL-9	Discovery of Human	In accordance with California PRC Sections 5097 and 7050.5,

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

	Remains	if, at any time, human remains are discovered, the County of Monterey Coroner, RCD Project Manager, and landowner will be notified immediately and all work on the project will temporarily halt. If the Coroner determines that the remains are likely to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will be notified and will appoint a Most Likely Descendent (MLD) to provide recommendations for the disposition of the remains and work will not resume until they have made a recommendation to the landowner and RCD, for means of treating and disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods, as provided in California PRC 5097.98.
CUL-10	Confidentiality of Archaeological or Sacred Lands Sites	All information obtained from a Tribe will be kept confidential (consistent with the requirements of AB 52 and Government code Section 625.10) and RCD staff will not disclose the location of an archaeological site or sacred lands or any other information that is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act.
Paleontological Resources		**Programmatic General Conditions**
PALEO-1	Avoid or Document Paleontological Resources *County policy is to stop work within 50 meters	In the planning phase of EESP projects, RCD will review Stanford EarthWork's data resource map and confirm that project activities are located outside any previously identified paleontological resources boundaries. If a paleontological resource is discovered during construction, RCD will require the following: All ground-disturbing activities within 50 meters (165 feet) of the find will be temporarily halted but may be diverted to areas beyond 50 meters from the discovery and continue working.* RCD will notify a qualified paleontologist who will document the discovery, evaluate the potential resource, and assess the nature and significance of the find. Based on scientific value or uniqueness, the paleontologist may record the find and allow work to continue or recommend salvage and recovery of the material. The paleontologist will make recommendations for any necessary treatment that is consistent with currently accepted scientific practices.
Biological Resources		**Programmatic General Conditions**
BIO-1	Review and Survey Project- Specific Biological Resources	Conduct data review and reconnaissance-level survey during the planning and design process to determine if sensitive habitat or habitat for special-status plant and animal species is present within the project area.
BIO-2	Identify and Avoid or Minimize Impacts in Coastal Zone ESHAs	If Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) is present and cannot be avoided during project activities, the RCD will include a mitigation plan with the Pre-Construction Notification ("PCN"), outlining the proposed restoration project to fully

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		mitigate loss of habitat. There will be no unauthorized ESHA removal.
BIO-3	Survey for Special-Status Plants and Wildlife	There will be no unauthorized "take" under ESA or CESA or unauthorized impacts to streams under Fish and Game Code 1600 allowed under the Program. If special-status species and/or their habitat is present and cannot be avoided during project activities, a qualified biologist will follow the survey requirements of USFWS and/or CDFW. Consultation with USFWS or NOAA for ESA, and CDFW for CESA or Fish and Game Code (FGC) Section 1600 or Section 1654 (Habitat and Restoration Enhancement Act, or HREA) compliance will be required if there is a potential for impact within USFWS, NOAA, or CDFW jurisdiction. If special-status species and/or their habitat is present and cannot be avoided during project activities, a qualified biologist will follow the pre-construction survey requirements of the appropriate state and federal agencies.
BIO-4	Comply with Required State and Federal Permits	Consultations with CDFW's CEQA, Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, and/or Cutting Green Tape divisions and USFWS will occur, at minimum, once per year to discuss all projects being considered for coverage under the Program. Prior to exercise of this Programmatic ~~Restoration~~ Permit, documentation will be submitted for each project to County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning certifying that all required state and federal approvals have been obtained.
BIO-5	Incorporate State and Federal Permit Protection Measures	To comply with CESA, any "take" of State listed plants and animals will only be authorized through CDFW's issuance of an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b), section 2080.1 (Consistency Determination), section 2800 (Natural Community Conservation Plan, or NCCP), section 2086 (Voluntary Local Program, or VLP), section 2089.2 (Safe Harbor), or section 1654 (Habitat and Restoration Enhancement Act, or HREA), or with CDFW authorization of "incidental take" coverage under a Scientific Collection Permit for scientific, educational, and propagation purposes. Any required federal "take" authorization will be obtained through USFWS and NMFS in compliance with the ESA Section 10. Plans for individual projects and practices will incorporate all conditions and recommendations of the approvals mentioned above. All recommended methods to lessen "take" of protected plants, animals, and habitats, including avoidance, will be incorporated into the design of each practice or project completed under this permit.
BIO-6	Require Biological Resource Training for Workers	All crew members and contractors will receive training from a qualified biologist prior to beginning construction. The biologist will educate workers about the identification, potential presence, habitat requirements, legal protections, avoidance and minimization measures, and applicable protection measures for

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		the species with the potential to occur in or immediately adjacent to the project site. Training attendance will be taken and documented. All workers shall be required to comply with the conditions of project approval, including implementation of protection measures and avoidance of sensitive areas.
BIO-7	Monitor for Sensitive Resources and/or Species	Where appropriate and based on project-specific requirements, a qualified biologist will perform site assessment at the beginning of each day and will monitor construction activities throughout the day in, or immediately adjacent to, sensitive resources and/or species habitat (including critical habitat as applicable), as necessary. The qualified biologist will confirm that all applicable protection measures are implemented during project construction.
BIO-8	Use Approved Biologist for Species Capture, Handling, and Translocation	Any Federal or State-listed Species capture, handling, and translocation will only be conducted by the NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, and/or CDFW-Approved Biologist(s) with permission to handle that species. This PGC shall be implemented in combination with BIO-3, BIO-4, and BIO-5.
BIO-9	Restrict Construction Hours	To minimize the potential for species mortality, all hauling activities will be restricted to daylight hours, defined as the hours after sunrise and before sunset.
BIO-10	Prevent Spread of Invasive Plants, Noxious Weeds, and Invasive Wildlife	The following actions will be taken to prevent the spread of invasive plants, noxious weeds, and invasive wildlife (e.g., New Zealand mudsnail): clean clothing, footwear, and equipment to be used on the project site prior to entering the project area; for all heavy equipment and vehicles traveling off road, pressure wash, if feasible; inspect all heavy equipment, vehicles, tools, or other treatment- related materials for sand, mud, or other signs that weed seeds or propagules could be present prior to use in the treatment area; stage equipment in bare areas where possible; identify significant infestations of invasive plant species (i.e., those rated as invasive by Cal-IPC or designated as noxious weeds by California Department of Food and Agriculture) during reconnaissance-level surveys and target them for removal during treatment activities; treat invasive plant biomass onsite to eliminate seeds and propagules. All invasive or noxious species removed manually or mechanically shall be disposed of at an appropriate location off-site. The facility shall be notified that the waste contains invasive or noxious species. Care shall be taken to cover loads properly to avoid the spread of invasive or noxious species during transport.
BIO-11	Prevent Spread of Aquatic Pathogens	The "Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force Fieldwork Code of Practice" will be implemented during any aquatic survey activity to prevent transfer of diseases through contaminated equipment or clothing.
BIO-12	Monitor, Flag or Fence for Wildlife Exclusion	Where appropriate, fencing and flagging will be used to minimize disturbance to environmentally sensitive areas and

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

	and Species Protection	species habitat. Wildlife Exclusion Fencing ~~will~~ may be installed between the active work area(s) and any suitable terrestrial habitat where species could enter the site. The use of and/or placement of Wildlife Exclusion Fencing may result in take of listed species and its use should only occur in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. When fencing is not practicable or advised by CDFW or USFWS due to project size, topography, soils, or other factors, monitoring by a qualified biologist during construction activities can be used to minimize impacts.
BIO -13	Establish Protective Buffers	Potential adverse effects from project-related noise should be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by implementing sufficient disturbance buffers between noise generating project activities and covered amphibian, bird, and mammal species habitat.
Building Permits Requirements		**Programmatic General Conditions**
BP-1	Obtain Separate Building Permit	A County building permit is needed for the installation/construction of any new bridge~~, however bridges installed/constructed under the Program are exempt from further environmental review~~. Building permits will also be required for retaining walls greater than 4 ft in height and fences over 6 ft in height.
Coastal Commission Jurisdiction (i.e., State Tidelands) Restrictions		**Programmatic General Conditions**
CC-1	Obtain Approval for Work in State Tidelands	This Programmatic ~~Restoration~~ Permit does not apply to projects conducted within Coastal Commission retained coastal permitting jurisdiction (i.e., all State tidelands, including any lands lying below the mean high tide line, submerged lands, filled areas that previously were below the mean high tide line, coastal lagoons/estuaries, public trust lands, etc.). Any qualifying environmental enhancement projects in these areas, while encouraged, will require separate Coastal Commission approval.
Engineering Standards		**Programmatic General Conditions**
ES-1	Require Engineered Design for Projects Exceeding Grading Volume Threshold	Any project where the estimated grading volume exceeds 5,000 cy, will result in slopes steeper than 2:1 (horizontal:vertical), or includes a drainage structure over five square feet in flow area will be designed by a qualified civil engineer.
ES-2	Require Engineered Analysis for Projects on Sites with Potential Geologic or Soil Hazards	A geologist, geotechnical engineer or civil engineer will complete an analysis for grading activities or outlet of concentrated water on slopes over 25% (or 30% in the North County inland and coastal area plans), areas near cliffs or bluffs, areas with high landslide risk, high erosion hazard risk, high liquefaction risk, or elevated seismic risk.
ES-3	Require Design for 10-year Storm Event for Engineering Practices	At a minimum, all engineered practices will be designed or sized to prevent erosion from a 10-year storm event.

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

ES-4	Require Design by an Engineer for Engineering Practices	All engineered Conservation Practices require design by a qualified engineer (either a registered professional engineer or an engineer working under the NRCS State Engineer's Authority). Engineered Conservation Practices are indicated with an asterisk in the Exhibit B Practice Types List. All Conservation Practices under the Program are engineering practices except the following which do not require engineering design or planning: Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat (643), Critical Area Planting (342), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Fence (382), Firebreak (394), Stream Habitat Improvement (395), and Wetland Wildlife Habitat (644).
ES-5	Require Hydrologic & Hydraulic Report for Impervious Area	Any project that results in over 2,500 sf of added or replaced impervious area will include a project-specific Hydrologic & Hydraulic (H&H) Report to quantify pre- and post-project peak stormwater runoff flow rates for the 10-year storm event, summarize the proposed stormwater management systems to mitigate the increase in peak flow rates, and demonstrate how stormwater runoff will be dispersed at non-erosive flow rates. If a project is within a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System ("MS4") boundary, the H&H Report will follow the Stormwater Technical Guide for Low Impact Development (Cloak, 2015).
ES-6	Obtain NPDES Construction General Permit and Prepare Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for Required Projects	For projects over 1 acre in area of disturbance that do not fall under the agricultural exemption or are one of the 56 exempted NRCS conservation practices, RCD will confirm with Regional Water Quality Control Board ("RWQCB") whether a NPDES Construction General Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan are required.
ES-7	Anchor Objects Installed in Floodplain	Objects installed in the flood zone that have the potential to float, such as tanks, will include mechanisms to prevent the migration of the objects during a flood.
ES-8	Complete Construction & Demolition Recycling Report	For projects that include demolition, the RCD will instruct the contractor to complete the County of Monterey Construction & Demolition Recycling Report and will retain a copy of the Report with the project file.
Erosion Control Standards		**Programmatic General Conditions**
EC-1	Limit Earthmoving Timeframe and Implement Erosion Control	Earthmoving activities will be completed prior to the onset of the rainy season, approximated as October 15, and not be initialized prior to the last rains, approximately April 15. Work beyond October 15 will be specifically authorized in advance by the participating regulatory agencies. All inactive areas (defined as a five-day period) will have all necessary soil stabilization practices in place two days after identification of inactivity and/or before a rain event, whichever comes first. All erosion control will meet specifications in County of Monterey Erosion Control Ordinance No. 2806 (Chapter 16.12) and an Erosion Control Plan will be provided to the Contractor.

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

EC-2	Complete Grading Activities During Dry Period	All excavation and grading activities will not be conducted during rain events or on any day for which the National Weather Service has predicted a 25% or more chance of at least 0.1 inch of rain in 24 hours (Predicted Rain Event). Effective erosion control, sediment control, and other protective measures will be installed no later than the day prior to the Predicted Rain Event, and prior to the start of any rainfall. Construction activities will resume after the rain has ceased, the National Weather Service predicts clear weather for at least 24 hours, and site conditions are dry enough to continue work without discharge of sediment or other pollutants from the project site.
EC-3	Utilize Erosion Control Measures	Erosion control and sediment detention devices will be incorporated into the project design and implemented at the time of construction. These devices will be in place prior to October 15 and/or at the onset of rains, whichever occurs first, for the purposes of minimizing fine sediment and sediment/water slurry input to flowing water, and of detaining water to retain sediment on-site. These devices will be placed at all locations where the likelihood of sediment input exists. Sediment collected in these devices will be disposed of away from the collection site and outside riparian areas and flood hazard areas.
EC-4	Protect Disturbed Areas	All soil (except for soil in agricultural fields and on firebreaks) exposed as a result of construction or soil laid on top of rip rap will be mulched, revegetated by seeding, live planting, hydroseeding or otherwise protected to match pre- construction conditions or better. Seeding and planting will be completed prior to or shortly after the start of the rainy season.
EC-5	Review Erosion Control Measures at Project Site	The RCD will oversee project implementation to confirm all planned erosion control measures are in place immediately following completion of land disturbance activities or prior to forecasted rain events. The RCD will conduct annual monitoring to ensure the long-term outcomes have been achieved or propose corrective measures. Annual monitoring will continue and be reported in the Annual Report until erosion control measures are satisfactorily functioning.
Fire Prevention		**Programmatic General Conditions**
FP-1	Equip Engines with Spark Arrestors	All earthmoving and portable equipment with internal combustion engines will be equipped with spark arrestors.
FP-2	Maintain Fire Suppression Equipment On-Site	Work crews will have appropriate fire suppression equipment available at the work site.
FP-3	Restrict Location of Flammable Materials	Flammable materials will be kept at least 10 feet away from any equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame. Portable tools powered by gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines will not be used within 25 feet of any flammable materials unless at least one round-point shovel or fire extinguisher is within immediate reach of the work crew (no more than 25 feet away

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		from the work area).
Fort Ord Excavation		**Programmatic General Conditions**
FO-1	Notify the County Prior to Excavations at Former Fort Ord	RCD will notify County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning about any excavation, digging, development or ground disturbance of any type that involves the displacement of ten (10) cubic yards or more of soil on the Former Fort Ord according to the guidelines in the Digging and Excavation on the Former Fort Ord Ordinance (Monterey County Code of Ordinances Chapter 16.10)
Hazardous Materials and Spill Prevention		**Programmatic General Conditions**
HAZ-1	Review Cortese List of Hazardous Materials Sites for Avoidance	During the project planning phase, the RCD will conduct a review of the "Cortese List" data resources to ensure that the project area is not located in any hazardous materials sites.
HAZ-2	Contain Equipment Storage, Maintenance, and Refueling at Least 100 Feet from Waterways	A contained area will be designated for equipment storage, short-term maintenance, and refueling. It will be located at least 100-feet from all water bodies, in a location where fluids or accidental discharges cannot flow into waterways. If site conditions (property size) make this 100-foot distance infeasible, these activities will occur at the maximum distance possible from aquatic areas, the Contractor will construct an impermeable containment feature (e.g., a Visqueen-covered earthen berm or gravel bag barrier) to prevent fluids, wash water or other pollutants from escaping the staging site and entering waters of the state or storm drains.
HAZ-3	Inspect and Cleanup Vehicle Leak	Vehicles will be inspected for leaks and repaired immediately. All questionable motor oil, coolant, transmission fluid, and hydraulic fluid hoses, fittings, and/or seals on construction equipment will be replaced. All mechanical equipment will be inspected daily to ensure there are no motor oil, transmission fluid, hydraulic fluid, and/or coolant leaks. All leaks will be repaired in the equipment staging area or other suitable location (away from watercourses) prior to resumption of construction activity. Leaks, drips, and other spills will be cleaned up immediately to avoid soil or groundwater contamination.
HAZ-4	Maintain and Wash Vehicles to Protect Environment	Major vehicle maintenance and washing will be done in a manner that protects the environment (at a minimum on a paved surface where all wash water, drippings, runoff, etc. is collected and properly disposed, and preferably offsite).
HAZ-5	Properly Dispose of Spent Fluid and Debris	All spent fluids (including motor oil, radiator coolant, and/or other fluids) and used vehicle batteries will be collected, stored, and recycled as hazardous waste off site. All construction debris and sediments (if sediments are not incorporated on site) will be properly disposed. Plans will indicate the approved disposal site.
HAZ-6	Utilize Dry Clean Up Methods	Dry cleanup methods (i.e., absorbent materials, cat litter, and/or rags) will be used whenever possible. If water is used, the

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		minimal amount required to keep dust levels down is used. Spilled dry materials will be swept up immediately.
HAZ-7	Prohibit Use of Hydraulic Fluids Containing Organophosphate Esters	Hydraulic fluids in mechanical equipment working within the active stream channel will not contain organophosphate esters.
HAZ-8	Properly Dispose of Trash and Construction Debris	During construction, the operator will not dump any trash and/or construction debris into any wetted channel; all trash and/or construction debris will be collected and properly disposed. During the project activities, all trash and food that may attract potential predators of salmonids (e.g., raccoons, piscivores, etc.) will be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of daily.
HAZ-9	Maintain Spill-Related Measures Onsite for Steelhead	When working in and/or near South-Central California Coast steelhead-bearing streams, or their tributaries, oil absorbent and spill containment materials will be located on site when mechanical equipment is in operation. If a spill occurs, (1) no additional work will occur in-channel until mechanical equipment has been inspected and the leak has been repaired, (2) the spill has been contained, and (3) the CDFW and NOAA Fisheries are contacted to evaluate the impacts of the spill.
Revegetation of the Project Area and Removal of Non-native Plants		**Programmatic General Conditions**
VEG-1	Monitor Baseline Conditions for Non-Native Plants	Each specific project area disturbed by a project activity will be monitored for an increase in non-native plant cover. Non-native, invasive plants that have colonized the area or expanded will be removed using BMPs designed to prevent re- establishment, unless the site is adjacent to an established, existing infestation that cannot reasonably be prevented from spreading on to the site without constant removal efforts.
VEG-2	Restore Project Area to Pre- Construction Condition or Better	The project area vegetation will be restored to pre-construction condition or better (including as directed by project specific success criteria) and will be maintained until this goal and/or project specific success criteria have been met and plants have become established. Revegetation and non-native plant removal programs will be monitored for at least two years and until success criteria are reached. If information has been submitted by a qualified individual that demonstrates that certain characteristics of the site and/or the revegetation plan indicate that the revegetation may be established more quickly, and if success criteria are reached after shorter period of time, then a shorter period of monitoring may be adequate.
VEG-3	Revegetate Project Area with Native Plants	Revegetation plans will be completed based on site-specific requirements. Native plant assemblages appropriate to the specific geographic area of the County where the project is taking place will be the prioritized source of planting materials for revegetation. Plant materials will be sourced in order of the

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		following preference, as available: 1. Plants salvaged from the site, plants propagated vegetatively from on-site plants or plants very close to the site, or plants grown from seed collected from the site or plants very close to the site. 2. Plant species that are native to the project site. Calscape and CalFlora are useful resources for determining native plant ranges. 3. Plant species that are native to the broader region (e.g., California Central Coast) 4. Non-native, non-invasive plant species if preferences 1-3 are infeasible *and* the project is not a restoration project type (e.g. sterile re-green wheat or cover crops such as legumes). Natural recruitment is also allowed, in conjunction with erosion control, invasive plant control, and ensuring the site is properly revegetated. Plants rated as invasive by Cal- IPC or designated as noxious weeds by California Department of Food and Agriculture are prohibited from use (see Exhibit E for the full list of prohibited species).
VEG-4	Prevent Use of Contaminated Plant Materials	Plant materials used for revegetation should be grown using phytosanitary BMPs to protect against introduction of *Phytophthora ramorum* (the pathogen that causes sudden oak death). Plants and seeds used in revegetation should not have been treated with neonicotinoids or other persistent insecticides that can kill or harm insects at the project site. Native plant materials that are grown at or delivered from a nursery will be closely inspected for disease and pests prior to use.
VEG-5	Prevent Spread of Plant Pathogens	When working in sensitive natural communities, riparian habitats, or oak woodlands that are at risk from plant pathogens, the following measures should be taken: Clean and sanitize vehicles, equipment, footwear, and clothing; minimize soil disturbance; minimize soil and plant material movement; and clean soil and debris from equipment and sanitize tools.
VEG-6	Monitor Revegetation	Inspections for the purpose of assessing the survival and growth of revegetated areas and the presence of exposed soil will be conducted by a qualified resource professional until vegetation is established and the project is functioning as intended, and success criteria have been met. Revegetation success will be documented in the Annual Report provided to the County each year. If the vegetative plantings are not becoming well established, an adaptive management plan that provides erosion control and habitat value at least equivalent to that which existed on the site prior to the project, and which considers cost and feasibility, will be implemented.
Least Environmentally Damaging		**Programmatic General Conditions**

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

Action		
LEDA-1	Minimize Project Footprint	Where there are various possible points of access, approaches/designs, etc. use of the least environmentally damaging actions will be required (e.g., removing the least amount of vegetation possible, placing the least amount fill possible, etc.) unless there are extenuating circumstances as approved by the County.
LEDA-2	Avoid Sensitive Habitats and Species	Whenever possible, conservation practices will be located to fully avoid negative resource impacts, including impacts on potential habitats of sensitive species identified during site evaluations or discovered subsequently. In some cases, short-term disturbance to potential habitat may be necessary to prevent further degradation of the site and to improve habitat for the species of concern.
LEDA-3	Minimize Ground Disturbance and Vegetation Removal in ESHAs	In environmentally sensitive habitat areas ("ESHAs"), actions that minimize ground disturbance and/or native vegetation removal will be applied.
LEDA-4	Follow Conditions in State and Federal Agreements/Permits	In situations where ground disturbance and/or vegetation removal in such areas cannot be avoided, all conditions specified in the agreements/permits of the participating State and/or Federal resource agencies will be followed to minimize negative impacts to State and/or federally listed animals and plants and their habitats during implementation of the conservation practices.
Limitations on Construction Equipment		**Programmatic General Conditions**
CE-1	Prevent Petroleum Release into Waterways	The RCD will ensure that the use and/or storage of petroleum-powered equipment will be accomplished in a manner to prevent the potential release of petroleum materials into waters of the state (Fish and Game Code 5650). All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur. See SWFP for additional protection measures.
CE-2	Limit Work in Flowing or Standing Water	Heavy equipment will not be used in flowing or standing water, except to cross a stream or pond to access the work site. In fish-bearing streams or their tributaries, if it is necessary to repeatedly cross the stream (i.e., more than once prior to and once following completion of construction activities) with heavy equipment to access a work site, a temporary culvert crossing with clean gravel backfill, or other appropriate temporary crossing structure will be installed and utilized.
CE-3	Use Existing Ingress or Egress Points	When possible, RCD will use existing ingress or egress points and/or perform work from the top of the creek banks.
CE-4	Avoid Heavy Equipment Use in Cobbled Substrate	Use of heavy equipment will be avoided in a channel bottom with rocky or cobbled substrate. If access to the work site requires heavy equipment to travel on a rocky or cobbled substrate, a

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		rubber tire loader/backhoe is the preferred vehicle. Only if this option has been determined infeasible will the use of tracked vehicles be allowed. The amount of time this equipment is stationed, working, or traveling within the creek bed will be minimized.
CE-5	Stage Equipment Away from Wetlands	No staging will occur in or directly adjacent to wetlands.
CE-6	Utilize Rubber Tired Vehicles in Wetlands	If it is not feasible to completely avoid movement of construction vehicles through wetlands, whenever possible rubber-tired vehicles will be used or a protective mat will be laid down prior to moving across these areas.
Limitations on Earthmoving and Vegetation Removal		**Programmatic General Conditions**
EM-1	Minimize Ground Disturbance and Vegetation Removal	Disturbance to existing grades and vegetation will be limited to the actual site of the conservation project and necessary access routes. Existing access routes and staging areas should be utilized as much as possible and placement of temporary access routes, staging areas, and other facilities will avoid and limit disturbance to habitat as much as possible.
EM-2	Minimize Impact to Vista Points	Vistas from public roads and vista points will be protected by avoiding or minimizing disruption of landforms and aesthetic character caused by grading operations and/or vegetation.
EM-3	Limit Finished Grade Slopes	Finished grades will not be steeper than 2:1 side slopes unless pre-construction condition is so steep that site conditions prohibit a 2:1 slope on the final grade or until slopes have been analyzed by an engineer.
EM-4	Minimize Disturbance to Native Vegetation	Disturbance of native shrubs, woody perennials or tree removal on the streambank or stream channel will be avoided or minimized to the fullest possible extent.
EM-5	Tree Removal and Replacement	If trees over 6-inch dbh (diameter at breast height) or oaks over 6 inches diameter at two feet above the ground are to be removed, they will be replaced at least a 1:1 ratio and maintained and monitored for two to three years or until established. If more than three native trees 6-inch or greater (dbh) trees (excluding diseased, dying, or hazardous trees) need to be removed within the same year, a qualified forest health or resource professional must recommend appropriate restoration measures. If native riparian vegetation is disturbed, it will be replaced with the same native species or another suitable native species.
EM-6	Avoid Thinning of Riparian Stands	As much as possible, project activities will avoid thinning out stands of riparian vegetation to minimize potential for increased cowbird predation and minimize loss of canopy cover.
EM-7	Wetland Delineations	If potential wetlands are identified in the project area, wetland delineations will be performed during the site evaluation stage of planning to assist in avoiding impacts to wetlands. The

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		methodology for conducting delineations under the proposed program has been developed in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.[3] For potential wetlands in the Coastal Zone, the Coastal Commission's definition of a wetland will be used to avoid potential impacts.[4]
Limitations on Herbicide Use		**Programmatic General Conditions**
HL-1	Use Herbicide According to Registered Label Conditions	Where it is necessary to use herbicides to control established stands of non-native plants or to control the invasion of non-native plants into restoration plantings, the herbicides must be applied according to registered label conditions.
HL-2	Prohibit Leaching into Waterways	Herbicides must be applied directly to plants and may not be spread upon any water or where they can leach into waterways in subsequent rains.
HL-3	Utilize Aquatic-approved Herbicides Near Waterways	When herbicides are used to control non-native species near waterways, an approved herbicide that is safe to use in or near aquatic habitats will be utilized.
Limitations on Work in Streams, Wetlands, Floodplains, and Permanently Ponded Areas		**Programmatic General Conditions**
SWFP-1	Isolate Work Area from Flowing Water	If it is necessary to conduct work in or near a live stream, the minimum area necessary to perform construction activities will be isolated from flowing water to prevent sedimentation and turbidity. In those specific cases where it is deemed necessary to work in a flowing stream/creek, all the flowing water will be temporarily diverted around the work site to maintain downstream flows during construction.
SWFP-2	Install Coffer Dams	Any temporary dam or other artificial obstruction constructed will only be built from materials such as clean gravel which will cause little or no siltation. Coffer dams and any stream diversion systems will remain in place and functional throughout the construction period. If the coffer dams and/or stream diversion fail, they will be repaired immediately. When construction is completed, the flow diversion structure will be removed as soon as possible in a manner that will allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate.
SWFP -3	Provide Diversion/Dewatering	If dewatering is required, the area to be dewatered will encompass the minimum area necessary to perform construction

[3] The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers defines a wetland as areas that are inundated or saturate by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

[4] The Coastal Commission considers a wetland to be any area that is wet enough long enough to support a preponderance of hydrophytic vegetation or to result in soil that is predominantly hydric. In other words, only one of the three primary indicators of wetlands need be demonstrated for an area to be identified as a wetland (California Code of Regulations, Section 13577).

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		activities. The project engineer will provide a dewatering plan with a description of the proposed dewatering structures and appropriate BMPs for the installation, operation, maintenance, and removal of those structures. The period of dewatering/diversion will extend only for the minimum amount of time needed to perform the restoration activity. When gravity-fed dewatering is not feasible and pumping is necessary to dewater a work site, a temporary siltation basin and/or silt bags may be required to prevent sediment from reentering the wetted channel. Silt fences or mechanisms to avoid sediment input to the flowing channel will be installed adjacent to flowing water. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow will be removed in a manner that will allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate.
SWFP-4	Exclude Fish and Aquatic Species from Diversion Structures	Fish and other aquatic species will be excluded from occupying the area to be dewatered by blocking the stream channel above and below with fine-meshed block nets or screens, based on the site conditions and in accordance with the appropriate mesh size specified for the species present.
SWFP-5	Obtain NOAA Approval for Work in Fish-Bearing Streams[5]	If dewatering in a fish-bearing (aka steelhead-bearing) stream is proposed, the RCD will obtain a NOAA approval or any other applicable permits. Dewatering activities will be supervised by an approved biologist. Given the potential adverse effects of dewatering on salmonid populations, in some instances and with NOAA approval, large wood may be installed within the active stream channel without dewatering and with other applicable agency approval. An approved biologist will be on-site during all activities to monitor for direct mortalities and/or adverse impacts to water quality.
SWFP-6	Restrict Materials for Instream Structures	No creosote-treated timbers will be used for instream structures. No gabions will be used in fish-bearing streams. In non-fish-bearing streams they may be used above the high-water mark only. If used, all concrete will be allowed to completely cure for a minimum of 30 days before being exposed to stream water or water that may enter the stream, or all concrete will be coated with a CDFW- approved concrete sealant. If sealant is used, water will be excluded from the site until the sealant is dry.
SWFP-7	Prevent Sediment Loading into Waterways	The implementation and maintenance of projects will not result in sediment delivery to a clean bottom of stream channel. A "clean" bottom is characterized by natural stream substrate (cobbles, gravel, and small stones or similar to background conditions). If the substrate of a seasonal pond, creek, stream or water body is altered during work activities and the alteration is not the goal of the practice being implemented (i.e., channel stabilization), it will be returned to approximate pre-construction

[5] A "fish-bearing stream" is defined as a stream located within the designated critical habitat of South Central California Coast steelhead.

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

		conditions after the work is completed, unless other agencies request that other measures be implemented.
SWFP-8	Keep Project Areas Clean	All debris, sediment, rubbish, vegetation, and/or other material removed from the channel banks, channel bottom, and/or sediment basins will be removed to a location where they will not re-enter the waters of the state. All petroleum products, chemicals, silt, fine soils, and/or any substance or material deleterious to fish, plant, or bird life will not be allowed to pass into or be placed where it can pass into the waters.
SWFP-9	Limit Work in Existing Wetlands to Wetland Enhancement	Existing wetlands will only be disturbed when that disturbance is part of a project that will enhance the value of the wetland. When possible, disturbance and compaction will be limited by use of a single identified access route.
SWFP-10	Prohibit Diversion of Water out of Watershed	No project will divert water flow from one watershed into another.
SWFP-11	Prohibit More than 1 ft Increase in Base Flood Elevation in FEMA Designated Areas	Any fill moved and/or placed within the one-hundred-year floodplain will be accomplished in a manner to ensure that the flood capacity of the stream is not altered (i.e., downstream properties would not be threatened by a higher likelihood of flooding). No fill will be placed in the floodplain unless it is accompanied by an analysis (by a Registered Civil Engineer) showing that there will be no rise greater than 1 foot in the base flood elevation and no off-site impact (see ENG-3). Such fill includes footings, supports, approaches, and other elements of bridges that are below the base flood elevation (BFE), as well as materials placed to protect those elements, such as riprap or concrete aprons.
SWFP-12	Prohibit Significant Risk of Loss, Injury or Death	Projects carried out under the Programmatic ~~Restoration~~ Permit will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death. Practices that include impoundment of water will be limited in size (embankment height and volume) and designed to meet geo-technical and engineering standards and regulations.
Temporal Limits on Construction		**Programmatic General Conditions**
TL-1	Limit General Construction Timeframe	The timing of project construction will take into consideration wildlife usage in the project area. The construction season for activities carried out under the proposed Program will be limited to between April 15 and October 15. Exceptions and/or further restrictions are included in TL-2, TL-3, and TL-4.
TL-2	Limit Construction Timeframe in Upland Habitats	Revegetation may continue in upland habitats throughout the year. For invasive species removal in upland habitat, work may continue throughout the year if no known protected species occurrences are documented within the past two years or if protocol level surveys are conducted and no species are found.
TL-3	Limit Construction	In riparian habitat, invasive species removal may occur between

Table 3. RCD of Monterey County Programmatic General Conditions

	Timeframe in Riparian Habitat	October 15 and May 30, when rain conditions allow and if no known protected species occurrences are documented within the past two years or if protocol level surveys are conducted and no such species are found. ~~All work in riparian habitat,~~ D~~d~~uring the wet season, these activities will be completed by non-mechanized hand tools. Herbicide application will be carefully applied during non-windy days with no rain forecasted within 3-5 days. All soils will be stabilized before a predicted rain event.
TL-4	Limit Construction Timeframe Near Nesting Bird Habitat	If working within 200 feet of established riparian vegetation (or other special status bird potential nesting habitats) and/or if constructing a sediment and/or water control basin, work may not begin until after August 1. If construction must occur prior to August 1st, during this period, a qualified biologist will conduct pre- construction surveys for bird nests or bird nesting activity in the project area. If an active nest is observed, the project proponent may establish one of the following: Establish a temporary, species-appropriate buffer around the nest, modify the treatment in the vicinity of an active nest to avoid disturbance of active nests, or defer the timing of treatment in the portion(s) of the treatment site that could disturb the active nest. Trees with visible raptor nests, whether occupied or not, will be retained.
Vernal Pool Restrictions		**Programmatic General Conditions**
VP-1	Prohibit Work in Vernal Pools	No work will be allowed in vernal pools under the Program.

In addition, projects facilitated under the Master Permit would be consistent with the County General Plan, General Plan Area Plans, Community Plans, and Local Coastal Program. These plans establish policies to guide development while preserving the scenic and environmental resources. **Table 4. Land Use Policies** outlines development policies that may be applicable to qualifying projects facilitated by the Master Permit.[6]

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
2010 General Plan	
Goal C-5 Scenic Highways	**C-5.2** Guidelines shall be developed to assure that development and land use in the scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding area using techniques that include, but are not limited to: ▪ Placement of utilities underground, where feasible; ▪ Architectural and landscape controls; ▪ Encouragement of area native plants, especially on public lands and dedicated open space; and, ▪ Cooperative landscape programs with adjoining public and private open space lands.

[6] A review of applicable General Plan and Land Use Plan policies will be completed during the planning process for individual projects by RCD of Monterey County.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
Goal OS-1 Scenic Resources	**OS-1.2** Development in designated visually sensitive areas shall be subordinate to the natural features of the area. **O-1.9** Development that protects and enhances the County's scenic qualities shall be encouraged. All routine and ongoing agricultural activities are exempt from the viewshed policies of this plan.
Goal OS-3 Soils	**OS-3.1** Best Management Practices to prevent and repair damage shall be established and enforced. **OS-3.2** Existing special district, state, and federal soil conservation and restoration programs shall be supported. Voluntary restoration projects initiated by landholders, or stakeholder groups including all affected landowners, shall be encouraged. **OS-3.5** The County shall regulate activity on slope to reduce impacts to water quality and biological resources. Specifics are available online at: https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/120722/638150994995430000
Goal OS-4 Marine and River Resources	**OS-4.1** Federal and State listed native marine and freshwater species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant shall be protected. Species designated in all Area Pans shall also be protected. **OS-4.2** Direct or indirect discharges of harmful substances into marine waters, rivers, or streams shall not exceed state or federal standards. **OS-4.3** Estuaries, salt, and freshwater marches, tide pools, wetlands, sloughs, river and stream mouth areas, plus all waterways that drain and have impact on State designated Areas of Special Biological Significance shall be protected maintained, and preserved in accordance with state and federal water quality.
OS-5 Biological Resources	**OS-5.1** The extent and acreages of critical habitat shall be inventoried to the extend feasible and mapped in GIS. Conservation of listed species shall be promoted. **OS-5.2** The extent of acreages of the potentially suitable habitat for listed species shall be inventoried to the extend feasible and mapped in GIS. Conservation of species shall be promoted as provided in the Area Plans. **OS-5.3** Development shall be carefully planned to provide for the conservation and maintenance of critical habitat. **OS-5.4** Development shall avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to listed species and critical habitat to the extend feasible. **OS-5.5** Landowners and developers shall be encouraged to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and native vegetation in visually sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridges, and watersheds. **OS-5.12** The California Department of Fish and Game shall be consulted and appropriate measures shall be taken to protect Areas of Special Biological Significance.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
	OS-5.25 Occupied nests of statutorily protected migratory birds and raptors shall not be disturbed during the breeding season (generally February 1 to September 15).
OS-6 Archaeological Resources	**OS-6.1** Important representative and unique archaeological sites and features shall be identified and protected for all parcels with undisturbed natural conditions, consistent with the State Office of Historic Preservation guidelines and definitions employed on a statewide basis. **OS-6.2** Information on the location and significant of the County's archaeological resources shall be compiled and used in the environmental and development review process. **OS-6.3** New development proposed within moderate or high sensitivity zones or within 150 feet of a known recorded archaeological and/or cultural site shall complete a Phase 1 survey. **OS-6.4** Development proposed in low sensitivity zones are not required to have an archaeological survey unless there is specific additional information that suggests archaeological resources are present. **OS-6.5** Policies and procedures shall be established that encourage development to avoid impacts to sensitive archaeological sites.
OS-7 Paleontological Resource	**OS-7.1** Important representative and unique paleontological site sand features shall be identified and protected. **OS-7.2** Information on the location and significant of the County's paleontological resources shall be compiled and use din the environmental and development review process. **OS-7.3** Development proposed in high and moderate sensitivity zones and know fossil bearing formations shall required a paleontological field inspection prior to approval. **OS-7.4** Development proposed in low sensitivity zones are not required to have a paleontological survey unless there is specific additional information that suggests paleontological resources are presents.
OS-8 Native Californian Cultural Sites, Sacred Places, and Burial Sites	**OS-8.1** Unique burial sites shall be identified and protected. **OS-8.2** Information on the location and significance of the County's burial sites shall be compiled and used in the environmental and development review process. **OS-8.3** Development proposed at sites where known burial or human cemeteries are located shall in no case modify, disturb, excavate, or develop within such locations until all steps in compliance with CEQA, NAHC, and Government Code have been completed. **OS-8.4** Policies and procedures shall be established that encourage development to avoid impacts to burial sites.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
	OS-8.6 Tribal representatives will be consulted, consistent with state preservation law about the location of sacred places.
OS-9 Air Quality	**OS-10.3** Monterey County shall promote conservation of naturally vegetated and forested areas for their air purifying functions. **OS-10.7** Use of the best available technology for reducing air pollution emissions shall be encouraged.
S-1 Seismic and Other Geologic Hazards	**S-1.1** Land uses shall be sited and measures applied to reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, property damage, and economic and social dislocations resulting from ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, and other geologic hazards in the high and moderate hazard susceptibility areas. **S-1.3** Site specific geologic studies may be used to verify the presence or absence and extend of the hazard on the property proposed for new development and to identify mitigation measures for any development proposed. **S-1.4** The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act shall be enforced. **S-1.6** New development shall not be permitted in areas of known geologic or seismic hazards unless measures recommended by a California certified engineering geologist or geotechnical engineer are implemented to reduce the hazard to an acceptable level. **S-1.9** A California licensed civil engineer or a California licensed landscape architect can recommend measures to reduce moderate and high erosion hazards in the form of an Erosion Control Plan.
S-2 Flood Hazards	**S-2.1** Land use planning to avoid incompatible structural development in flood prone areas shall be the primary means of minimizing risk from flood hazards. **S-2.2** Uses such as agricultural, passive to low intensity recreation, and open space/conservation are the most acceptable land uses in the 100-year floodplain to lessen the potential for loss of life, injury, property damage, and economic and social dislocations to the maximum extent feasible. **S-2.3** All new development, including filling, grading, and construction, within designated 100 year floodplain areas shall conform to the guidelines of FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program and ordinances established by the County Board of Supervisors.
S-3 Drainage	**S-3.2** Best Management Practices to protect groundwater and surface water quality shall be incorporated into all development.
S-4 Fire Hazards	**S-4.8** Fire hazards shall be reduced to an acceptable level of risk by prescribing the use, location, type, and design of roadways. **S-4.9** Roadways shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with Monterey County Code Chapter 18.56 or the California Fire Code. **S-4.16** New and reconstructed bridges shall be constructed in accordance with Monterey County Code Chapter 18.56.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
S-7 Noise Hazards	**S.7.1** New noise sensitive land uses may only be allowed in areas where existing and projects noise levels are "acceptable" according to the "Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Table" **S-7.2** Proposed development shall incorporate design elements necessary to minimize noise impacts on surrounding land uses. **S-7.9** No construction activities pursuant to a County permit that exceed "acceptable" levels listed in S-7.1 shall be allowed within 50 ~~0~~feet of a noise sensitive land use during the evening hours of Monday through Saturday, or anytime on Sunday or Holidays. **S-7.10** Constriction project shall include standard noise protection measures.
AG-5 Environmental Resources	**AG-5.1** Programs that reduce soil erosion and increase soil productivity shall be supported. **AG-5.2** Policies and programs that protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources shall be promoted, but shall not be inconsistent with state and federal regulations.
Central Salinas Valley Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**CVS-3.1** Within areas designated as "sensitive" or "highly sensitive" on the Scenic Highway Corridor and Visual Sensitivity Map, landscaping or new development may be permitted if the development is located and designed in such a manner that pubic views are not disrupted.
Cachagua Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**CACH-3.1** Within areas designated as "sensitive" or "highly sensitive" on the Scenic Highway Corridor and Visual Sensitivity Map, landscaping or new development may be permitted if the development is located and designed in such a manner that pubic views are not disrupted. **CACH-3.2** Consider including stronger ambient noise abatement requirements in this planning area. **CACH-3.6** In cooperation with the United State Forest Service and private property owners, work to ensure that the Santa Lucia fir are protected due to their significant to the natural history of the Planning Area. **CACH 3.76** New development shall be sited to protect riparian vegetation and threatened fish species, minimize erosion, and preserve the visual aspects of the Carmel and Arroyo Seco Rivers. Private property owners are encouraged to preserve the Carmel River in its natural state, to prevent erosion and protect fishery habitat. Fishery habitats located above the Los Padres and San Clemente Dams shall be maintained in a productive state accessible to fish populations, especially steelhead.
Carmel Valley Master Plan	

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**CV – 3.3** Development shall not be allowed to significant block views of the viewshed, the river, or the distance hills as seen from key public viewing areas. **CV-3.4** Alternation of hillsides and natural landforms caused by cutting, filling, grading, or vegetation removal shall be minimized through sensitive siting and design of all improvements and maximum feasible restoration including botanically appropriate landscaping. **CV-3.8** Development shall be sited to protect riparian vegetation, minimize erosion, and preserve the visual aspects of Carmel River. In places where the riparian vegetation no longer exists, it should be planed to a width of 150 feet from the river bank, or the face of adjacent bluffs. **CV-3.10** Predominant landscaping and erosion control material shall consist of plants native to the valley that are similar in habitat, form, and water requirements.
4.0 Safety	**CV-4.1** In order to reduce potential erosion or rapid runoff: The amount of land cleared at one time shall be limited Motorized vehicles shall be prohibited on the banks or in the bed of Carmel River. Native vegetative cover must be maintained on areas that have particular soils and slope. https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/45818/636389938550470000
Toro Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**T-3-1** Within areas designated as “sensitive” or “highly sensitive” on the Scenic Highway Corridor and Visual Sensitivity Map, landscaping or new development may be permitted if the development is located and designed in such a manner that pubic views are not disrupted.
Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**GMP-3.1** The County shall encourage creative public and private efforts to restore the scenic beauty of visually impacted common public viewing areas.
North County Inland Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**NC-3.1** The County shall encourage creative public and private efforts to restore the scenic beauty of visually impacted common public viewing areas. **NC-3.3** Conservation of North County’s native vegetation shall be given high priority **NC-3.10** Notwithstanding Policy OS-3.5, conversion for agricultural purposes shall prohibited on slopes 1) uncultivated at the time of conversion, 2) that contain highly erodible soils, 3) which exceed twenty five percent (25%), and 4) that drain into the watershed of the Elkhorn and Moro Cojo Sloughs.
5.0 Public Services	**NC-5.1** New developments shall be designed to maximize prime groundwater recharge capabilities and to minimize runoff from the property. **NC-5.3** Cooperative soil conservation, water quality protection, and resource restoration programs within watershed basins shared with neighboring counties shall be pursued.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
South County Area Plan	
5.0 Public Services	**SC-5.1** New development shall not diminish the groundwater recharge capabilities in the South County Planning Area where the following resources have been identified: a. Valuable natural groundwater recharge areas, or b. Artificial groundwater recharge projects. Areas that are highly susceptible to water quality degradation because of either high water tables or rapid percolation rates shall require more strict enforcement of this policy. Agricultural land uses in such areas should be maintained to preserve groundwater quality. **SC-5.2** Cooperative soil conservation, water quality protection, and resource restoration programs within watershed basins shared with neighboring counties shall be pursued.
Greater Salinas Area Plan	
3.0 Conservation Open Space	**GS-3.1** All vegetation on land exceeding 25 percent slope, particularly chaparral and broad leaf evergreen, should remain undisturbed to minimize erosion and retain important visual amenities. **GS-3.2** Native plant materials should be used to integrate the man-made environment with the natural environment and to screen or soften the visual impact of new development.
1982 Monterey County General Plan (for Coastal Zones)	
3.0 Conservation of Soil	**3.1.1** Erosion control procedures shall be established and enforced for all private and public construction and grading projects. **3.1.2** The County shall support and encourage existing special district, state, and federal soil conservation and restoration programs within its borders. **3.1.3** In the absence of more detailed site specific studies, determinations of soil suitability for particular land uses shall be made according to the Soil Conservation Service's Soil Survey of Monterey County. **3.2.2** Lands having a prevailing slope above 30% shall require adequate special erosion control and construction techniques. **3.2.3** Lands having a high erosion potential as identified in the Soil Survey shall require adequate erosion control methods for agricultural uses.
5.0 Water Resources	**5.1.1** Vegetation and soil shall be managed to protect critical watershed areas. **5.1.2** Land use and development shall be accomplished in a manner to minimize runoff and maintain groundwater recharge in vital water resource areas. **5.2.1** Owners of property adjacent to waterways or responsible agencies shall be encouraged to maintain healthy vegetation along the drainage course, or provide other suitable means of preventing bank erosion or siltation.
7.0 Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats	**7.1.1** Development shall be carefully planned in, or adjacent to, areas containing limited or threatened plant communities, and shall provide for the conservation and maintenance of the plant communities.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
	7.2.1 Landowners and developers shall be encouraged to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and natural vegetation in visually sensitive areas such as hillsides and ridges.
9.0 Abundance and Diversity of the County's Wildlife	**9.1.1** Development shall be carefully planned in areas known to have particular value for wildlife and, where allowed, shall be located so that the reasonable value of the habitat for wildlife is maintained. **9.1.2** Development shall be carefully planned in areas having high value for fish and wildlife reproduction. **9.2.1** Land use practices which could result in siltation and pollution of inland and marine waters shall be carefully managed in order to assure a clean and productive habitat. **9.2.2** Projects that modify or otherwise impact inland waters and waterways shall be referred to appropriate agencies for review, recommendations, and appropriate conditional permits.
11 Environmentally Sensitive Areas	**11.1.1** The California Native Plant Society shall be consulted and appropriate measures shall be taken to protect rare and endangered plant species and their habitats. **11.1.2** the California Department of Fish and Game shall be consulted and appropriate measures shall be taken to protect Areas of Special Biological Importance. **11.1.3** Land uses shall be carefully controlled and waste discharges shall be prohibited in order to protect water quality in state designated Areas of Special Biological Significance.
12 Archaeological Resources	**12.1.3** All proposed development, including land divisions, within high sensitivity zones shall require an archaeological field inspection prior to project approval. **12.1.5** Projects proposed for low sensitivity zones shall not be required to have an archaeological survey taken unless specific additional information has been obtained to suggest that archaeological resources are present. **12.1.6** Where development could adversely affect archaeological resources, reasonable mitigation procedures shall be required prior to project approval.
15 Seismic and Other Geologic Hazards	**15.1.2** Faults classified as "potentially active" shall be treated the same as "active faults" until geotechnical information demonstrating that a fault is not "active" is accepted by the County. **15.1.3** The lands within 1/8 mile of active or potentially active faults shall be treated as a fault zone until accepted geo-technical investigations indicate otherwise. **15.1.4** All new development and land divisions in designated high hazard zones shall provide a preliminary seismic and geologic hazard report which addresses the potential for surface ruptures, ground shaking, liquefaction, and landsliding before the application is considered complete. This report shall be completed by a registered geologist and conform to the standards of a preliminary report adopted by the County.

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	15.1.12 The County shall require grading permits to have an approved site plan which minimizes grading and conforms to the recommendations of a detailed soils or geology investigation where required. **15.1.15** Side castings from the grading of roads and building pads shall be removed from the site unless they can be distributed on the site so as not to change the natural landform. An exception to this policy will be made for those cases where changes in the natural landform are required as a condition of development approval.
16 Flood Hazards	**16.2.2** Open space uses such as agriculture, passive to low intensity recreation, and conservation are considered the most acceptable land uses in the floodplain. **16.2.4** All new development, including filling, grading, and construction, within designated 100-year floodplain areas shall conform to the guidelines of the National Flood Insurance Program and policies established by the County Board of Supervisors, with the advice of the Monterey County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. **16.2.5** All new development, including filling, grading, and construction, proposed within designated floodplains shall require submission of a written assessment prepared by a qualified hydrologist/engineer on whether the development will significantly contribute to the existing flood hazard. Development shall be conditioned on receiving approval of this assessment by the County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. **16.2.9** The County should condition all modifications to living riparian vegetation to be in conformance with an overall approved river management plan. Where no such plan exists, modification may only take place when in accord with an approved landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect or other qualified professional.
17 Fire Hazards	**17.3.1** In no case shall a roadway be less than 12-feet wide. Determination of the width of an all-weather surface shall be made at the time of subdivision approval. Further, the County shall revise its subdivision ordinance to address road standards including minimum width, height clearance, gradient and materials; these standards shall pertain to all new development. Minimum road widths of all new driveways, roads and streets shall be designed, constructed, and maintained according to adopted County Standards (Appendix D: Standard Detail, 1977). **17.3.8** The maximum grade of the road shall not exceed 15 percent. **17.3.9** The road shall have an overhead clearance of 13 feet, 6 inches vertical distance for its entire width and length, including turnouts. **17.3.12** New and reconstructed bridges on tertiary and lesser roads shall be the width of the existing road bed and berms, but in any event no less than 12 feet wide. Bridge width on all roads exceeding tertiary standards shall be not less than the width of two

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	lanes with berms. All bridges shall be designed for HS 15-44 loading (Standard Specification for Highway Bridges) and have guard rails.
North County Coastal Land Use Plan	
2.0 Visual Resources	**2.2.2.1** Views to and along the ocean shoreline from Highway One, Molera Road, Struve Road, and public beaches, and to and along the shoreline of Elkhorn Slough from public vantage points shall be protected. **2.2.2.5** Structures should be located to minimize tree removal, and grading for the building site and access road. Disturbed slopes should be restored to their previous visual quality. Landscape screening and restoration should consist of plant and tree species complementing the native growth of the area. **2.2.2.6** Agricultural uses on flat or rolling land should be preserved as a productive and visual resource. Agricultural uses on highly erodible slopes should be discouraged due to the visual degradation that results from runoff problems and resultant erosion scars. **2.2.3.6** Existing native trees and other significant vegetation shall be retained to the maximum extent possible, as an essential element of the scenic beauty and character of the North County coastal area. Removal of native trees and vegetation and landmark trees shall be permitted in accordance with Sections 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.6.2 and 2.6.3 of this plan and other policies that may apply. In addition, a Tree Ordinance shall be developed and rigorously enforced that will regulate removal of trees and other significant vegetation throughout the North County Coastal Zone.
2.3 Environmentally Sensitive Habitat	**2.3.1.1** With the exception of resource dependent uses, all development, including vegetation removal, excavation, grading, filling, and the construction of roads and structures, shall be prohibited in the following environmentally sensitive habitat areas: riparian corridors, wetlands, dunes, sites of known rare and endangered species of plants and animals, rookeries, major roosting and haulout sites, and other wildlife breeding or nursery areas identified as environmentally sensitive. **2.3.2.2** Land uses adjacent to locations of environmentally sensitive habitats shall be compatible with the long-term maintenance of the resource. **2.3.2.5** Where private or public development is proposed in documented or potential locations of environmentally sensitive habitats - particularly those habitats identified in General Policy No. 1 - field surveys by qualified individuals or agencies shall be required in order to determine precise locations and to recommend mitigating measures to ensure protection of any sensitive habitat present. The required survey shall document that the proposed development complies with all applicable environmentally sensitive habitat policies. **2.3.2.8** Where development is permitted in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas (consistent with all other resource protection policies), the County, through the development review process, shall restrict the removal of indigenous vegetation and land disturbance (grading, excavation, paving, etc.) to the minimum amount necessary for structural improvements.

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	2.3.2.9 The County shall require the use of non-invasive plant species in proposed landscaping and should encourage the use of appropriate native species or species that are compatible with native plants. **2.3.2.10** Construction activities, industrial, and public and commercial recreational uses which would affect rare and endangered birds shall be regulated to protect habitats of rare, endangered, and threatened birds during breeding and nesting seasons. Regulations may include restriction of access, noise abatement, and restriction of hours of operation of public or private facilities. Regulations shall not prohibit emergency operation of service and public utility equipment. **2.3.3.A2** Maritime chaparral is an uncommon, highly localized, and variable plant community that has been reduced in North County by residential and agricultural development. Further conversion of maritime chaparral habitat to agricultural uses is highly discouraged. Where new residential development is proposed in chaparral areas, it shall be sited and designed to protect the maximum amount of maritime chaparral. All chaparral on land exceeding 25 percent slope should be left undisturbed to prevent potential erosion impacts as well as to protect the habitat itself. **2.3.3.A3** Domestic livestock should be managed and controlled in areas where they would degrade or destroy rare and endangered plant habitats, riparian corridors, or other environmentally sensitive habitats. **2.3.3.B1** Riparian plant communities shall be protected by establishing setback requirements consisting of 150 feet on each side of the bank of perennial streams, and 50 feet on each side of the bank of intermittent streams, or the extent of riparian vegetation, whichever is greater. In all cases, the setback must be sufficient to prevent significant degradation of the habitat area. The setback requirement may be modified if it can be conclusively demonstrated by a qualified biologist that a narrower corridor is sufficient or a wider corridor is necessary to protect existing riparian vegetation from the impacts of adjacent use. **2.3.3.B2** All development, including dredging, filling, and grading within stream corridors, shall be limited to activities necessary for flood control purposes, water supply projects, improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, or laying of pipelines when no alternative route is feasible, and continued and future use of utility lines and appurtenant facilities. These activities shall be carried out in such a manner as to minimize impacts from increased runoff, sedimentation, biochemical degradation, or thermal pollution. When such activities require removal of riparian plant species, re-vegetation with native plants shall be required. **2.3.3.B3** The following activities shall be prohibited within intermittent and perennial stream channels: cultivated agriculture, pesticide applications, and installation of septic systems. would not destroy vegetative ground cover of the stream channel.
2.5 Water Resources	**2.5.2.2** Point and non-point sources of pollution of coastal waters shall be controlled and minimized. Restoration of the quality of degraded surface waters shall be encouraged.

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	2.5.2.A4 Water conservation measures should be required in all new development and should also be included in Agricultural Management Plans. These measures should address siting, construction, and landscaping of new development, should emphasize retention of water on site in order to maximize groundwater recharge, and should encourage water reclamation. **2.5.2.B2** Agricultural runoff should be monitored and techniques established through the proposed Agricultural Management Plan to reduce pesticide and nitrate contents.
Siting New Development	**a**. New cultivation in Critical Erosion Areas within areas designated for exclusive agricultural use shall be permitted upon completion of agricultural management plans certified adequate to maintain erosion and sedimentation from the site at levels closely approximating, or less than pre-conversion levels. In the absence of such plans, Critical Erosion Areas shall be retained in natural vegetation or grazing uses in order to minimize erosion.
Development in Watershed Restoration Areas	**b.** In cooperation with property owners and managers, develop restoration plans for each watershed restoration area which establishes overall improvement needs to reduce the area's erosion and sedimentation to a sufficient level (such as 50% of the LDT) which will remove the respective sub-watershed from the "Restoration" category on a long-term basis and reduce overall sedimentation of the sloughs.
Erosion Control Measures	**a.** Existing sources of erosion shall be reduced through diligent enforcement of the County's most current Erosion Control Ordinance. The County shall institute a system of fines sufficiently large or shall take other actions to compel compliance by landowners or farm operators in violation of the ordinance. **g**. Livestock enclosures shall be sited and designed to minimize erosion. Specific erosion control measures shall be required to adequately retain sedimentation from livestock enclosures on-site.
2.8 Hazards	**2.8.2.1** All development shall be sited and designed to minimize risk from geologic, flood, tsunami, or fire hazards to a level generally acceptable to the community. Areas of a parcel which are subject to high hazard(s) shall generally be considered unsuitable for development. Any proposed development in high hazard areas shall require the preparation of an environmental or geotechnical report prior to County review of the project. **2.8.3.3** New roads across slopes of 30 percent or greater shall be allowed only where potential erosion and geologic impacts can be adequately mitigated, (i.e., the proposed construction will not induce landsliding or significant soil creep, nor increase the existing rates of erosion). Mitigation measures shall not include massive grading or excavation or the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms. **2.8.3.4** Soils and geologic reports shall be required for all new land divisions and for construction of structures and roads on slopes exceeding 30 percent or in areas of known or suspected geologic hazards.
2.9 Archaeological Resources	**2.9.2.2** Whenever development is to occur in the coastal zone, including any proposed grading or excavation activity or removal of vegetation for agricultural use, the

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	Archaeological Site Survey Office or other appropriate authority shall be contacted to determine whether the property has received an archaeological survey. **2.9.2.4** When developments are proposed for parcels where archaeological or other cultural sites are located, project design shall be required which avoids or substantially minimizes impacts to such cultural sites. To this end, emphasis should be placed on preserving the entire site rather than on excavation of the resource, particularly where the site has potential religious significance.
Big Sur Coastal Land Use Plan	
3.2 Critical Viewsheds	**3.2.3.A4** New roads, grading or excavations will not be allowed to damage or intrude upon the critical viewshed. Such road construction or other work shall not commence until the entire project has completed the permit and appeal process. Grading or excavation shall include all alterations of natural landforms by earthmoving equipment. These restrictions shall not be interpreted as prohibiting restoration of severely eroded water course channels or gullying, provided a plan is submitted and approved prior to commencing work. **3.2.4.A1** So that the visual continuity may remain undisturbed, the design and siting of structures, whether residential, commercial, agricultural, or public, and access thereto, shall not detract from the natural beauty of the undeveloped skylines, ridgelines, and the shoreline. **3.2.4.A6** So that the visual continuity may remain undisturbed, the design and siting of structures, whether residential, commercial, agricultural, or public, and access thereto, shall not detract from the natural beauty of the undeveloped skylines, ridgelines, and the shoreline.
3.3 Environmentally Sensitive Habitats	**3.3.2.1** Development, including vegetation removal, excavation, grading, filing, and the construction of roads and structures, shall not be permitted in the environmentally sensitive habitat areas if it results in any potential disruption of habitat value. To approve development within any of these habitats the County must find that disruption of a habitat caused by the development is not significant. **3.3.2.2** Where private or public development is proposed, in documented or expected locations of environmentally sensitive habitats, field surveys by qualified individuals or agencies shall be made in order to determine precise locations of the habitat and to recommend mitigating measures to ensure its protection. **3.3.2.4** For developments approved within environmentally sensitive habitats, the removal of indigenous vegetation and land disturbance (grading, excavation, paving, etc.) associated with the development shall be limited to that needed for the structural improvements themselves. The guiding philosophy shall be to limit the area of disturbance, to maximize the maintenance of the natural topography of the site, and to favor structural designs which achieve these goals. **3.3.2.5** Access routes including recreational trails and roads shall be sited to avoid significant impacts to riparian corridors.
3.4 Water Resources	**3.4.2.B1** The effects of all new development proposals or intensification of land use activities or water uses on the natural character and values of the Big Sur coast's rivers

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	and streams will be specifically considered in all land use decisions. Subjects to be addressed in such evaluations include protection of scenic quality, water quantity and quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and recreational values. Land use proposals determined to pose significant impacts to the natural integrity of the stream must be modified accordingly. The County will request assistance from the Department of Fish and Game as a technical expert on wildlife and fish habitat and mitigation measures.
3.7 Hazardous Areas	**3.7.2.3** All development shall be sited and designed to minimize risk from geologic, flood, or fire hazards to a level generally acceptable to the community. Areas of a parcel which are subject to high hazard(s), shall generally be considered unsuitable for development. For any development proposed in high hazard areas, and environmental or geotechnical report shall be required prior to County review of the project. **3.7.2.6** New roads, bridges, and utility lines (either public or private) that cross active or potentially active fault zones should be designed and constructed in a manner which recognizes the hazard of fault movement. Water and electric lines should be equipped with shut-off devices or the equivalent which utilize the best available technology for quick shut-off consistent with providing reliable service.
3.10 Historical Resources	**3.10.2.1** New development shall, where appropriate, protect significant historical buildings, landmarks, and districts because of their unique characteristics and contribution to the cultural heritage of the County.
3.11 Archaeological Resources	**3.11.2.3** Because of the Coastal Zone's known abundance of paleontological resources and archaeological and other cultural sites, no sites or development shall be categorically exempt from environmental review in the Big Sur Local Coastal Plan.
Carmel Area Land Use Plan	
2.0 Visual Resources	**2.2.3.1** The design and siting of structures, whether residential, commercial, agricultural, or public, and the access roads thereto, shall not detract from the natural beauty of the scenic shoreline and the undeveloped ridgelines and slopes in the public viewshed. **2.2.3.8** Landscape screening and restoration shall consist of plant and tree species consistent with the surrounding vegetation. Screening on open grassy slopes and ridges should be avoided.
2.3 Environmentally Sensitive Habitats	2.3.3.1 Development, including vegetation removal, excavation, grading, filling, and the construction of roads and structures, shall be avoided in critical and sensitive habitat areas, riparian corridors, wetlands, sites of known rare and endangered species of plants and animals, rookeries and major roosting and haul-out sites, and other wildlife breeding or nursery areas identified as critical. 2.3.4.3 If existing livestock operations are intensified and concentrated in or near riparian corridors, a management program to protect the riparian resource should be developed. 2.3.4.4.1 Riparian plant communities shall be protected by establishing setbacks consisting of a 150-foot open space buffer zone on each side of the bank of perennial streams and 50 feet on each side of the bank of intermittent streams, or the extent of riparian vegetation, whichever is greater.

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2.4 Water and Marine Resources	**2.4.3.2** New development including access roads shall be sited, designed, and constructed to minimize runoff, erosion, and resulting sedimentation. Land divisions shall be designed to minimize the need to clear erodible slopes during subsequent development. Runoff volumes and rates should be maintained at pre-development levels unless provisions to implement this result in greater environmental damage. **2.4.3.3** Point and non-point sources of pollution of Point Lobos and Carmel Bay ASBS's, coastal streams and the Carmel River Lagoon and Marsh shall be controlled and minimized. **2.4.3.B1** All dumping of spoils (dirt, garbage, refuse, etc.) into riparian corridors and other drainage courses should be prohibited.
2.7 Hazards	**2.7.3.1** All development shall be - sited and designed to minimize risk from geologic, flood, or f ire hazards. **2.7.4.1** All development shall be sited and designed to conform to site topography and to minimize grading and other site preparation activities. **2.7.4.4** New roads across slopes of 30 percent or greater shall be allowed only where potential erosion impacts can be adequately mitigated (i.e., the proposed road construction will not induce landsliding or significant soil creep, nor increase existing erosion rates).
2.8 Archaeological Resources	**2.8.3.2** Whenever development is to occur in the coastal zone, the Archaeological Site Survey Office or other appropriate authority shall be contacted to determine whether the property has received an archaeological survey.
Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan	
Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area	**14** Near environmentally sensitive habitat areas, native vegetation removal and land disturbance (grading, excavation, paving, etc.) shall be restricted to the minimum amount necessary to accommodate reasonable development. **15** The use of non-invasive Del Monte Forest-appropriate native plant species shall be required in landscape materials used in projects and invasive plant species shall be prohibited, especially in developments adjoining environmentally sensitive habitat areas. Non-native and/or invasive plant species should be removed, and such removal is encouraged. **32** In reviewing requests for tree removal, land clearing, and other development, preservation of scenic resources shall be a primary objective. **38** New development shall be sited and designed to minimize risk from geologic, flood, or fire hazards; to assure stability and structural integrity; and to not threaten the stability of a site, contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding areas. **46** Geologic and geotechnical reports shall be required for unstable areas and for all proposed blufftop development.

Table 4. Land Use Goals and Policies

Plan Title and Goal	Policy Summary
	47 Views from designated public access areas and vista points, from Highway 68 and 17-Mile Drive corridors, and of ridgelines as seen from the public viewing areas identified on Figure 3, shall be protected as resources of public importance, and development that could adversely impact such views shall only be allowed where it protects, preserves, and if feasible enhances, such scenic resources. Conservation and scenic easements shall be required as one means of protecting such views in perpetuity. **57** The timely identification and evaluation of archaeological, historical, and paleontological resources, and coordination with applicable Native American representatives, is encouraged, so that these resources are given full consideration during the conceptual design phase of land use planning for project development.

Compliance with County regulations would also be required; regulations include, though are not limited to:

- Title 14 (Streets, Sidewalks, and Public Places)
- Title 16 (Environment)
- Title 18 (Fire Code)
- Title 20 (Coastal Zoning)
- Title 21 (Inland Zoning)

B. Planning and Oversight Process

RCD of Monterey County Planning Process

The RCD of Monterey County would be responsible for reviewing all projects under the Master Permit to ensure that each project meets the minimum standards identified above. The RCD of Monterey County would utilize technical knowledge along with support from NRCS staff to address natural resource concerns as part of project design, and maintain and improve economic viability of agricultural properties. Specifically, the RCD of Monterey County would provide scientific and technical support to facilitate project planning and implementation. The projects under the Master Permit would be designed and constructed under the oversight of the RCD of Monterey County with regulatory agency input and, where necessary, separate permitting, and incorporate the minimum Programmatic General Conditions (PGCs listed in Table 3) that mitigate any potential impacts by design. RCD of Monterey County shall relate PGCs to projects and review the ability of the project as designed and conditioned for consistency with the policies and zoning outlined in Table 4. ~~f~~Following the Program Planning Process described in **Table 5**,~~.~~ ~~The~~ the RCD of Monterey County~~'s approach to planning is adapted from the NRCS planning process. The~~ would plan~~ning process would consist of~~ projects individually with clients and specialists with a comprehensive review of design actions to address environmental issues while also considering the effects of those actions on resources (i.e., soil, water, animals, plants, air, energy, and humans).

Table 5. Program Planning Process

Step	Planning Step	Results
1	Consultation	Project design team (RCD and other specialists) ~~Identify~~ identify resource problems with the client (i.e. land owner or manager)~~and other specialists~~.
2	Determine Objectives	Project design team ~~Identify,~~ agrees on~~,~~ and document client's objectives.
3	Inventory Resources	Project design team ~~Complete~~ completes an inventory to evaluate quantitative or qualitative data in several resources categories: soils, water, air, plants, animals, energy, and human. Inventory begins with site visits and desktop-level analysis and will be followed by site-specific surveys as needed.
4	Analyze Resource Data	For each of the resource problems or concerns identified, project design team consults quality criteria and completes baseline evaluation to determine if a resource is significantly impaired. RCD coordinates with state and federal agencies for sensitive habitat considerations.
5	Formulate Range of Design Solutions	All significantly impaired resources are itemized. Practices (Attachment A) which could be used to treat each impaired resource are evaluated for anticipated negative or positive effects. RCD coordinates with state and federal agencies on design solutions, if a possibility of consultation is indicated during step 4.
6	Evaluate Range of Design Solutions	Groups of practices that result in a significant positive improvement in all resource problem categories are identified as the preferred design solution. Other groups of practices are also listed as potential options or alternative actions on the condition that they do not result in a negative effect on resources ~~problems~~.
7	Client Determines Course of Action	RCD team r~~R~~ecommend selecting a system of optimal conservation practices to maximize resource protection and enhancement to the client, and if the client agrees to proceed, RCD~~.~~ ~~Prepare~~ prepares conservation plan and specifications and routes the PCN, with documentation that regulatory agencies have reviewed, to County.
8	Client Implements Plan	Once all permits have been obtained and PCN review is completed by County, projects are implemented according to recommended design, standards, and specifications, with RCD technical support and oversight. Practices are implemented according to the recommended design, standards, and specifications ~~and with on-site technical support, if needed~~.

Table 5. Program Planning Process

Step	Planning Step	Results
9	Evaluate Plan Results	RCD ~~Evaluate~~ evaluates the effectiveness of a plan and makes adjustments, as needed.

Throughout steps 1-6 of the planning process, the RCD of Monterey County would identify potential environmental effects associated with the project proposal to identify all short-term, long-term, and cumulative effects both on- and off-site. If a significant adverse environmental effect is expected to result from a project, the RCD of Monterey County would work with the property owner to develop a plan that would reduce potential significant adverse impacts to less than significant, with or without mitigations. The RCD will consult with all state and federal agencies to ensure that all permits are obtained and that projects result in no adverse impacts. The PCN would identify conditions and mitigation measures that RCD would apply to a project. If a plan that would reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant is not possible, the project would not be eligible for coverage under the Master Permit.

RCD of Monterey County Oversight Process

Under the Master Permit, the RCD of Monterey County proposes to maintain oversight of all qualifying projects and would administer the Master Permit using *Procedures for Complying with the Monterey County EESP ~~Programmatic Restoration Permit~~: A Guide for Conservation Planners.*[7] The manual will outline the process for determining project eligibility under the Master Permit. It will identify conservation practice options, design and implementation criteria, and conditions required by the County (adherence with Tables 1 through 4). It will also specify consultation requirements with state and federal agencies, provide guidance on endangered species habitat considerations, and describe protocols for tribal engagement and cultural resource protection. In addition, it will detail the monitoring and reporting obligations (Table 5 and Attachment A).~~specify the process for ensuring individual projects qualify for the program~~; list ~~conservation practice selection; design; and implementation criteria and conditions required by the County; provide information on endangered species habitat and cultural resources protections; and detail the monitoring and reporting requirements.~~ The RCD of Monterey County would be responsible for ensuring that all projects under the Master Permit comply with applicable PGCs, pre-construction notifications (PCNs), Mitigation Measures (MMs) and annual reporting requirements.

In order to implement a project under the Master Permit, the RCD would complete and submit a PCN for each individual project. The PCN provides the County of Monterey with a streamlined overview of the proposed project for their final review and confirmation that the project and associated construction activities conform to the Master Permit. The PCN would include, but is not limited to, the project description, environmental setting, location (address, latitude/longitude, watershed, and/or County Planning Area), results of the inventory of resources, list of Conservation Practices and their associated Practice Standards, proposed area of disturbance, proposed grading volumes, compaction requirements and finished maximum cut and fill slopes (if applicable), proposed vegetation or tree removal, proposed construction window, potential

[7] This manual will be developed once the Master Permit is finalized by the County of Monterey. The manual will be updated with applicable information, guidelines, restrictions, and mitigation measures.

presence of special status species, indication that the County FEMA map has been consulted to determine if the project is located in a FEMA identified flood hazard area, indication of whether the project includes in-stream work or wetland disturbance, landowner consent, whether the project is within 50 feet of a County right-of-way, the results of all state and federal agency consultations (which agencies are taking jurisdiction over the project, the required permit type, and permit number), the required PGCs and MMs to reduce potential impacts to less than significant, and any additional protection measures as required by the state and federal agencies, and measures of success with the time frame to be used to monitor the identified success criteria. In the event RCD has applied for a state or federal permit, but the issuance is pending, the RCD will document this information, permit application number, and anticipated date of issuance in the PCN. The RCD must present the permit once it is obtained to the County prior to any construction activities.

After deeming each PCN complete, the RCD would evaluate all five projects as a whole to ensure that each environmental impact category (e.g., air quality, water quality, traffic, biological resources, tribal or cultural resources) is not impacted to a significant level. The RCD would document these cumulative findings in the form of a Cumulative Impact Evaluation memorandum that would summarize the project activities, location, and applicable PGCs, Mitigation Measures (MMs), and/or additional protection measures required by state or federal agencies to reduce a potential impact to less than significant. This includes both 1) cumulative impacts from all projects proposed in the current year, and 2) additive impacts from projects approved under the Master Permit in prior years. This approach ensures a comprehensive short-term (same year) and long-term (multi-year) evaluation of potential impacts, preventing unintended adverse effects to sensitive resources such as special-status species, waterways, air quality, and tribal or cultural resources. The memorandum, together with the five project PCNs, will be submitted to the County of Monterey and to state and federal agencies for their records. (See **Attachment C** for draft Cumulative Impact Evaluation Memorandum template.)

State and Federal Agency Oversight

Early in the project development and design process, the RCD will consult with applicable state and federal regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction over natural resources that may be impacted by the project. All projects, regardless of type, size, or location will be required to consult with and obtain any required permits from State and Federal regulatory agencies, including California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries. This ensures that each regulatory agency has an opportunity to determine if the project requires permits or additional protection measures. State and federal permits will be obtained separately through each agency's established traditional permitting processes. The types of permits or approvals may vary and may include programmatic or individual permits or authorizations. A description of agency jurisdiction and a summary of permitting mechanisms are provided in Attachment A-1. All projects must consult with the appropriate regulatory agencies and comply with state and federal regulations.

Early consultation with CDFW will ensure that all projects comply with CESA, that unauthorized "take" does not occur, and that any "take" of State listed plants and wildlife will only be authorized

through CDFW's issuance of an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b), section 2080.1 (Consistency Determination) or section 1654 (Habitat and Restoration Enhancement Act, or HREA); or with CDFW authorization of "incidental take" coverage under a Scientific Collection Permit for scientific, educational, and propagation purposes.

Early consultation will be initiated with Central Coast RWQCB for Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 and nonpoint source pollution (NPDES) compliance for discharge in Waters of the State and the USACE for Section 404 of CWA and Section 10 of Rivers and Harbors Act compliance for discharge to Waters of US. If a federal nexus with USFWS and NOAA Fisheries for ESA Section 7 exists for the permitting process, USFWS and NOAA will be the lead agencies for Section 106 and ESA compliance. For projects where there is no federal nexus and "take" of federally protected wildlife has a potential to occur, any required federal "take" authorization will be obtained directly through USFWS and NOAA Fisheries under ESA Section 10. USACE and NOAA will also be the lead agency for Section 106 NHPA compliance if a federal authorization is issued for the project. For more details, see the second table in Attachment A-1.

Each agency shall be given opportunity to review a year's set of projects and to confirm that all required state and federal permits are obtained. This notification to agencies allows an opportunity to disagree with the finding that the cumulative total of projects permitted under the program will not adversely impact resources under their jurisdiction. It also gives agencies the opportunity to stay updated on the progress of the EESP.

If an agency representative does not respond when the PCNs are distributed to them, the RCD must obtain written documentation from the agency stating that no additional consultation and/or permit is needed, and they have no objection to the projects being proposed under the Master Permit. This documentation will then be provided to the County prior to construction. If an agency finds that there could be a significant impact and that additional mitigation measures not identified in this IS/MND should be required, the project will not be submitted for coverage under the Master Permit.

County of Monterey HCD Oversight

The County of Monterey ("County") would be responsible for reviewing all qualifying environmental enhancement projects to confirm that each proposed project is appropriate to be covered under the Master Permit. This process would entail the RCD of Monterey County submitting pre-construction notifications for all projects to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning (see **Attachment B**). The projects would be reviewed by RCD of Monterey County at that time and verified by RCD as being covered by the Master Permit. RCD of Monterey County would prepare pre-construction notifications (PCNs) for a set of projects that are ready to be implemented within a year. RCD of Monterey County would submit all ~~preliminary pre-construction notification~~PCNs and supporting documentation to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning on a date to be specified between March 1st and May 1st of each year. The County would be responsible for reviewing the notifications and supporting documentation for the following:

- project conformance to the RCD planning process and regulatory agency requirements (Tables 1 and 2),

- adherence to policies described in Table 3, and appropriate application of Table 4 PGCs as well as MMs identified in this MND;
- documentation certifying that all required state and federal required approvals have been obtained or in process and will be obtained prior to project implementation; and
- Cumulative Impact Evaluation Memorandum that demonstrates no cumulative impacts.

~~and~~ County would be required to notify RCD of Monterey County within 30 days if additional review is needed. The County may conduct pre-construction site inspections during the review period, if necessary. If the County determines that a project is not eligible under the Master Permit, then that project would be subject to separate project-level review not covered under the Master Permit. HCD would consent to a final group of five qualifying projects that would move ahead for implementation each year.

Monitoring and Reporting

The RCD of Monterey County would submit annual reports to the Chief of Planning ("County") to document compliance with applicable PGCs/MMs and status of project implementation. The reports would describe the status of all environmental enhancement projects carried out under the Master Permit. The annual reports would provide County with the opportunity to review the status and progress of projects implemented under the Master Permit and determine whether further clarification or minor modifications are necessary to meet the objectives and terms of the Master Permit.

C. Other public agencies whose approval may be required

On a project-by-project basis, the RCD of Monterey County staff will coordinate with applicable state and federal regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction over natural resources that may be impacted by the projects implemented under the Master Permit. State and federal agencies include:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife ("CDFW")
- Regional Water Quality Control Board ("RWQCB")
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE")
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS")
- NOAA Fisheries ("NOAA Fisheries")

III. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER APPLICABLE LOCAL AND STATE PLANS AND MANDATED LAWS

Use the list below to indicate plans applicable to the project and verify their consistency or non-consistency with project implementation.

General Plan/Area Plan	☒	Air Quality Mgmt. Plan	☒
Specific Plan	☐	Airport Land Use Plans	☐
Water Quality Control Plan	☒	Local Coastal Program-LUP	☒

General Plan: The 2010 General Plan establishes policies and standards for development within unincorporated Monterey County. Policies of the General Plan cover most land use designations and areas within the County (i.e., Cachagua, Carmel Valley, Central Salinas Valley, Greater Monterey Peninsula, etc., illustrated in **Figure 1**). The Master Permit would facilitate enhancement projects located throughout Monterey County and across various land use designations. Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would be designed to comply with policies and standards of the General Plan. **Table 4** identifies development policies that may be applicable to the projects facilitated under the Master Permit. RCD of Monterey County would review the 2010 General Plan and all inland Land Use Plans (as applicable to the individual projects) to incorporate development policy consistency into the design and implementation of individual projects that would be facilitated under the Master Permit. **CONSISTENT.**

Local Coastal Program LUP(s): Within the coastal areas of unincorporated Monterey County, the 1982 General Plan policies apply where the Local Coastal Program ("LCP") is silent. This is typically limited to noise policies as the LCP policies contain most development standards applicable to development in the coastal areas. The Master Permit would facilitate enhancement projects located throughout unincorporated Monterey County. Land use and development within coastal zones of Monterey County are governed by the four LUPs, each with a companion Coastal Implementation Plan ("CIP"), all of which comprise the Monterey County LCP. Enhancement projects would result in temporary construction-related noise but would not increase noise above the ambient levels since the projects would not change the site's existing use. The projects would be located within various land use designations and would be designed to be consistent with the allowable uses for those designations. The LUP Policies that correspond to the type of projects the Master Permit would cover relate to policies on environmentally sensitive habitat areas, water resources, visual resources, siting new development as it pertains to watershed areas and erosion control measures, hazards and hazardous areas, and archaeological resources. **Table 4** identifies specific development policies that may be applicable to the projects facilitated under the Master Permit. RCD of Monterey County would review the 1982 General Plan and an LUP as applicable to each project to incorporate policy consistency into the design and implementation. For these reasons, the Master Permit would be consistent with the Local Coastal Program. **CONSISTENT**

Water Quality Control Plan: The Master Permit would facilitate enhancement projects in Region 3 of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board which regulates sources of water quality-related issues resulting in actual or potential impairment or degradation of beneficial uses or the overall degradation of water quality. Construction of qualifying projects under the Master Permit could result in temporary effects (e.g., erosion). Operation of projects would not generate polluted runoff in amounts that would cause degradation of water quality. To the contrary, projects facilitated under the Master Permit are intended to reduce water quality impacts through design. These environmental enhancement projects would result in a net beneficial impact to water quality. For additional discussion on hydrology and water quality, please refer to **Section VI.10 Hydrology and Water Quality**. **CONSISTENT**

Air Quality Management Plan: Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would be located within the North Central Coast Air Basin ("NCCAB") which includes unincorporated areas of Monterey County. Air quality in the region is managed and regulated by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District ("MBARD"). MBARD has developed Air Quality Management Plans

("AQMPs") and CEQA Air Quality Guidelines to address attainment and maintenance of state and federal ambient air quality standards within the NCCAB. The 2012-2015 AQMP, the 2008 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, and 2016 Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act are the most recent documents used to evaluate attainment and maintenance of air quality standards. The California Air Resources Board ("CARB") uses ambient data from each air monitoring site in the NCCAB to calculate Expected Peak Day Concentration over a consecutive three-year period. The air monitoring stations are located in various locations throughout the County. Given the nature of projects proposed under the Master Permit, there are no indications that potential future environmental enhancement projects under the Master Permit would cause a significant impact to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions. Construction could result in temporary air quality impacts. However, implementation of best management practices during construction would ensure impacts are less than significant. For a more detailed evaluation, please refer to **Section VI.3 Air Quality**. **CONSISTENT.**

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED AND DETERMINATION

A. FACTORS

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, as discussed within the checklist on the following pages.

☒ Aesthetics	☒ Agriculture and Forest 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/Traffic	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☐ Utilities/Service Systems	☒ Wildfires	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Some proposed applications that are not exempt from CEQA review may have little or no potential for adverse environmental impact related to most of the topics in the Environmental Checklist; and/or potential impacts may involve only a few limited subject areas. These types of projects are generally minor in scope, located in a non-sensitive environment, and are easily identifiable and without public controversy. For the environmental issue areas where there is no potential for

significant environmental impact (and not checked above), the following finding can be made using the project description, environmental setting, or other information as supporting evidence.

☐ Check here if this finding is not applicable

FINDING: For the above referenced topics that are not checked off, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from either construction, operation or maintenance of the proposed project and no further discussion in the Environmental Checklist is necessary.

EVIDENCE:

Land Use and Planning: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. The projects would not divide established communities. Additionally, the projects would be designed in accordance with all applicable development standards defined by the Monterey County General Plan, applicable Land Use Plans (inland and coastal), and regulations pursuant to Title 20 or Title 21 of the Monterey County Municipal Code. As previously discussed, **Table 4** identifies development policies from County of Monterey land use planning documentation (e.g., General Plans, Land Use Plans) that would be reviewed and incorporated by design and implementation of individual projects facilitated under the Master Permit. RCD of Monterey County would review the various plans as appropriate during the project process. Then, HCD would review a set of projects each spring for inclusion and would have the option to exclude any project that appears it could not comply with the Land Use and Planning policies and regulations for the site. As a result, the Master Permit would have no impact on land use and planning.

Mineral Resources: Mineral resources are determined in accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act ("SMARA") of 1975, and the California Geological Survey ("CGS") which maps regional significance of mineral resources. There are three (3) sites located within Monterey County that are designated mineral resource recovery sites (CGS, 2023). Qualifying enhancement projects under the Master Permit would likely not result in a loss of availability of known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and residents of the state. Projects facilitated under the Master Permit would primarily occur in agricultural lands, which are not designated as mineral resource recovery sites. Moreover, the Master Permit is intended to facilitate environmental enhancement projects that would have a net beneficial impact on the environment. The Master Permit would not result in any impacts to mineral resources.

Population and Housing: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would not induce substantial population growth either directly or indirectly. Projects would not change the existing use of a project site such that potential growth-inducing impacts would occur. Projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not displace existing housing units. Therefore, the Master Permit would not result in any population or housing-related impacts.

Public Services: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would not result in any adverse impacts

resulting in the need for new, or physically altered, government facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any public services (i.e., fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities). Therefore, there would be no public services related impacts.

Recreation: Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would not result in an increased use of existing neighborhood and/or regional parks or other recreational facilities causing a substantial physical deterioration. No parks, trail easements, or other recreational opportunities would be adversely impacted by the Master Permit. Moreover, qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural land. Therefore, the Master Permit would not result in any adverse recreation-related impacts.

Utilities/Service Systems: Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would not 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 of which could cause significant environmental effects. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County and would not impact water or wastewater supplies or facilities. Similarly, solid waste generated during construction would not exceed the capacity of local infrastructure or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

B. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

☒ I find that 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.

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

☐ I find that 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.

☐ I find that 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.

Mary Israel	September 8, 2023
Signature	Date

Mary Israel, Supervising Planner, County of Monterey Housing and Community Development

V. 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 project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take into account the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, 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 Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," 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) 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.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1. AESTHETICS **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (Source: 1, Attachment A, 3)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? (Source: Attachment A, 1, 3)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. (Source: Attachment A, 1, 3)	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (Source: Attachment A)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be primarily on agricultural lands. Prominent features within the County's 3,324 square miles include the Santa Lucia and Gabilan Mountain Ranges, the Salinas and Carmel Valleys, and 100 miles of California's Central Coast. Native vegetation throughout the County contributes to the highly valued scenic qualities. The General Plan and Land Use Plans ("LUPs") establish goals and policies to retain the character and natural beauty of Monterey County by preserving, conserving, and maintaining unique physical features, natural resources, and agriculture (County, 2010 and **Table 4**). Figures 12 – 16 of the General Plan identify *Scenic Highway Corridors & Visual Sensitivity Areas* throughout Monterey County.

The California Scenic Highway Program was created by Legislature in 1963 to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California's highways and adjacent corridors. Monterey County has several designated scenic highways, and others that are eligible for designations. Highways include Highway 1, Highway 68, Highway 156, Highway 25, Highway 198 (Caltrans, 2023). In addition to state scenic highways, the County of Monterey has also designated county scenic routes, these include: Crazy Horse Road; Old State Road (between Crazy Horse Road and Williams Road); San Juan Grade Road (from Crazy Horse Road to San Benito County); Palo Colorado Road; Old Coast Road; Reservation Road (from Marina to Highway 68); Elm Avenue (from Greenfield to Arroyo Seco Road); Arroyo Seco Road to Carmel Valley Road; Bitterwater Road (from King City to the San Benito County line); Jolon Road (from King City to Bradley); and Nacimiento Lake Drive (from Jolon Road to San Luis Obispo County line).

Aesthetic Impact (a - c) Less than Significant: The implementation of environmental enhancement projects under the Master Permit would not have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas. The Master Permit would facilitate environmentally beneficial restoration projects throughout Monterey County. While areas that constitute a scenic vista may exist in the vicinity of individual project sites, construction, and operation of the projects under the Master Permit would not adversely impact existing views. Rather, the projects would, if anything, improve the overall aesthetic quality of individual project sites by restoring them to their natural state. Similarly, the implementation of potential projects under the Master Permit would not substantially damage scenic resources including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway for similar reasons. As discussed above, Monterey County has highly valued scenic resources, including several state designated highways and county scenic routes. Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit could be located within an area with scenic resources and/or near a designated highway or county scenic route; however, impacts would be primarily temporary in nature during construction and would be minimal. Due to the nature of these projects, it is more likely that projects would have a net beneficial impact on scenic resources as they would include actions such as restoration, re-planting, and stream habitat improvements that would improve the visual quality of potential future project sites. A full list of projects covered by the Master Permit is provided in **Attachment A**. Finally, the implementation of projects under the Master Permit would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the enhancement project sites and their surroundings. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would primarily be on agricultural land. Projects would improve existing sites and therefore have a net benefit on the existing visual character or quality of public views of the sites and their surroundings. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Aesthetic Impact (d) No Impact: Construction of qualifying projects under the Master Permit would not require nighttime lighting, nor would operation of the projects require lighting that would result in a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views on or near the project sites. The Master Permit would have no impact.

2. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? (Sources Attachment A, 1, 2, 4, 5)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? (Sources Attachment A, 1, 2, 4, 5)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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))? (Sources Attachment A, 1, 2, 4, 5)	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? (Sources Attachment A, 1, 2, 4, 5)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Sources Attachment A, 1, 2, 4, 5)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The California Department of Conservation identifies and designates important farmland throughout the State as part of the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Farmland is classified as followed:

- **Prime Farmland.** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. These are Class I and Class II soils.

- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climactic zones in California.
- **Grazing Land.** Grazing Land is defined in Government Code §65570(b)(3) as: "...land on which the existing vegetation, whether grown naturally or through management, is suitable for grazing or browsing of livestock." The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres. Grazing Land does not include land previously designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance, and heavily brushed, timbered, excessively steep, or rocky lands which restrict the access and movement of livestock.
- **Urban and Built-Up Land.** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Other Land.** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas, not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

Monterey County's gross agricultural production in 2021 totaled 4.10 billion dollars (Monterey County Crop Report, 2021). The top crops in the County include vegetable crops, fruit, and nuts (Ibid.). The top revenue crops produced in the County in 2021 included strawberries, leaf lettuce, head lettuce, broccoli, wine grape, spinach, cauliflower, celery, and brussels sprouts (Ibid.) The California Department of Conservation designated 1.3 million acres of land in Monterey County as "agricultural land" in 2010 (County, 2010). Of this land, 166,251 acres were classified as "Prime Farmland", 43,372 acres were classified as "Farmland of Statewide Importance", 25,524 acres were classified as "Unique Farmland", and 1,065,698 acres were classified as "Grazing Land".

Agricultural and Forest Resources Impact (a) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects on agricultural lands throughout Monterey County. The projects would not convert *Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance* to non-agricultural use. Rather, the projects would enhance existing land uses by implementing conservation practices onsite. As discussed under *Section II. Description of Project,* the purpose of the projects to be implemented under the Master Permit is to improve the environmental condition on future project sites to improve existing site conditions, address impacts associated with existing agricultural use, and improve water quality, among other potential benefits. These projects are intended to complement and support existing agricultural operations

and would not result in the conversion of farmland to a non-agricultural use. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Agricultural and Forest Resources Impact (b) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands, some of which may be under a Williamson Act contract. The implementation of environmental enhancement projects to support existing agricultural uses would not, however, conflict with existing zoning or a Williamson Act contract. These projects would be complementary to existing agricultural uses and would not result in potential agricultural conflicts. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Agricultural and Forest Resources Impact (c – d) No Impact: Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoning Timberland Production, nor result in the loss of forest land or covert forest land to non-forest land. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. As previously discussed, qualifying projects would not change the existing use of the project sites, and therefore would not result in a conflict with the zoning for or cause rezoning of forest land.

Agricultural and Forest Resources Impact (e) Less than Significant Impact: See impact discussions above, the Master Permit would not likely result in changes to the environment that would result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use. Projects facilitated under the Master Permit would be located primarily on agricultural lands and would consist of environmental enhancement projects that would have a beneficial impact. The implementation of environmental enhancement projects would not change the overall use, but rather improve existing conditions. For this reason, this represents a less than significant impact.

3. 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? (Source: Attachment A, 1,2,6,7)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Source: Attachment A, 1,2,6,7)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in significant construction-related air quality impacts? (Source: Attachment A, 1,2,6,7)	☐	☐	☒	☐

3. 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 6, 7)	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? (Source: Attachment A, 1, 2, 6, 7)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects located throughout Monterey County. Monterey County is in the North Central Coast Air Basin ("NCCAB"), which is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District ("MBARD"). The MBARD is responsible for producing an Air Quality Management Plan ("AQMP") that reports air quality and regulates stationary air pollution sources throughout the NCCAB. The MBARD is responsible for measuring the concentration of pollutants and comparing those concentrations against the Ambient Air Quality Standards ("AAQS"). AAQS establish levels of air quality that are required to be maintained to protect the public from the adverse effects of air pollution and are established for "criteria air pollutants" which include ozone, carbon monoxide, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter and less than 2.5 microns in diameter, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. MBARD is responsible for monitoring criteria pollutants to determine whether they are in attainment or not in attainment with the AQMP. **Table 3-1** illustrates the attainment status for criteria pollutants.

Table 3-1 Attainment Status for the NCCAB

Pollutants	State Designation	Federal Designation
Ozone (O_3)	Nonattainment – Transitional	Attainment
Inhalable Particulates (PM_{10})	Nonattainment	Attainment
Fine Particulates ($PM_{2.5}$)	Attainment	Attainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Monterey Co. – Attainment	Attainment
	San Benito Co. – Unclassified	Attainment
	Santa Cruz Co. – Unclassified	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Source: Monterey Bay Air Resources District, 2017. 2012 – 2015 Air Quality Management Plan		

MBARD has set air quality thresholds of significance for the evaluation of projects. **Table 3-2** illustrates the thresholds of significance used to determine if a project would have a significant air quality effect on the environment during construction.

Table 3-2 Thresholds of Significance Construction Emissions	
Pollutant	**Threshold of Significance (lb./day)**
Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	137
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	137
Respirable Particular Matter (PM_{10})	82
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	55
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	550
Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, 2016. Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act.	

In addition to these thresholds, MBARD has also determined that a significant short-term construction generated impact would occur if more than 2.2 acres of earthmoving per day was to occur. **Table 3-3** illustrates the thresholds of significance used to determine if a project would have a significant air quality effect on the environment during operation.

Table 3-3 Thresholds of Significance Operational Emissions	
Pollutant	**Threshold of Significance (lb./day)**
Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	137
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	137
Respirable Particular Matter (PM_{10})	82
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	55
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	550
Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, 2016. Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act.	

The California Air Resources Board ("CARB") defines a sensitive receptor as children, elderly, asthmatic, and others who are at high risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sec. 42705.5, a sensitive receptor includes hospitals, schools and day cares centers and such locations as the district or state board may determine. MBARD similarly defines sensitive receptors and adds that the location of sensitive receptors be explained in terms that draw a relationship to the project site and potential air quality impacts.

Air Quality Impact (a) No Impact: CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15125(b) requires that a project be evaluated for consistency with applicable regional plans, including the AQMP. MBARD is required to update their AQMP every three (3) years. The most recent update was the 2012 – 2015 AQMP which was adopted in March 2017. This plan addresses attainment of the State ozone standard and Federal air quality standards. The AQMP accommodates growth by projecting growth in emissions based on population forecasts prepared by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments ("AMBAG") and other indicators. Consistency determinations are issued for commercial, industrial, residential, and infrastructure related projects that have the potential to induce population growth. A project is considered inconsistent with the AQMP if it has not been accommodated in the forecast projects considered in the AQMP. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural land. Projects under the Master Permit would not induce substantial population growth or result in the need for additional residential development. Therefore, the Master Permit would not conflict with or obstruct an applicable air quality plan. There would be no impact.

Air Quality Impact (b - c) Less than Significant: The MBARD 2016 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines contain standards of significance for evaluating potential air quality effects of projects subject to the requirements of CEQA. According to MBARD, a project would violate an air quality standard and/or contribute to an existing or projected violation if it would emit (from all sources, including exhaust and fugitive dust) more than:

- 137 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x),
- 137 pounds per day of reactive organic gases (ROG),
- 82 pounds per day of respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}),
- 55 pounds per day of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), and
- 550 pounds per day carbon monoxide (CO).

According to the MBARD's criteria for determining construction impacts, a project would result in a potentially significant impact if it would result in 8.1 acres of minimal earthmoving per day or 2.2 acres per day with major grading and excavation.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. As discussed in *Section II. Description of Project*, and detailed in **Attachment A**, projects may require a total of 1,000 cy to 30,000 cy of cut and fill, the total amount of grading volume being dependent of the project practice type described in **Attachment A** (e.g., Underground Outlet vs Wetland Management). Construction would require equipment such as tractors, backhoes, excavators, loading trucks, and pickup trucks. Construction related emissions would come from sources such as exhaust or fugitive dust. Construction of projects under the Master Permit would not, however, exceed MBARD's significance criteria, and would be temporary in nature. First, projects would disturb approximately 0.5 acres to 18 acres. Grading and excavation related activities would occur over several days and would not exceed MBARD's daily ground disturbance thresholds for excavation (2.2 acres per day) or grading (8.1 acres per day). Secondly, projects would implement standard construction Best Management Practices ("BMPs") related to dust suppression (e.g., watering active construction areas, prohibiting grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph), covering trucks hauling soil, covering exposed stockpiles, etc.). Third, projects would be required to implement RCD of Monterey County's PGCs AQ-1 through AQ-6. Applicable PGCs related to air quality include actions such as:

- Watering construction areas in dry and windy conditions;
- Sweeping paved roads;
- Covering hauling trucks;
- Stabilizing disturbed or inactive areas;
- Not working during high wind events; and
- Limiting driving speeds.

Implementation of BMPs, and PGCs would ensure that impacts remain less than significant.

Due to the nature of the projects facilitated by the Master Permit, operations emissions would not be generated. There would be no impact.

Air Quality Impact (d) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects under the Master Permit would be located throughout Monterey County. More specifically, projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. Projects could be located within ¼ mile of a sensitive receptor. CARB identifies sensitive receptors as children, elderly, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Locations where sensitive receptors congregate may include hospitals, schools, and day care centers. As discussed above, construction related activities would generate temporary air quality impacts. These impacts would be temporary and would not exceed the thresholds set by MBARD. Operation of projects under the Master Permit would not increase air quality impacts due to the nature of anticipated future projects. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Air Quality Impact (e) Less than Significant: Construction of the projects under the Master Permit could generate temporary odors from construction equipment (e.g., diesel exhaust) which could be noticeable at times to residences, students, and other sensitive receptors in the vicinity of qualifying projects. However, construction generated odors would be temporary in nature and would not create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of persons. This represents a less than significant impact.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 8)	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 8, 13, 14)	☐	☒	☐	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 8, 13)	☐	☒	☐	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1,2, 8)	☐	☐	☒	☐

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 8)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 8)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Camara Environmental Consulting prepared the *Programmatic Restoration Permit for the Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Program Biological Resources Assessment* on December 20, 2022 (HCD Library Document No. LIB230006, Source: 8). The purpose of the biological resources assessment was to document and summarize existing conditions in the Master Permit area (i.e., Monterey County) and to determine to what extent projects facilitated under the Master Permit may affect biological resources. The following analysis relies on the results of the biological resources assessment.

Biological Resources Impact (a - c) Less than Significant with Mitigation: The implementation of qualifying projects under the Master Permit could have a substantial adverse effect on candidate, sensitive, or special status wildlife or plant species in connection with construction-related activities. Similarly, projects facilitated under the Master Permit could have a substantial adverse effect on a state or federally protected wetland. More specifically, these projects could result in potentially significant impacts during construction. As such, this represents a potentially significant impact that would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of PGCs, compliance with state and federal permitting requirements, and the **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-2**.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural land. Specific locations of qualifying projects are not available at this time but could reasonably contain one or more habitat types or plant communities that contain candidate, sensitive, or special status species. Based on the literature review completed by Camara Environmental, 101[8] special status wildlife species and 124 special status plant species have the potential to occur within the Master Permit area (i.e., Monterey County). Similarly, 59 vegetation types were recorded within the Master Permit area, half of which contain a sensitive ranking. Camara Environmental also notes that wetlands and riparian communities are prevalent and likely to occur within qualifying projects sites.

[8] Camara Environmental excluded vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*and) and conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), Stellar sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*), Olive Ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas).*

Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would result in long term and cumulatively beneficial effects to protected species, their habitats, and sensitive communities. Potential effects as a result of qualifying projects would be localized and result in a net benefit to the environment through the establishment, restoration, and enhancement of various habitats. The implementation of potential environmental enhancement projects under the Master Permit could, however, result in temporary impacts to biological resources, including potentially sensitive resources, during construction.

Potential temporary construction-related impacts could be significant but would be reduced to less than significant for the following reasons. First, projects implemented under the Master Permit would be required to comply with all applicable state, local, and federal regulations pertaining to biological resources and would be required to comply with all applicable permit conditions. Second, each qualifying project under the Master Permit would be required to implement PGCs intended to minimize potential biological impacts. Applicable PGCs include, but are not limited to, BIO-1 through BIO-13, VEG-1 through VEG-6, LEDA-1 through LEDA-4, EM-5 through EM-7, SWFP-4, and TL-4. These PGCs generally require projects be completed based on the recommendations of a site-specific biological evaluation, avoid or minimize impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas ("ESHA"), implement project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, implement state and federal permitting requirements, conduct biological training, conduct construction-phase biological monitoring, and other similarly related measures. Moreover, applicable PGCs further require a detailed analysis process to ensure that each qualifying project represents the least potentially adversely impacting design. To ensure that potential biological impacts are reduced to a less than significant level, the following mitigation measures identified below would be necessary. The implementation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-2**, which would require projects facilitated under the Master Permit to submit comprehensive, project-level, documentation that includes a site-specific biological resources report, development plans with all applicable PGCs included as part of the project, and identify all state and federal permits, including applicable permit conditions. The project-level documentation would be subject to review and approval by the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning.

In summary, compliance with applicable state and federal permitting requirements related to biological resources, implementation of PGCs, as well as **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-2** would ensure that impacts remain less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 *The RCD of Monterey County shall submit detailed project-level documentation for each qualifying project facilitated under the Master Permit to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning for review and approval prior to the initiation of any construction-related activities.* Documentation shall be developed by a qualified biologist and submitted to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning as part of the planning process and pre-construction notification procedure as discussed in *Section II. Description of Project*. Documentation shall include, at a minimum, the following material:

1. *Biological Resource Evaluation:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include a project-level biological resource evaluation for each project proposed under the Master Permit. The biological resource evaluation shall be prepared by a qualified professional on the

County's approved consultant list. The biological evaluation shall identify general biological habitats in the project's proximity and each respective species composition that may be present. The evaluation shall also identify the presence of sensitive habitats, presence, or potential presence of sensitive species, and identify applicable regulatory requirements. The evaluation shall also, if necessary, identify project-specific avoidance and minimization measures. The evaluation shall document that potential temporary project-related impacts can be addressed through the implementation of PGCs and project-specific avoidance and minimization measures. If a project cannot avoid potential impacts through the implementation of PGCs, project-specific avoidance and minimization measures, or applicable state and federal permit conditions, then the project would be subject to additional environmental review under CEQA. RCD of Monterey County shall present cumulative impact assessment ("Cumulative Impact Evaluation") annually with the PCN set that shall be circulated to regulatory agencies prior to submittal to County. Evidence that regulatory agencies have reviewed the memorandum shall also be included in each annual PCN set provided to County.

2. *State and Federal Permits:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include copies of state and federal permits required for the construction of each qualifying project facilitated under the Master Permit. All relevant conditions shall be included as project design measures and the RCD of Monterey County shall include all permit conditions on the construction drawings for each project. Individuals involved in capture, handling, and/or translocation of Federal or State-listed species shall be identified in Incidental Take Permits pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(b), except when other CESA permitting mechanisms such as section 2080.1 (consistency determination), section 2086 (natural community conservation plan, or NCCP), section 2086 (voluntary local program, or VLP), section 2089.2 (Safe Harbor), or section 1654 (habitat and restoration enhancement act, or HREA) apply.
3. *Program General Conditions:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include a detailed list of all applicable PGCs that will be implemented in connection with each project as part of the project-specific documentation. Note that PGCs are updated herein to better detail the involvement of regulating agencies. All PGCs shall be included as notes on the construction drawings.
4. *Project Plans:* The RCD of Monterey County shall submit project-level drawings to the County of Monterey for review and approval. Project plans shall be consistent with the description of the RCD of Monterey County's Authorized Project Practice Types. Project Plans shall include construction notes that identify all PGCs, state and federal permit conditions, and any additional project-specific design features to reduce potential temporary construction impacts to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 Monitoring Action: Before May 1st of each year, and prior to the authorization of a qualifying project by County of Monterey HCD, the RCD of Monterey County shall submit to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning for review and approval: project-specific documentation as described in 1-4 of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, a Cumulative Impact Evaluation, and evidence that regulatory agencies have been given an opportunity to be involved in the design of projects and have reviewed the PCN set with that year's Cumulative Impact Evaluation. ~~to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning for review and approval~~.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2 *RCD of Monterey County shall submit annual reports that document compliance with all relevant PGCs, project-specific minimization and avoidance measures, and applicable state and federal permit requirements.* The annual reports shall define the area affected, environmental enhancements accomplished, and the quantity of ground disturbance completed at the time of the report preparation (i.e., provide a status update regarding ground disturbance). The annual report shall also list all conservation benefits, identify all net benefits from the project, and describe all actions taken to avoid adverse effects to, and enhance habitat of, listed species. The annual reports shall detail how each applicable Programmatic General Condition(s), project-specific avoidance, and minimization measures, and permitting requirements has been successfully implemented, where necessary. A detailed description of monitoring and reporting efforts, and future monitoring actions, shall be included as part of the annual report. The annual reports shall also include photographic evidence documenting the site conditions before, during, and after construction. Upon completion of the project, the RCD of Monterey County shall submit a Final Report. The Final Report shall include all the documentation produced throughout the duration of the project.

> **Mitigation Measure BIO-2 Monitoring Action:** By or before March 1st of each year, RCD of Monterey County shall submit an annual report for review by County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning. Following project completion, the RCD of Monterey County shall submit a Final Report for review and approval to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning.

Biological Resources Impact (d) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not have a substantial adverse effect on any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Camara Environmental identified 21 natural landscape blocks that are critical for facilitating animal movement. As discussed above, all qualifying projects would be required to comply with all applicable PGCs. Furthermore, the projects facilitated under the Master Permit would provide a net benefit to native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species through habitat restoration and enhancement activities. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Biological Resources Impact (e) Less than Significant: Monterey County Code Section 16.60.040(a) prohibits the removal of trees without a tree removal permit. The number of trees to be removed is not known; however, qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would comply with the County of Monterey's tree removal permit requirement and would implement RCD of Monterey County's PGC EM-5 Tree Removal and Replacement. This PGC identifies when tree replacement is required and how to implement replacement actions (i.e., number of trees and species). The implementation of applicable PGCs would ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

Biological Resources Impact (f) No Impact: The Master Permit would have no impact on an adopted habitat conservation plan or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects which would have a net benefit on the condition of habitats within the qualifying project sites.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 9)	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 9)	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 9)	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The following discussion is based on the results of the *2022 Cultural Resources Assessment Report: Programmatic Restoration Permit for the EESP, Monterey County, California* (HCD Library Document No. LIB230006, Source: 9). The report was prepared by Sarah Nicchitta et al. of Albion Environmental Inc. ("Albion").

Methodology

Due to the programmatic nature of the Master Permit (i.e., absence of project specific information), Albion conducted archival and background research of their in-house cultural resource database, publicly accessible data (including maps and imagery), and General Land Office maps and archives. A general archaeological sensitivity model for Monterey County was developed using geographic information system ("GIS") and publicly available GIS data. The parameters of the model were: distance to freshwater sources and slope. Both parameters have demonstrated the strongest correlation with known cultural site locations. A slope layer and water source layer that included perennial and intermittent watercourses and water bodies was developed using United State Geological Survey ("USGS") data. The models categorized the landscape according to three levels of sensitivity:

- Low – further than 200 meters from a water source.
- Moderate – within 200 meters of a water source and on a slope greater than 9 degrees.
- High – within 200 meters of a water source and on a slope less than 9 degrees.

Monterey County is in the traditional lands of at least three (3) different known tribal groups: the Ohlone, the Esselen, and the Salinan.

Cultural Resources Impact (a - b) Less than Significant with Mitigation: CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5 defines a historical resource as one being listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Public Resources Code Section 21084.1 states 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. Historical resources include human-made/modified structures, objects, or landscape features older than 50 years (Albion, 2022).[9] Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) states a unique archaeological resource means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects under the Master Permit could contain and/or be located near a historic and/or an archaeological resource. In order to ensure that potential adverse impacts are avoided, site specific analyses would be completed at the time a qualifying project is identified consistent with PGC CUL-2 (see *Section ii. Description of Project*). PGC CUL-2 identifies projects that have minimal ground disturbance and do not require heavy equipment use as *Low Impact* projects. *Low Impact* projects would require a cultural resource assessment to be completed by an archaeologically trained resource professional and include:

- Background research
- Pedestrian survey
- Letter report of findings

If during the background research or pedestrian survey, historic or archaeological resources are found, PGC CUL-4 (cultural resource extended presence/absence testing) and CUL-5 (cultural resource evaluation and significance study) would be implemented.

For enhancement projects that do not meet the criteria for *Low Impact*, projects would implement PGC CUL-3 which would result in a cultural resource inventory and include:

- Background research
- Pedestrian survey
- Report of Findings

Enhancement projects that have a positive historical or archaeological resource located within the project area that are determined eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, a Cultural Resource Treatment Plan would be developed and implemented to reduce potential impacts of the project to less than significant (see PGC CUL-6). PGC CUL-7 (cultural

[9] Not every 50 (or older) resource possess the same potential to contribute to the historic record. A cultural resource assessment would determine historical significance of an artifact.

resource training) and CUL-8 (discovery of cultural resources) would also be implemented prior to construction of projects.

Moreover, the RCD of Monterey County would conduct consultation with potentially affected Native American Tribes as part of the planning process to solicit input from representatives of potentially affected Native American Tribes to ensure that potential impacts are avoided through design. In addition to the PGCs, **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **CUL-2** would ensure this remains a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 *The RCD of Monterey County shall submit project-specific documentation to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning for review and approval, of each qualifying project facilitated under the Master Permit, prior to initiation of any construction-related activities. PGCs CUL-1 through CUL-3 require reporting subject to project design and site condition qualifiers.* Documentation shall be developed by a qualified professional and shall be submitted as part of the planning process and pre-construction notification procedure as discussed in *Section II. Description of Project.* CUL-3's Phase 1 report is not fully aligned with County's archaeological and tribal cultural resource requirements. Therefore, CUL-3 is modified to require d~~D~~ocumentation to ~~shall~~ include, though not be limited to, the following:

1. *Cultural Resource Evaluation and Report:* A detailed cultural resource evaluation shall be conducted by a qualified professional to identify archaeological, historic resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources. The evaluation shall discuss the site's current and historical significance including, though not limited to, current and prior land use. The evaluation shall present results from a records search at the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources File System, and shall provide an analysis of sacred lands identified through consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission. The evaluation and report shall also confirm the presence of cultural resources, identify all regulatory requirements, and if necessary, identify mitigation to minimize impacts. The evaluation shall document that potential temporary project-related impacts can be addressed through the implementation of PGCs and project-specific avoidance and minimization measures. If a project cannot avoid potential impacts through implementation of PGCs, and project -specific avoidance and minimization measures, then the project would be subject to additional environmental review under CEQA.
2. *Native American Consultation and Outreach:* The RCD of Monterey County shall submit evidence demonstrating that the RCD of Monterey County has conducted tribal outreach to potentially affected Native American Tribes. Documentation shall include copies of project correspondence, dates, and descriptions of potential Native American Tribal concerns, and actions taken to ensure that concerns are incorporated into the design of individual projects, as necessary.
3. *Program General Conditions:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include a detailed list of all applicable PGCs that will be implemented in connection with each project as part of the project-specific documentation. All PGCs shall be included as notes on the construction drawings.
4. *Project Plans:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include detailed Project Plans. Project plans shall be consistent with the description of the RCD of Monterey County's Authorized Project Practice Types (**Attachment A**). Project Plans shall include construction notes that

identify all measures to minimize impacts. Measures shall include all relevant PGCs, all appropriate NRCS Conservation Measures, and if necessary, include project-specific minimization and avoidance measures identified in the project-level documentation.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 Monitoring Action: Before May 1st of each year, and prior to the authorization of a qualifying project by County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning, for any enhancement project for which the RCD of Monterey County would apply PCG CUL-3, ~~a~~ project-specific documentation shall be submitted for review and approval.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2 *The RCD of Monterey County shall submit annual reports that document compliance with all relevant PGCs, project-specific minimization and avoidance measures, and on-going monitoring results.* Annual reports shall detail the project and define the project's purpose. The annual reports shall define the area affected, environmental enhancements accomplished, and the quantity of ground disturbance completed at the time of the report preparation (i.e., provide a status update regarding ground disturbance). The annual report shall also list all conservation benefits, and describe all actions taken to avoid adverse effects to known, and unknown, cultural resources. A detailed description of monitoring and reporting efforts, and future requirements, shall be included in the annual report. A detailed description of monitoring and reporting efforts, and future monitoring actions, shall be included in as part of the annual report. The annual reports shall also include photographic evidence documenting the site conditions before, during, and after construction. Upon completion of the project, the RCD of Monterey County shall submit a Final Report. The Final Report shall include all documentation produced throughout the duration of the project.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2 Monitoring Action: By or before March 1st of each year, RCD of Monterey County shall submit an annual report for review by County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning. Following project completion, the RCD of Monterey County shall submit a Final Report to the County of Monterey Chief of Planning for review and approval.

Cultural Resources Impact (c) Less than Significant with Mitigation: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects located throughout Monterey County. Projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands, and therefore previously disturbed and developed. It would be unlikely to encounter human remains during construction; however, unknown human remains could be impacted during ground disturbing activities. Qualifying projects would be required to comply with PGCs intended to minimize potential impacts due to the discovery of human remains, and would implement **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **CUL-2**, described above. Specifically, projects would be required to comply with PGC CUL-9 which requires that all work temporarily halt in the event of the accidental discovery of human remains. The implementation of this PGC and **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** and **CUL-2** would ensure that potential impacts related to human remains would be less than significant.

6. ENERGY **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 17, 18, 20)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 17, 18, 20, 22)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Pacific Gas & Electric ("PG&E") is the primary electric and natural gas service provider in Monterey County. In 2018, all PG&E customers within Monterey County were enrolled in Central Coast Community Energy ("3CE"), formally known as Monterey Bay Community Power. 3CE is a locally controlled public agency providing carbon-free electricity to residents and businesses. 3CE works through PG&E which provides billing, power transmission and distribution, grid maintenance service and natural gas to customers. 3CE's standard electricity offering is carbon free and has progressed on a pathway toward 100% renewable sources by 2030. As of February 2022, 3CE's residential power is classified as 34 percent renewable. Of the electricity provided by the company in 2018, 40 percent was hydroelectric, and 30 percent was solar and wind (eligible renewables). (Source: 20.)

Energy Impact (a – b) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. Due to the nature of the enhancement projects potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during construction or operation, would be unlikely. Construction activities associated with qualifying projects would require energy for the procurement and transportation of materials, and preparation of potential project sites (e.g., grading, materials hauling). Petroleum-based fuels such as diesel fuel and gasoline would be the primary sources of energy for these activities. At this time construction energy use cannot be quantified; however, construction would not cause inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy because 1) the construction schedule and process would be designed to be efficient to avoid excess monetary costs, and 2) energy use required to complete construction would be temporary in nature.

Operation of the Master Permit would not result in a significant increase in energy as the enhancement projects would not require energy use.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12) Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Chapter 18B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 12, 16)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Qualifying projects would be required to comply with the latest adopted edition of California Building Codes. Adrienne Carter, P.E. with the RCD of Monterey County prepared a *Programmatic Geotechnical Investigation for the Environmental Enhancement Streamlining*

Program (HCD Library Document No. LIB230007, Source: 12). The following discussion is based on the findings of that analysis.

Seismicity and Fault Zones

The geologic structure of central California is primarily a result of tectonic events during the past 30 million years. Faults in the area are believed to be a result of movements along the Pacific and North American tectonic plate boundaries. The movements along these plates are northwest-trending and are largely composed of the San Andreas Fault system. Monterey County's complex geology is a result of changes in sea level and tectonic uplifting. Geologic units in the region have been displaced by faulting and folding. Granitic basement and overlying tertiary deposits have been juxtaposed along many of the northwest/southeast-trending faults.

Monterey County is subject to high seismic activity due to its proximity to the San Andreas Fault Zone. The plate boundary is wide and creates a network of disconnected smaller faults, including the Rinconada, San Gregoria, Monterey Bay-Tularcitos, Zayante-Veregels, and San Andreas Fault. Monterey County is susceptible to seismic waves and ground movement. Seismic activity also results in increased potential for hazards such as fault rupture, ground shaking, liquification, landslides, and subsidence.

Soils

The Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") characterizes soils throughout Monterey County. The NRCS SoilWeb website provides site specific soil information including runoff potential, erosion hazard, and shrinking and swelling behavior. Soil behavior can be attributed to the soil type, human activity/use, and natural mechanisms (e.g., wind, drainage).

Geology and Soils Impact (a.i – a.iv) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. The Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is in the southeastern portion of Monterey County. Qualifying projects could be located within this area. RCD of Monterey County's PGCs would be applied, as would development standards and policies established by the 2010 General Plan and Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act. Monterey County is a region that is seismically active. Qualifying projects could be in proximity to active and potentially active faults; therefore, there is a potential for strong seismic shaking at project sites. Qualifying projects would be required to comply with California Building Code seismic design standards to the extent applicable. Additionally, qualifying projects would be required to comply with applicable PGCs (e.g., PGCs ES-1 through ES-3, EC-1 through ES-5). Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit could be susceptible to landslides and liquefication. Again, qualifying projects would be subject to applicable PGCs, which would ensure that potential seismically induced hazards would be minimized. This represents a less than significant impact.

Geology and Soils Impact (b-d) Less than Significant: Monterey County contains surface soils that present erosion hazards and could be susceptible to landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquification, or expansion based on their physical properties and surrounding land use (e.g., agriculture). Environmental enhancement projects facilitated under the Master Permit are intended

to reduce erosive conditions, improve stormwater management, and stabilize soils and slopes. Qualifying projects would be reviewed, designed, and implemented with oversight from RCD of Monterey County staff and design engineers (see *Section II. Description of Project*) and would be subject to final review by the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning. Additionally, projects would be required to comply with PGCs (e.g., ES-1 through ES-2 and EC-1 through EC-5) and associated NRCS conservation practices. These PGCs and conservation practices would ensure that site specific evaluation of existing erosion conditions are evaluated by a geologist, geotechnical engineer, or civil engineer and that the projects are designed to reduce erosion. Erosion reduction PGCs would also include limiting earthmoving activities during wet seasons[10], implementing soil stabilization mechanisms, and protecting disturbed areas. In addition, temporary construction related effects may occur and would be minimized through implementation of BMPs and all applicable Monterey County Code requirements (e.g., Chapter 16.08 and 16.12). For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Geology and Soils Impact (e) No Impact: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would not construct wastewater facilities or septic tanks. Therefore, qualifying projects would not result in adverse impacts related to site soils being incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. The Master Permit would have no impact.

Geology and Soils Impact (f) Less than Significant: Significant paleontological resources are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, and diagnostically or stratigraphically important, as well as those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas, stratigraphically, taxonomically, or regionally. They include fossil remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates, remains of plants and animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy, and assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlations – particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphic evolution, paleoclimatology, and the relationships of aquatic and terrestrial species. Most of the fossils found in Monterey County are of marine life forms and form a record of the region's geologic history of advancing and retreating sea levels. A review of nearly 700 known fossil localities within the County was conducted in 2001; 12 fossil sites were identified as having outstanding scientific value. Qualifying projects could be located on or near any of these sites. To ensure impacts remain less than significant projects would be required to comply with PGCs (i.e., PALEO-1). This PGC is intended to avoid or document paleontological resources that could potentially be affected by implementation of a qualifying project. Specifically, this PGC would require that each project be reviewed against the Stanford EarthWork's data and to confirm that project activities are located outside any previously identified resources. If resources are discovered, construction within 50 feet of the resource would stop and a qualified paleontologist would be notified who would record and evaluate the resource and provide additional recommendations to allow work to proceed. The implementation of this PGC would ensure that impacts would be minimized to a less than significant level. For this reason, this is a less than significant impact.

[10] As discussed in Attachment B, projects that require grading work beyond October 15th must be pre-approved by County of Monterey HCD and all appropriate regulatory agencies permitting the project.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 6, 7, 17)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2 ,6, 7, 17)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Various gases in the earth's atmosphere, when exceeding naturally occurring or 'background' levels due to human activity or catastrophic geological events, create a warming or greenhouse effect, and are classified as atmospheric greenhouse gases ("GHGs"). These gases play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the atmosphere from space and a portion of the radiation is absorbed by the earth's surface. The earth emits this radiation back toward space, and the properties of the radiation change from high-frequency solar radiation to lower-frequency infrared radiation. Greenhouse gases, which are transparent to solar radiation, are effective in absorbing infrared radiation. As a result, the radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is retained, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere known as the greenhouse effect. Among the prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect, or climate change, are carbon dioxide ("CO_2"), methane ("CH_4"), ozone ("O_3"), water vapor, nitrous oxide ("N_2O"), and chlorofluorocarbons ("CFCs"). Human-caused emissions of these GHGs in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for the greenhouse effect. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter of GHGs.

MBARD has not yet adopted a threshold for construction related GHG emissions and recommends utilizing thresholds set by neighboring districts (e.g., Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District ["SMAQMD"]). SMAQMD adopted an updated threshold based on the 2030 target year in April 2020. According to SMAQMD, a Project would result in a significant GHG related impact if the Project would emit more than 1,100 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent-CO_2e ("$MTOCO_2e$") per year. Operation of a stationary source project would not have a significant GHG impact if the project emits less than 10,000 $MTOCO_2e$.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (a-b) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Monterey County is located within the NCCAB, where air quality is regulated by MBARD. As discussed above. If a project emits less than 1,100 $MTOCO_2e$ per year, its GHG emissions impact would be less than significant. Qualifying projects would generate temporary construction-related GHG emissions. Construction would be short-term and temporary. Operation of the projects facilitated by the Master Permit would not generate GHG emissions as they consist of environmental enhancement projects (e.g., wetland management, critical planting areas, etc.). Rather, operation of the projects would have a net benefit on GHG emissions, as they would be improving the environmental

conditions of sites and facilitating activities that reduce GHG emissions, such as replanting and restoration activities. For these reasons, construction and operation would have a less than significant impact.

As described above, enhancement projects facilitated under the Master Permit are not expected to generate GHG emissions that would exceed applicable thresholds. Therefore, the Master Permit would not conflict with any applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This represents a less than significant impact.

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1,2, 11)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11)	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 11, 23)	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 10, 11, 21)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Hazardous materials, as defined by the California Code of Regulations, are substances with certain physical properties that could pose a substantial present or future hazard to human health or the environment when improperly handled, disposed, or otherwise managed. Hazardous waste is any hazardous material that is discarded, abandoned, or slated to be recycled. Hazardous materials and waste can result in public health hazards if improperly handled, released into the soil or groundwater, or through airborne releases in vapors, fumes, or dust. Soil and groundwater having concentrations of hazardous constituents higher than specific regulatory levels must be handled and disposed of as hazardous waste when excavated or pumped from an aquifer.

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site ("Cortese") List is a planning tool used by the state, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California EPA ("CalEPA") to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. Various state and local government agencies are required to track and document hazardous material release information for the Cortese List.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (a-b) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. Qualifying projects would entail the use of hazardous materials (e.g., herbicides, fuel, etc.) during construction. The types and amounts of hazardous materials used would vary according to the project and activity. It is unlikely that construction of qualifying projects would create a significant impact due to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in part due to the temporary nature of construction; or 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. Hazardous materials would be handled and stored in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to hazardous materials. In addition, projects would implement standard BMPs and comply with PGCs (see HAZ-1 through HAZ-9 and HL-1 through HS-3 in *Section II. Description of Project*). PGC's would establish specific locations for use of hazardous materials (e.g., herbicides), identify containment sites for storage at project sites, and establish inspection and cleanup procedures. The implementation of these measures would ensure that impacts would be less than significant. Operation of projects facilitated under the Master Project would not require use of hazardous materials. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (c) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. The projects would be located primarily on agricultural property. The projects could be located within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school, but would not result in emissions of hazardous material, or handling of hazardous materials for which would result in a substantial adverse impact. As previously discussed, construction of the qualifying projects would require the use of hazardous materials (e.g., herbicides, fuel, etc.). Standard BMP's and implementation and compliance with applicable PGCs would ensure potential impacts remain less than significant.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (d) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. The projects would

be located primarily on agricultural property. Qualifying projects would be required to comply with PGCs (see *Section II. Description of Project*) which include measures that require a detailed review of the Cortese List to ensure potential projects would not result in potential hazardous impacts due to a project being located on a hazardous materials site. For this reason, this is a less than significant impact.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (e) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Given the nature of the projects, it is unlikely that they would adversely impact a public or private airport and would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working if located within an airport land use plan. Projects would be designed to be consistent with the land use plans, including Airport Land Use plans, which would ensure that impacts remain less than significant.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (f) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects facilitated by the Master Permit would not interfere with or impair the implementation of any emergency response plans or evacuation plans. The evacuation routes and plans within Monterey County are available in the *2021 Monterey County Operational Area Evacuation and Transportation Plan*. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects that would result in temporary construction-related traffic, but these effects would be limited in duration and would not physically impair and/or otherwise interfere with the implementation of an existing emergency response plan or evacuation plan. Moreover, the Master Permit would not increase existing operational traffic beyond current levels at qualifying project sites. Therefore, the Master Permit would not interfere with emergency response plans or evacuation plans. This represents a less than significant impact.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impact (g) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects facilitated by the Master Permit would be located within Monterey County on sites located primarily on agricultural lands. Qualifying project sites could be located within areas of moderate wildfire risk. Projects would be required to comply and implement all applicable PGCs (see *Section II. Description of Project*) which would ensure wildfire risk is minimized. For more information, please refer to **Section VI.20 Wildfire**. The Master Permit would have a less than significant impact.

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Adrienne Carter, P.E. of RCD of Monterey County prepared a *Programmatic Hydraulic and Drainage Analysis* in December of 2022 (HCD Library Document No. LIB230010, Source: 13). Steven Bond, P.G., CEG, H.G. prepared a *Hydrogeological Assessment Report and Risk Evaluation of Proposed Conservation Practices Under the Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program* in December of 2022 (HCD Library Document No. LIB230008, Source: 14). Together, these reports evaluate the Master Permit, and support the discussion below.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Monterey County is located in the central coast of California and bounded by the Monterey Bay and Pacific Ocean to the west, Santa Cruz County to the north, San Benito County and Fresno County to the east, and San Luis Obispo County to the south. Monterey County covers over 2.1 million acres and is 130 miles long and 30 miles wide. The County is shaped by the Coastal Ranges and Salinas River Valley. The County has numerous creeks and rivers that create a complex hydrologic setting. The major watersheds within the County are the Salinas River, Pajaro River, and the Carmel River. Larger sub-watersheds are Nacimiento, San Antonio, Arroyo Seco, Big Sur River.

Monterey County has a number of groundwater basins. As discussed above, the three major watersheds are the Salinas River, Pajaro River, and Carmel River watersheds. These watersheds support the Salinas Groundwater Basin, Pajaro Valley Basin, and the Carmel River Basin. Recharge of the groundwater systems is primarily from stream-channel infiltration from the major rivers and their tributaries, and from infiltration of water from precipitation and irrigation. The principal groundwater basins are in various states of overdraft and in areas of high agricultural use, groundwater is contaminated.

Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (a and c) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. The implementation of qualifying projects is not anticipated to result in a significant adverse impact due to potential violations of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. As discussed in *Section II. Description of Project*, the Master Permit would facilitate 13 environmental enhancement projects. Projects are intended to protect water quality and reduce potential erosion and stabilize project sites. Most qualifying projects would require minimal earthwork and all work would be temporary in nature. Projects could generate temporary soil erosion from ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal. Enhancement projects would, however, ultimately result in a net benefit to surface and groundwater quality. Qualifying projects would implement BMPs throughout construction and would comply with RCD of Monterey County's PGCs. Furthermore, RCD of Monterey County would review, design, and implement projects consistent with the Programming Planning Process described in *Section II. Description of Project*, and the County would be responsible for reviewing projects for consistency with the Master Permit (see *Section II. Description of Project*) before approving projects for construction. For larger enhancement projects, particularly ones that involve infiltration (e.g., lined waterways, underground outlets, and bioreactors), RCD of Monterey County requires that projects be designed by a design engineer, and that a project specific hydrology and hydraulics reports be prepared to ensure the project protects water quality, stabilizes on-site soils, manages stormwater runoff, and prevents erosion. All reports and supporting documentation would be submitted to the County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning during the pre-construction and post-construction notification process (see **Attachment B**). These projects would also be monitored to ensure potential impacts remain less than significant. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (b) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that projects may impede sustainable groundwater management of the local basins. Construction of a qualifying project would require water for actions such as dust suppression and watering of revegetation areas. The amount of water required for qualifying projects would not, however, substantially decrease groundwater supplies. Rather, projects are intended to improve groundwater recharge through completion of environmental enhancement efforts (e.g., wetland enhancement, surface water control, wetland management). This represents a less than significant impact.

Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (d) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects

would primarily be located on agricultural lands. Projects could be located in areas subject to significant seiche, tsunami, or flooding efforts. Projects would be evaluated by RCD of Monterey County during the planning process described above. As detailed in impact discussions above (see Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (a and c)) projects would be reviewed, designed, and implemented to ensure risks remain less than significant. Furthermore, projects would comply with RCD of Monterey County's PGC's as they relate to flood hazards (see PCG's ES-7 and SWFP-1 through SWFP-12). For these reasons this represents a less than significant impact.

Hydrology and Water Quality Impact (e) No Impact: The Master Permit would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. As discussed previously, the enhancement projects facilitated under the Master Permit would connect to existing water supply infrastructure, if water is required. No impact would occur.

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion:

Please refer to Section IV.A, Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on land use and planning.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Source: Attachment A, 11, 12)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion:

Please refer to Section IV.A, Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on mineral resources.

13. NOISE **Would the project result in:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 24)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 24)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 24)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Noise is commonly defined as unwanted sound. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels ("dB") with zero (0) decibels corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Most sounds consist of a broad band of frequencies, with each frequency differing in sound level. The intensities of each frequency add together to generate a sound. Most environmental noise includes a conglomeration of noise from distant sources, which creates a relatively steady background noise in which no particular source is identifiable.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. The primary sources of noise within the vicinity of project sites would likely be from road and existing site uses (e.g., agricultural use). Policies related to noise are found in the 2010 and 1982 General Plans (where applicable). The County Noise Ordinance is codified as Monterey County Code Chapter 10.6, as amended in July 2019.

Noise Impact (a) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects located throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural land. Noise generated by the qualifying projects would be from construction equipment (e.g., trucks, tractors, excavators). **Table 13-1** Construction Equipment

Noise Emission Levels identifies typical noise emissions (i.e., levels) generated by construction equipment and how equipment noise reduces with distance.[11]

Table 13-1
Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 50 ft from Source	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 100 ft from Source[1]	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 200 ft from Source[1]	Typical Noise Level (dBA) 400 ft from Source[1]
Air Compressor	81	75	69	63
Backhoe	80	74	68	62
Ballast Equalizer	82	76	70	64
Ballast Tamper	83	77	71	65
Compactor	82	76	70	64
Concrete Mixer	85	79	73	67
Concrete Pump	82	76	70	64
Concrete Vibrator	76	70	64	58
Dozer	85	79	73	67
Generator	81	75	69	63
Grader	85	79	73	67
Impact Wrench	85	79	73	67
Jack Hammer	88	82	76	70
Loader	85	79	73	67
Paver	89	83	77	71
Pneumatic Tool	85	79	73	67
Pump	76	70	64	58
Roller	74	68	62	56

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, 2006
Construction generated noise levels drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance between the source and receptor.

Noise related impacts would primarily occur in connection with the operation of construction-related equipment. While the extent, duration, and volume of noise generated by the construction of qualifying projects has not been quantified, it is unlikely that construction noise would result in a significant impact given the nature of the projects, type of construction required for the identified project practice types, and temporary nature of construction activities. As a result, temporary construction-related noise impacts associated with potential future qualifying projects is not anticipated to increase ambient noise levels beyond existing levels such that a significant impact would occur. This represents a less than significant impact.

Operational noise would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise. Operation of qualifying projects would not result in activities or mechanisms that would generate new sources of noise. For these reasons, the Master Permit would have a less than significant impact.

Noise Impact (b) Less than Significant: Construction of qualifying projects would not generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise. Construction activities for projects may

[11] The rate of noise diminishes as the distance from the source of noise doubles.

require excavation and grading. These activities would be minor and temporary in nature. No new sources of vibration would be created as a result of the operation of qualifying projects. For these reasons, the Master Permit would have a less than significant impact.

Noise Impact (c) Less than Significant: Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not likely expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels due to the proximity to a private or public airport. This represents a less than significant impact.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Please refer to Section IV.A, Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on population and housing.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES **Would the project result in:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? (Source: Attachment A)	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Police protection? (Source: Attachment A)	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Schools? (Source: Attachment)	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Parks? (Source: Attachment A)	☐	☐	☐	☒

15. PUBLIC SERVICES Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Other public facilities? (Source: Attachment A)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Please refer to Section IV.A, Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on public services.

16. RECREATION Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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? (Sources: Attachments A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Sources: Attachments A, 1, 2)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Please refer to Section IV.A Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on recreation.

17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 15, 18)	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 15, 18)	☐	☒	☐	☐

17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 15, 18)	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 15, 18, 23)	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

County of Monterey owns and maintains 1,240 miles of road. In addition, there are 575 miles of private roads, two minor highways (Highway 25 and Highway 146) and five major highways that include Highways 1, Highways 68, Highways 101, Highways 156, and Highways 183.

Programmatic Construction Management Plan

RCD prepared a Programmatic Construction Management Plan (Source: 18). The document uses the Water and Sediment Control Basin or Infiltration Basin project practice types (see **Attachment A**) as an example to illustrate what construction may entail (e.g., duration, number of workers, etc.). The Water and Sediment Control Basin or Infiltration Basin project practice types are the most traffic-intensive projects to be covered by the Master Permit. The Programmatic Construction Management Plan identifies that construction of these projects would typically take approximately seven (7) weeks or 35 days. Construction-related activities would occur between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. At any time during construction an average of three (3) construction workers and three (3) vehicles would be needed. Approximately 650 trips for staging equipment and delivery would be needed. Additionally, construction of these project practice types would require approximately 100 trips for smaller passenger vehicles. Public and private roads would be utilized.

Significance Criteria – Vehicle Miles Traveled

Senate Bill (SB) 743 required that starting July 2020 transportation impact for projects per CEQA be based on a project's Vehicle Miles Traveled ("VMT"). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1) calls for the evaluation of transportation impacts of projects based on Vehicle Miles Traveled ("VMT"). CEQA uses the VMT metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts. The publication "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research" published in December 2018, suggests that a significant environmental impact would occur if a project would generate more than 110 trips per day. This threshold is related to the operation of a small project. Thresholds for construction-generated traffic are not available due to the temporary nature of construction. Moreover, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research states that "Projects would not likely lead to a substantial or measurable increase in vehicle travel, and therefore generally should not

require an induced travel analysis when projects are rehabilitation and maintenance projects that do not add motor vehicle capacity."

Transportation Impact (a-b, d) Less than Significant with Mitigation: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural land. Access to project sites would be available by public and private roadways. Construction of qualifying projects would range in size, duration, and require different equipment. Similarly, the number of workers and associated vehicle trips would vary based on the project practice type. Projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not conflict with an existing plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines Section 15064.3(b). However, due to the programmatic nature of this IS/MND, qualifying projects would result in temporary construction-related traffic that could be potentially significant.

As discussed above, the RCD of Monterey County prepared a Programmatic Construction Management Plan to illustrate the potential traffic effects due to implementation of the Water and Sediment Control Basin or Infiltration Basin project practice types. These projects represent the most traffic-intensive projects. Construction of these project practice types would generate 750 trips over the duration of construction. Construction would occur over approximately 35 days, which would equate to 21 trips per day. It is unlikely that temporary construction impacts would result in a significant traffic-related impact. While it is unlikely that individual projects would generate a significant traffic related impact, it is important to recognize that multiple projects could be constructed simultaneously. The construction of multiple enhancement projects in the same general area would result in temporary construction-related impacts.

Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit could be constructed simultaneously. However, it is unlikely that project would be constructed within close proximity to one another and therefore, would not impact regional access around the sites. There would be no increase in operational traffic due to the nature of the projects. Moreover, the implementation of qualifying projects would not result in any operational traffic.

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects that would conform with all County and Fire Department requirements regarding emergency access, and therefore, would not intentionally result in inadequate emergency access. However, without foreknowledge of the location and construction-related local flagging and detouring of County roads, it would potentially impact the response time of CalFire or the Fire Protection Districts of the County.

Consistent with RCD of Monterey County's planning process, qualifying projects would be evaluated and designed to be consistent with PGCs and align with local and regional transportation policies and regulations. To further ensure impacts remain less than significant, **Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1** would be implemented. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact with mitigation.

Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1. *RCD of Monterey County shall submit documentation for each qualifying project facilitated under the Master Permit to the County of Monterey HCD Engineering Services for review and approval prior to the initiation of any construction-related*

activities. Documentation shall be developed during the planning process and pre-construction notification procedure as discussed in *Section II. Description of Project.* Documentation should at a minimum include the following elements:

1. *Traffic and Construction Management Plan:* A detailed traffic and construction management plan shall be prepared by a qualified professional to address temporary traffic impacts as a result of construction of the project. The traffic and construction management plan shall be developed on the basis of a detailed project plan (see below), where appropriate. The traffic and construction management plan shall identify the existing setting and identify construction generated effects, including but not limited to:
    a. Days and hours of operation;
    b. Worker truck routes;
    c. Haul routes;
    d. Estimated number of truck trips;
    e. Number of construction workers; and
    f. Map showing the staging and parking locations;

    The traffic and construction management plan shall also identify elements to ensure traffic control and safety throughout the duration of construction. Such elements include:

    a. Utilize traffic signage and/or flaggers to guide vehicles through work areas.
    b. Install traffic control devices where warranted as specified in the applicable jurisdictions standards (e.g., the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones).
    c. Schedule truck trips outside of peak A.M. and P.M. commute hours.
    d. Post detour signs at all affected roadways to notify motorists of alternative routes, if necessary.
    e. Store all equipment and materials in designated contractor staging areas.
    f. Maintain alternate one-way traffic flow past the construction zone where possible.
    g. Avoid truck trips through designated school zones during drop-off and pick-up hours.

    The traffic and construction management plan shall include all applicable PGCs and mitigation measures, if necessary.

2. *Project Plans:* The RCD of Monterey County shall include project-level drawings as part of the project documentation. Project plans shall be consistent with the description of the RCD of Monterey County's Authorized Project Practice Types. Project Plans shall include construction notes that identify all applicable PGCs, and any additional project-specific design features to reduce potential temporary construction impacts to a less than significant level.

    Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1 Monitoring Action a: Before May 1st of each year, and prior to the authorization by County of Monterey HCD Chief of Planning to construct a project, a project-specific documentation shall be submitted for review and approval.

Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1 Monitoring Action b: For any project that has the potential to impact emergency response routes, RCD of Monterey County shall notify the Master Permit point of contact on HCD staff of the initiation dates at least one month prior to work. In turn, HCD staff shall share the project location, schedule, and project traffic and construction management plan that may impact emergency response with the OES and the related emergency service teams (Office of the Sheriff, area Fire Protection District).

Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1 Monitoring Action c: If County Public Works or HCD determine that County roads adjacent to or on the construction management plan route of a project in the EESP are impacted by debris and dirt clods to an extent that is deemed hazardous, the Master Permit point of contact shall inform RCD of Monterey County of the issue. RCD of Monterey County shall cause the roadway to be cleaned as part of on-going maintenance and post-project clean up (This mitigation monitoring action should not be triggered if projects are consistent with VEG-5 of the Programmatic General Conditions, see **Table 3**.)

Transportation Impact (c) No Impact: Qualifying projects facilitated under the Master Permit would not substantially increase hazards due to the geometric design features or incompatible uses. The qualifying projects would not be changing existing circulation systems, roadways, or bicycle and pedestrian facilities. No impact would occur.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k); or (Sources: 1, 2, 9)	☐	☒	☐	☐
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (Sources: 1, 2, 9, 16)	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

The following discussion is based on the results of the 2022 Cultural Resources Assessment Report: Programmatic Restoration Permit for the EESP, Monterey County, California (HCD Library Document No. LIB230006, Source: 9). The report was prepared by Sarah Nicchitta *et al.* of Albion Environmental Inc. ("Albion").

Tribal Resources Impact (ai - aii) Less than Significant with Mitigation: Public Resources Code Sec. 21074 defines a tribal cultural resource as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following: a) included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources, [or] b) included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of [Public Resources Code] Section 5020.1" (Public Resources Code Sec. 21027(a)).

The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County primarily on agricultural. While most of the qualifying project sites have likely been previously disturbed in connection with agricultural use, construction could potentially affect buried resources or previously unknown resources. Additionally, due to the programmatic nature of the Master Permit, details pertaining to the location of individual projects that may qualify under the Master Permit remain unknown. In order to ensure that potential impacts would be minimized, the RCD of Monterey County has identified several PGCs to minimize potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources. The PGCs include measures to ensure that the RCD of Monterey County will consult with appropriate Native American representatives prior to implementing a project under the Master Permit. This would include outreach to Native American representatives who have requested to be consulted by County of Monterey. The request for consultation would identify the location and type of project and solicit input from the applicable Native American representatives. The RCD of Monterey County would ensure that potential impacts to a Tribal Cultural Resource is avoided and that the Native American representatives are engaged early in the planning process. In addition, the RCD of Monterey County would also implement PGCs (e.g., CUL-1 through CUL-10) that would further ensure that potential impacts due to the implementation of future qualifying projects under the Master Permit would be further minimized. As discussed in *Section VI.5 Cultural Resources,* **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **CUL-2** would be implemented to further ensure impacts remain less than significant.

The implementation of PGCs, as well as the implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** and **CUL-2** would ensure that potential impacts to a Tribal Cultural Resource would be minimized to a less than significant level. Moreover, as noted above, the RCD of Monterey County would also conduct outreach to potentially affected Native American Tribes to ensure that qualifying projects are designed to avoid potential Tribal Cultural Resources. This represents a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS **Would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? (Sources: Attachment A, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? (Sources: Attachment A, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☐	☒
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? (Sources: Attachment A, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Please refer to Section IV.A, Environmental Factors Potentially Affected. The Master Permit would have no impact on utilities and service systems.

20. WILDFIRE **If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Sources: 1, 2, 10, 21)	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? (Sources: 1, 2, 10)	☐	☐	☒	☐
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? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 10, 17)	☐	☐	☒	☐

20. WILDFIRE **If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:**	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? (Sources: Attachment A, 1, 2, 10, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Monterey County contains areas of high fire hazard as depicted in the Fire Hazard Severity Zone map produced by the California Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects located throughout unincorporated Monterey County. Land within unincorporated Monterey County includes areas that are designated as State Responsibility Areas, and under the jurisdiction of CalFire.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones are categorized as: Low, Moderate, High, and Very High. Furthermore, these zones are described in terms of the probability of a particular area having conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildlife, fuel reduction efforts (Source: 10).

The San Benito-Monterey Fire Plan 2022 Plan (Source: 21) has identified the following high risk fire areas in Monterey County: State Highway 68 Corridor between Salinas and Monterey Peninsula/Laureles Grade, Carmel Valley, Cachagua, Carmel Highlands/Palo Colorado Canyon, Pine Canyon (King City), North Monterey County/Aromas, Jacks Peak/Pebble Beach.

Wildfire Impact (a-d) Less than Significant: The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. The Fire Hazard Severity Zone map for Monterey County illustrates that qualifying projects sites would likely be located in areas designated as having moderate to high fire hazard. However, given the nature of the projects, it is unlikely that a potentially significant impact with regard to wildland fires would result from construction or operation. As mentioned, qualifying projects would consist of environmental enhancement projects (e.g., habitat improvements, critical area planting, restoration, etc.). Projects would not require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructures that may exacerbate fire risk, rather, projects would reduce risk of wildland fire and impacts associated with wildland fires. For example, projects could result in the construction of firebreaks which would remove fire fuel in advance of habitat improvement projects. Additionally, the Master Permit would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Finally, future qualifying projects would also be required to comply with PGCs that address fire, erosion, and drainage. More specifically, future projects would be required to comply with PGCs FF-1 through FF-3 which require that equipment with internal combustion engines be equipped with spark arrestors, that work crews have fire suppression equipment on-site, and that

flammable materials be kept at least 10 feet away from any equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame. The implementation of these measures would ensure that potential wildland fire hazards would be minimized. For these reasons, this represents a less than significant impact.

VII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

NOTE: If there are significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated and no feasible project alternatives are available, then complete the mandatory findings of significance and attach to this initial study as an appendix. This is the first step for starting the environmental impact report (EIR) process.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21082.1, 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.

Does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 8, 9, 16)	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 18) ("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)? (Sources: Attachments A & B, 1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 18)	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (Source: Attachment A & B, 1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion/Conclusion/Mitigation:

Mandatory Findings Impact (a): As discussed in this Initial Study, the Master Permit would not 1) degrade the quality of environment; 2) substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife

species; 3) cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; 4) threaten to eliminate plant or animal community; 5) reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal; or 6) eliminate important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Qualifying projects would be reviewed, designed, and implemented consistent with the RCD of Monterey County's planning process, and would comply with PGCs, BMPs, all existing local, state, and federal policies and regulations, and project-specific avoidance and minimization measures developed through the design process. Qualifying projects could result in temporary construction-related impacts to biological resources, but these impacts would remain less than significant with implementation of RCD of Monterey County PGCs, and **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-2**. While unlikely, construction could unearth cultural and tribal cultural resources that were previously unknown. However, the Master Permit would implement PGCs and **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **CUL-2** to ensure that potential impacts related to the inadvertent discovery of previously unknown resources are minimized. All potentially significant impacts associated with the Master Permit would be minimized to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures identified in this Initial Study.

Mandatory Findings Impact (b): In order to determine whether a cumulative effect requires an EIR, the lead agency shall consider whether the impact is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable (CEQA Guidelines §15064(h)(1)). In addition, CEQA allows a lead agency to determine that a project's contribution to a potential cumulative impact is not considerable and thus not significant when mitigation measures identified in the initial study will render those potential impacts less than considerable (CEQA Guidelines 15064(h)(2).

The Master Permit would not result in a cumulatively considerable adverse environmental effect when considered with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects planned in Monterey County. Rather, the project would have cumulatively net beneficial impact since the Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects and the potential for cumulative impacts would be reviewed annually (see updated mitigation measure BIO-1). While projects facilitated under the Master Permit could occur simultaneously, the RCD of Monterey County would review, design, and implement projects to ensure impacts remain less than significant. Through the planning process (see *Section II. Description of Project*), PGCs, BMPs, and mitigation measures (e.g., **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** and **Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1**), qualifying projects, even when constructed simultaneously, would have a less than significant impact and operation would have a cumulative net benefit.

Mandatory Findings Impact (c): The Master Permit would not have a substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The Master Permit would facilitate environmental enhancement projects throughout Monterey County. Projects would be located primarily on agricultural lands. As discussed above, construction of projects could result in temporary impacts. However, these impacts would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of RCD of Monterey County's planning process (see *Section II. Description of Project*), PGCs, and BMPs, identified within this IS/MND.

VIII. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FEES

Assessment of Fee:

The State Legislature, through the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 1535, revoked the authority of lead agencies to determine that a project subject to CEQA review had a "de minimis" (minimal) effect on fish and wildlife resources under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Projects that were determined to have a "de minimis" effect were exempt from payment of the filing fees.

SB 1535 has eliminated the provision for a determination of "de minimis" effect by the lead agency; consequently, all land development projects that are subject to environmental review are now subject to the filing fees, unless the California Department of Fish and Wildlife determines that the project will have no effect on fish and wildlife resources.

To be considered for determination of "no effect" on fish and wildlife resources, development applicants must submit a form requesting such determination to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A No Effect Determination form may be obtained by contacting the Department by telephone at (916) 653-4875 or through the Department's website at www.wildlife.ca.gov.

Conclusion: The project would be required to pay the fee.

Evidence: Based on the record as a whole as embodied in the HCD-Planning files pertaining to PLN220358-DEP and the attached Initial Study / Proposed (Mitigated) Negative Declaration.

IX. SOURCES

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Attachment A

Project Types Eligible Under the Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program (EESP) for a Programmatic Restoration Permit, with Allowed Dimensions and Project-Specific Conditions

(NOTE: Numbers in parentheses indicate the practice number code as referenced in the *NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.* Conservation Practices with an asterisk (*) require engineering design.)

Projects proposed through this Certification may on a case-by-case basis exceed the dimensions shown in this table upon written approval by the County and all other agencies with jurisdiction over that project.

There are thirteen (13) project types covered under the EESP Programmatic Restoration Permit. Numbers in parentheses indicate the conservation practice numerical codes (as referenced in the *NRCS Field Office Technical Guide*) that are included under each project type. For a given project, one or more project types may be applicable with several different conservation practices being implemented. Project types with a single number in parentheses next to them indicate that there is only one NRCS conservation practice (with that same practice name and code) for that project type. The project type limitations indicated in the table are only for projects that initially require a Monterey County Permit (coastal development, grading, encroachment, tree removal permit, etc.) and do not apply to projects that otherwise would not require a Monterey County permit. Projects proposed through this Certification may on a case-by-case basis exceed the dimensions shown in this table upon written approval by Monterey County Housing and Community Development (HCD). Projects implemented through the EESP Permit will adhere to the Programmatic General Conditions appropriate to the site and type of project. Timing, Tools, and Materials for project types are included below for general descriptive purposes and are not intended to be exhaustive or prohibitive.

GENERAL WATERSHED PROJECT TYPES
Project types 1 & 2 can be implemented throughout the watershed (upland, riparian, wetland, and streambank/beds). These conservation practices restore habitat and protect water quality. **Timing:** Non-vegetative erosion control measures should be put in place prior to the first measurable rain event of the rainy season. Revegetation is most likely to be successful when completed early in the rainy season, which typically lasts from October-April, but is highly variable year-to-year. Seeding should be completed prior to or shortly after the start of the rainy season, typically from October-December. Planting cuttings or container stock should be completed between the start of the rainy season and April 1 of the following calendar year unless plants are supplemented by irrigation. **Tools and Materials:** Herbicides, loppers, chainsaws, mowers, excavators, augers; Filter fabric fence, non-synthetic fiber rolls, weed-free straw mulch and/or other erosion control methods; Native erosion control seed mix, native plants or site-specific plant species; Sterile (non-reseeding), non-native, non-invasive grass mix.
1 – Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)

Before Arundo Treatment

After Arundo Treatment

The Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat project type restores and manages rare or declining native vegetated communities and associated wildlife species.

The project type is used in upland or aquatic habitats degraded by human activity in order to provide habitat for rare and declining wildlife species by restoring native plant communities, increasing native plant community diversity, and managing unique or declining native habitats. Activities include mowing in potentially sensitive habitat or removal of non-native invasive plants by hand or with the use of machinery. Where appropriate and required, non-native invasive plants and regrowth may be treated with an appropriate herbicide. If introduction of native plants is incorporated into the plan, the selection of the plants will be based on local conditions and adjacent sites. Plant introduction may be accomplished through broadcasting seed or live planting. Hand-watering or a temporary irrigation system may be employed to help plants establish.

Although vegetation restoration or management on its own does not typically require a County permit, the Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat (643) practice is being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that require a County grading permit, projects removing more than three native mature trees that require a tree removal permit, or projects within the County right-of-way that require an encroachment permit.

Additional Conditions:

- Plant species selected for revegetation will be based on site-specific conditions.
- Where hand and mechanical removal are ineffective at controlling or eradicating weeds, herbicides may be used.
- Where vegetation removal results in bare soil, the site will be monitored to ensure soil is stabilized through reseeding or additional erosion control measures prior to first rain event following restoration.
- Where temporary irrigation is required to establish vegetative growth, the site will be monitored for signs of erosion from overwatering.

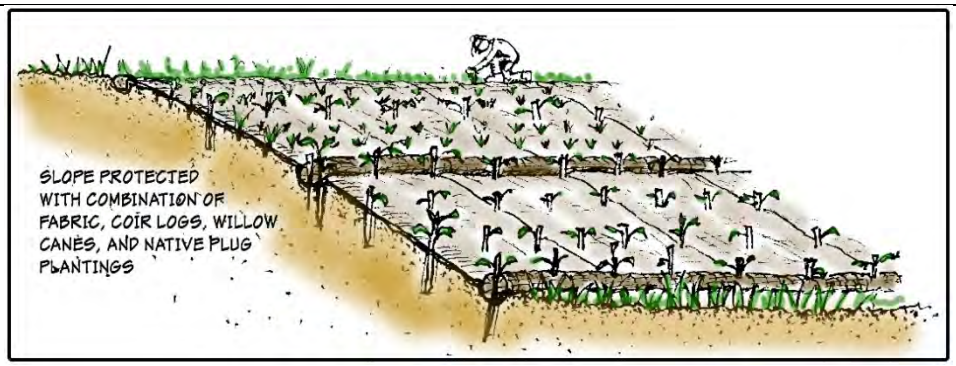
Environmental Benefits:

- Restores native plant communities and improves habitat for fish and wildlife species dependent on them.
- May create and/or enhance essential habitat features for threatened or endangered terrestrial and aquatic species.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Grading Depth
5 ac	1,500 cy	5 ft

2 – Critical Area Planting (342)



Erosion control fabric and coir logs to stabilize hillslope

The Critical Area Planting project type includes planting and seeding vegetation such as trees, shrubs, and grasses, on disturbed areas for erosion control purposes.

The project type stabilizes the soil, reduces damage from sediment and runoff to downstream areas, and improves wildlife habitat and visual resources. Native and sterile non-native seed can be used to stabilize soil, particularly after other practices have been implemented. This project type can also be used to revegetate degraded sites such as gullies and streambanks, and for post-construction revegetation activities. Hand-watering or an irrigation system may be employed until plants become well-established.

Although vegetation restoration/management or erosion control on its own does not typically require a County permit, the Critical Area Planting (342) practice is being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that require a County grading permit.

Additional Conditions:

- Plants selected for revegetation will be based on site-specific conditions.
- Native plants characteristic of the local habitat type are the preferred alternative.
- When used for post-construction revegetation, area will be restored to pre-construction conditions or better.
- Pursuant to erosion control methods, a filter fabric fence, fiber rolls, straw mulch and/or other erosion control methods will also be used if needed when installing or maintaining this practice above the bankfull elevation if needed to stabilize the soil before plants germinate and/or become well-established.
- The site will be monitored to ensure soil is stabilized through revegetation or additional erosion control measures prior to first rain event following restoration.
- Where temporary irrigation is required to establish vegetative growth, site will be monitored for signs of erosion from overwatering.

Environmental Benefits:

- Established vegetation provides habitat for wildlife and stabilizes soil and streambanks.
- Vegetation encourages the deposition of sediment on upland sites, reducing the amount of soil and nutrients washed into surface waters.
- Vegetation may take up more of the nutrients in the soil, reducing the amount that can be leached into groundwater.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
5 ac	1,500 cy	1 ft

UPLAND WATERSHED PROJECT TYPES

Project types 3-10 are typically, but not always, installed in uplands. These conservation practices reduce delivery of sediment to downstream properties, channels, and streams, improve habitat and water quality, reduce soil loss and benefit groundwater recharge.

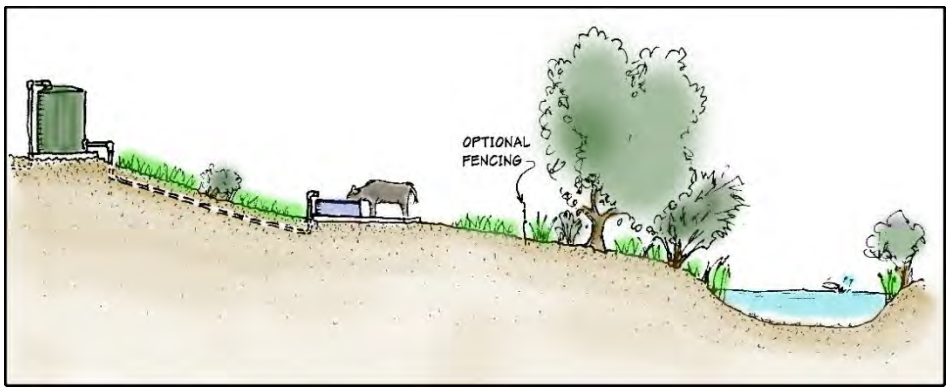
Timing: April 15 to October 15

Tools and Materials: Fencing (barbed/smooth or woven wire, electric, wooden, metal, silt/poly exclusionary), pipe (metal (steel, ductile iron) or plastic (polyvinyl chloride (PVC), High Density Poly Ethylene (HDPE), etc.), metal, plastic and concrete water tanks and troughs, plumbing appurtenances (fittings, valves, booster pumps, pressure tanks, etc.), roller (as needed for asphalt on rebuilt road), asphalt, concrete, woodchips, Excavator, backhoe, skid steer, concrete, rock protection, sand or gravel bags, native seed mix, native plants, sterile non-reseeding (if non-native) grass mix.

3 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

Includes Practices:

- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
- Fence (382)
- Livestock Pipeline (516)*
- Watering Facility (614)*
- Obstruction Removal (500)*



Installation of livestock pipeline and watering facility to provide cattle with water source after drinking access was restricted by fence installation for pond restoration

The conservation practices included under the Upland Wildlife Habitat Management project type manage upland habitats to reduce the impact of domestic livestock on rangeland and enhance upland habitat and improve connectivity within the landscape for wildlife.

These practices are used to improve sensitive habitats by fencing off and restricting access to riparian areas or installing practices that promote sustainable grazing distribution. Restricting access of horses or livestock to waterways or waterbodies through fence installation can result in restricting their access to drinking water, therefore, this practice also includes installation of a water tank or trough and necessary pipeline from an existing water source to the points of use. Habitat improvement may also be achieved by removing obstructions, such as buildings, structures, vegetation, debris or garbage.

Although fences under 6 ft in height or livestock pipelines do not typically require a County permit, the Fence (382) and Livestock Pipeline (516) practices are being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage

in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that would typically require a County grading permit.

The Upland Wildlife Habitat Management project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645): This practice is intended to improve upland wildlife habitat through managing habitats and connectivity within the landscape for wildlife.

- Fence (382): Fencing includes both digging/trenching for post holes and installation of above-ground fencing and could be incorporated into a grazing program, protect revegetated areas, or restrict access to otherwise sensitive riparian areas.

- Livestock Pipeline (516): Livestock pipelines will convey water from an existing source to an existing or proposed tank or trough to provide a water source for livestock that have been restricted from accessing water in sensitive areas. Pipelines may be buried or installed on the surface and will be placed only in or on soils suitable for the type of material selected. Buried pipelines will be installed using traditional open-cut construction methods, although horizontal drilling may be used where appropriate.

- Watering Facility (614): Installation of a watering facility storage tank or water trough can include minor grading, shaping, and construction of a stable surface or pad beneath the facility. It will be located where there is an existing water source that is adequate in quantity and quality and where soils and topography are suitable for a facility. Troughs will be fitted with escape ramps so small animals do not get trapped.

- Obstruction Removal (500): Removal and disposal of buildings, structures, or other debris, including vegetation management, removal of garbage (cars, appliances or items that are anthropogenic, obsolete, or non-functioning structures or buildings that are not natural to the ecosystem).

Additional Conditions:
- No new water source will be developed or constructed under this practice.
- If crossing a stream channel, pipeline and fence will be installed and maintained only when a streambed is dry or dewatered.
- Trenching for pipe installation is expected to be shallow (less than 3') but in rare occasions may be deeper (up to 10') to allow for gravity flow.
- In the rare circumstance that trenches must be dewatered (i.e., because of unanticipated seepage into the trench), a pump will be used to dewater the trench and water will be pumped to a detention area outside of the channel.
- Fences will be located and installed to meet appropriate local wildlife and land management needs. Separate permits must be obtained for Monterey County for fencing over 6 ft. in height.
- Obstruction removal in a waterway is covered under Project Type #12 - Stream Habitat Improvement.
- Fences that cross into floodplains or flood zones will be analyzed by an engineer for free passage of reasonably expected large woody material, debris, and rock migration as well as impacts to the 100-year base flood elevation.
- Fence posts set in concrete will not be set with wet concrete in waterways or aquatic habitat.
- Water storage tanks will be less than 5,000 gallons and have a height-to-diameter ratio of less than 2.
- The drainage from foundations and drains for water storage tanks and watering troughs will dispersed to the landscape in stabilized areas so runoff will not become erosive.

Environmental Benefits:
- Reduces bank erosion, sediment yield, and manure entering watercourses.
- Improves grazing and land use management in sensitive habitats.
- Restores and enhances essential habitat features for threatened or endangered species.

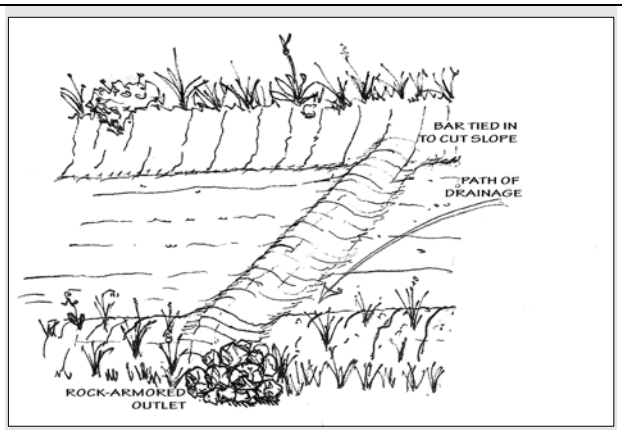
Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
5 ac	1,500 cy	10 ft

4 – Road Improvement, Relocation, or Closure

Includes Practices:

- Access Road (560)*
- Trails and Walkways (575)*
- Road, Trail, Landing Closures & Treatment (654)*



Road improvement showing rolling dip or water bar to divert path of drainage to rock-armored outlet

The Road Improvement, Relocation or Closure project type includes practices that are intended to make improvements to existing roads to provide access for property management while controlling runoff to prevent erosion and maintain or improve water quality.

Activities in this project type may include surface grading to effectively manage stormwater, installing drainage features such as water bars or rolling dips and roadside ditches, or culverts to safely redirect water before it can concentrate and lead to erosion.

Although some of the trails and road decommissioning do not typically require a County permit, the Trails and Walkways (575) and Road, Trail, Landing Closures & Treatment (654) practices are being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that would require a County grading permit.

The Road Improvement, Relocation, or Closure project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Access Roads (560): This practice is intended to improve drainage conditions on existing vehicular roads. The road or sections of a road may be graded to create an outsloped cross-slope to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff to concentrate on the road surface. This practice also includes improved ditches or ditch-relief drainage for in-sloped roads. Water bars or rolling dips may be proposed as stand-alone improvements to safely redirect water off the road before it can concentrate and lead to erosion of the surface or gully formation. To address chronic sediment loading, the inclusion of surface treatment will be considered where preference is given to permeable surfaces (gravel, permeable pavers, etc.) over paved, impervious surfaces such as asphalt. This practice may also be used for new, improvement of, or removal of culverts from non-fish bearing streams associated with access road improvements. If a road is highly eroded or the repair will not address chronic erosion, a new alignment for that segment of the road may be proposed.

- Trails and Walkways (575): A trail or walkway may be maintained on decommissioned roads to allow for access, management, maintenance, and monitoring.

- Road, Trail, Landing Closures & Treatment (654): Road decommissioning will only occur on roads that do not provide ingress/egress for structures, fire department, or public access. A project may include closing a road if the road is no longer needed and can be returned to a productive state by reestablishing plants and habitat, reconnecting wildlife habitat and migration corridors including streams and riparian areas, and controlling non-native/invasive species. Decommissioning may be accomplished through the removal of culverts, inside ditches and other road infrastructure, outsloping the road, downing brush and woody material, blocking the entrance, and revegetation.

Additional Conditions:

- All road projects will confirm if County and fire department road requirements apply.
- No new roads associated with development or construction will be constructed under this practice.
- A new segment of road may be proposed if repairing the existing segment does not address the erosion or runoff issues AND if the new segment is sited such that no sensitive resources are negatively impacted.
- Ditch relief culverts that discharge onto slopes over 30% require additional measures to ensure slope stability.
- Road improvements may involve multiple installations spread out over the project area.
- Where possible, the design storm for culverts will be the 10-year, 24-hour storm but for intermittent, single-purpose roads may be the 2-year, 24-hour storm.
- Culvert design will an analysis of larger storm events and overtopping flows will be directed to safe, stable routes.
- Projects including work near a drainage channel (e.g., culvert removal and installation, etc.) will be timed for the late summer months when the site is expected to be driest. The engineer will provide a temporary construction diversion and dewatering where needed.
- Preference will be given to low-impact options such as vegetative cover for road surfaces or turf-reinforced mat for stabilizing areas that receive concentrated stormwater.

Environmental Benefits:

- Treatments to restore vegetative cover, natural topography, and surface hydrology will reduce erosion from roads and sediment load to streams and waterways.
- Improves habitat for fish and other aquatic species.
- Increases rate of infiltration and decreases surface runoff.

Guides:

- Road Improvements are modeled in the *Handbook for Forest and Ranch Roads: A Guide for planning, designing, construction, reconstructing, maintaining, and closing wildland road*s (Weaver and Hagens, 2014), and *Central Coast Private Road Maintenance Guide* (Central Coast RCDs, 2013).

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
5 ac	7,500 cy	2-10 ft

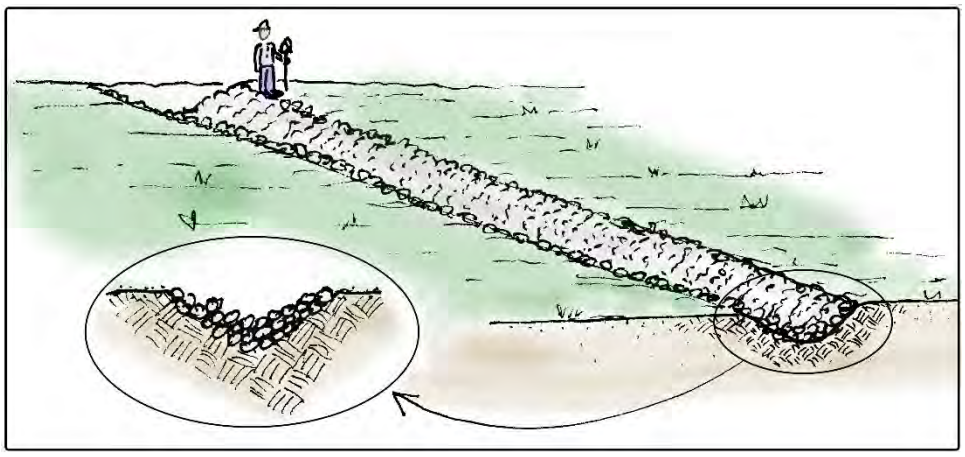
5 – Lined Waterway

Includes Practices:

- Lined Waterway or Outlet (468)*
- Grassed Waterway (412)*
- Diversion (362)*

Turf-Reinforced Mat-Lined Waterway

Rock-Lined Waterway



Lined waterways may be lined with rock, geotextiles, or grass

The Lined Waterway project type includes conservation practices that construct channels (rock-lined, geotextile-lined, or grass) to slow and safely convey excessive surface flow.

This is an upland project type that is primarily installed to break up concentrations of water on long slopes, reduce soil loss from surface flow, divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas, and reduce sediment delivery downstream. This practice will be designed to avoid creation of unstable conditions up- or downstream and is often used to deliver water to a sediment basin or a flat, vegetated area where flow velocities are slowed before discharging into a stream or channel. The Lined Waterway project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Lined Waterway or Outlet (468): Lined waterways are graded channels that have an erosion-resistant lining of concrete, rock, synthetic turf reinforcements, or other material.

- Grassed Waterway (412): Grassed waterways are graded channels that have dense vegetation to convey surface water at a non-erosive velocity using broad and shallow cross sections.

- Diversion (362): A diversion is a graded channel constructed across the slope to break up concentrated water flow on long slopes.

Additional Conditions:

- Practices will have a safe and stable outlet that conveys runoff to a point where outflow will not cause damage.
- Practices will not involve the diversion of water from a waterway or redirection of flow to a different waterway or subwatershed.
- Practices will not result in the conversion of a wetland by changing the hydrology.

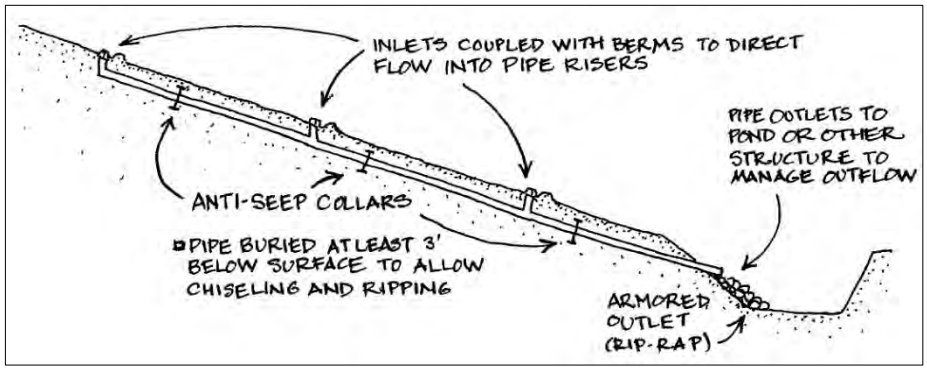
Environmental Benefits:

- Reduces the amount of sediment and related pollutants delivered to streams, riparian and wetlands areas.
- Prevents or slows gully formation.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
2 ac	2,000 cy	6 ft

6 – Underground Outlet (620)*



Buried pipe to safely convey concentrated flow through field

The Underground Outlet project type includes installation of an underground conduit (pipe) to collect excess surface water and convey it to a suitable outlet to reduce erosion and the delivery of sediment-laden pollutants, and flooding. Flow is typically conveyed to a sediment basin or stabilized outlet.

Components of underground outlets, including inlet collection boxes and conduit junction boxes, will be designed with sufficient size to allow efficient maintenance and cleaning operations. The pipes will typically be installed using traditional open-cut construction methods, and the trench width will be wide enough to allow proper installation. The underground outlet installation depth will be determined based on the site conditions including surface slope and land use above the pipes (e.g., pipes should be installed a minimum of 36" or more beneath disced and tilled fields).

Although installation of an underground outlet on its own may not typically require a County permit for small grading volumes, the Underground Outlet (620) practice is being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that require a County grading permit.

Additional Conditions:

- Each underground outlet will have a safe and stable outlet that conveys water to a point where outflow will not cause damage.
- Location, size, and number of inlets are determined to collect excess runoff and prevent erosive surface flow.

Environmental Benefits:

- Prevent or repair sheet and rill erosion and prevent sediment from entering waterways.

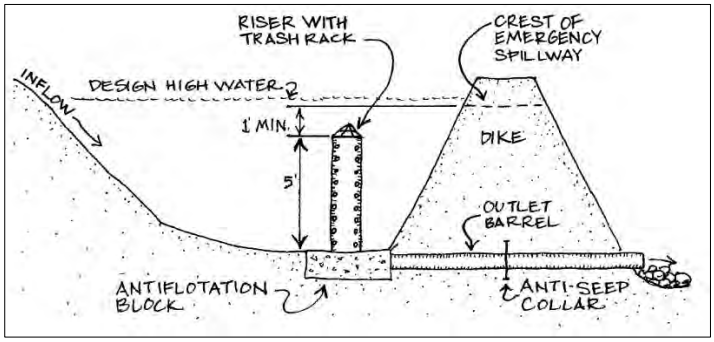
Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
0.5 ac	1,000 cy	10 ft

7 – Water and Sediment Control Basin

Includes Practices:

- Water and Sediment Control Basin (638)*
- Sediment Basin (350)*



Sediment basin capturing stormwater runoff

The Water and Sediment Control Basin project type includes construction of excavated basins with or without embankments that collect and detain sediment-laden stormwater and irrigation tailwater. These basins reduce undesirable deposition on bottomlands and in streams or other waterbodies.

These upland conservation practices reduce the peak flow of stormwater runoff, trap and store sediment, and improve the quality of stormwater where erosion is already occurring or has potential to occur, and for which measures to address the source are insufficient. Basins are generally located at the base of agricultural fields and adjacent to natural drainages or riparian areas. Basins are designed with sufficient capacity to release water more slowly than the stormwater runoff flows into the basin while maintaining at least 6" of freeboard. A riser pipe controls the release rate of water through perforations, the number, size, and spacing of which vary to reduce peak flow rates for design storm events. Basins typically include a trapezoidal spillway at least 6" above the perforated riser that may be lined to reduce erosion potential when activated in larger storm events. The practice does not treat the source of sediment but provides a barrier to reduce degradation of surface water downstream.

Additional Conditions:

- Water and sediment control basins will not be constructed in a stream channel or other permanent waterbody.
- The design outlets will prevent scouring at discharge points.
- Basins are typically excavated into the soil but may include an embankment. Embankments that impound over 3 ft of water require additional analysis and are only installed when they present a low risk to downstream areas.
- Periodic removal of sediment will be required as part of a maintenance plan.

Environmental Benefits:

- Water and sediment control basins will trap sediment, sediment associated materials, and other debris and prevent undesirable deposition on bottomlands and in waterways and streams.
- May increase the amount of water infiltrating and increase groundwater recharge.
- May reduce downstream flooding.

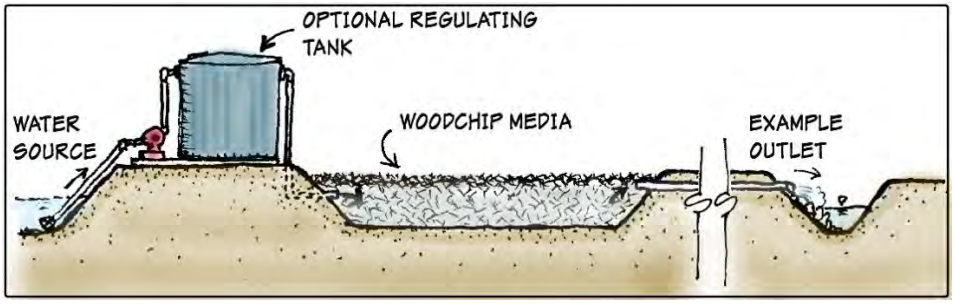
Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
3 ac	10,000 cy	20 ft

8 – Bioreactor

Includes Practices:

- Bioreactor (605)*
- Watering Facility (614)*



Bioreactor system with woodchip media

The Bioreactor project type includes installation of biological treatment systems that use a carbon source to reduce nitrate or other contaminants in surface and subsurface water and improve water quality downstream.

This project type improves water quality from agricultural production through construction and installation of a biological treatment system and its components, including the bioreactor and a watering facility, e.g., water holding tank. The systems are typically installed near tile drain sumps or ditches and convey the agricultural water through a carbon-rich environment (such as woodchips or other media with an injected carbon source).

The Bioreactor project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Bioreactor (605): A bioreactor is an excavated basin filled with media to create an environment that promotes the growth of beneficial bacteria that consume nitrogen and reduce the concentration of nitrate downstream.

- Water Facility (614): Tanks (watering facilities) may be installed adjacent to the bioreactor to increase the treatment system capacity by providing storage and increasing water temperatures.

Additional Conditions:

- The design of outlets will prevent scouring at discharge points.
- Surface flow will be diverted away from the system.
- If a tank or above-ground containment structure is included for temporary storage, the design engineer will demonstrate that tanks do not pose a safety hazard.
- Bioreactors are typically excavated into the soil but may include an embankment. Embankments that impound over 3 ft of water require additional analysis and are only installed when they present a low risk to downstream areas.
- The system will be designed such that it does not produce nuisance odors.
- Periodic removal of sediment and replacement of wood chips will be required as part of a maintenance plan.
- Water storage tanks will be less than 5,000 gallons and have a height-to-diameter ratio of less than 2.
- The drainage from foundations and drains for water storage tanks and watering troughs will dispersed to the landscape in stabilized areas so runoff will not become erosive.

Environmental Benefits:

- Reduces concentration of nitrate or other contaminants in surface and subsurface water.
- May reduce downstream flooding.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
1 ac	4,000 cy	10 ft

9 – Infiltration Basin

Includes Practice:

- Groundwater Recharge (815)*

Infiltration basin recharging groundwater

The Infiltration Basins project type includes construction of impoundments with a permeable base to collect stormwater runoff and increase the potential to move water down through the soil towards groundwater.

The project type increases infiltration of stormwater runoff through the underlying soil layers and could potentially provide groundwater recharge. Basins are designed to collect and infiltrate water that is free from potentially-clogging sediment, as well as pesticides and nutrients that pose a threat to groundwater. Projects may include collecting runoff from agriculture fields that utilize plastic such as greenhouses or hoop houses where the runoff is typically free from sediment and has low-to-zero levels of pesticides and nutrients. Runoff from other types of agricultural fields will have non-threatening levels of sediment, nutrients, and pesticides prior to entering the infiltration basin, and therefore the project may include a Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), Bioreactor (605), or another form of treatment such as a packaged treatment system or biochar system upstream from the infiltration basin. The infiltration basin will also have a stable overflow outlet to allow excess runoff from larger design storm events to pass through the basin. The practice also includes installing observation wells near the basin to monitor groundwater levels. Typical observation wells are small-diameter (less than 12") borings with a perforated pipe surrounded by clean, washed drain rock up-gradient and down-gradient from the infiltration basin to monitor changes in groundwater levels and quality.

Additional Conditions:

- The bottom of the basin will be at least 10 feet from the highest expected water table.
- The basin will be designed with sufficient capacity for the designed storm event and allow for non-erosive and safe conveyance of flow.
- Infiltration basins are typically excavated into the soil, but some basins may include an embankment. Embankments that impound over 3 ft of water require additional analysis and are only installed when they present a low risk to downstream areas.
- Practices will have a safe and stable outlet that conveys runoff to a point where outflow will not cause damage.
- Practices will not involve the diversion of water from a waterway or redirection of flow to a different waterway or subwatershed.
- Periodic removal of sediments and ripping of the basin will be required as part of a maintenance plan.
- The source water will be characterized and compared to background water quality of the local aquifer so that no water will be infiltrated that could exacerbate existing groundwater quality issues.
- One upgradient and two downgradient observation wells will be installed and monitored for water level and contaminants. Permits for observation/monitoring wells will be obtained separately through Monterey County Environmental Health.

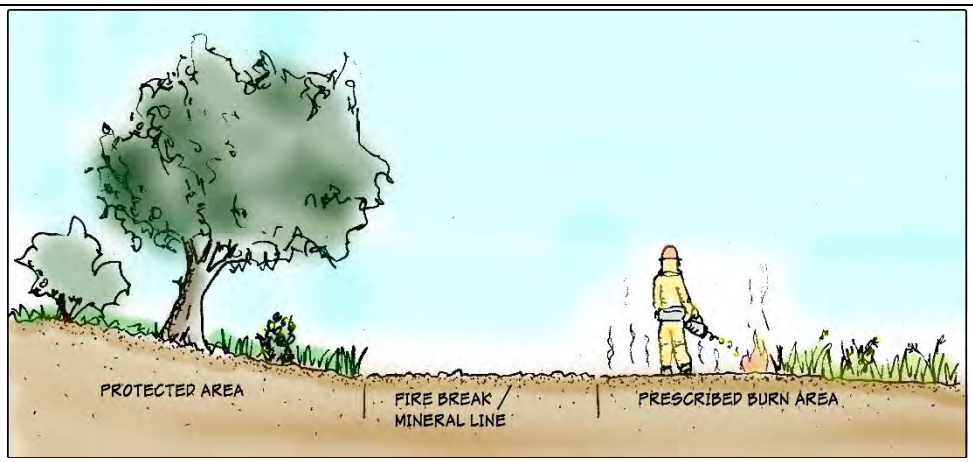
Environmental Benefits:

- Increased percolation of water into the soil matrix and potential groundwater recharge.
- May reduce downstream flooding.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
3 ac	10,000 cy	30 ft

10 – Firebreak (394)



Fire break (bare ground fuel break) to contain prescribed burn -- A temporary strip of bare land to contain prescribed burns as part of a restoration project.

The Firebreak project type aids restoration activities by creating a defensible barrier prior to a prescribed burn ~~to~~ for restoration purposes, only. ~~habitats, control invasive plants, improve rangeland, or improve wildlife habitat.~~ The practice will only be used to create a defensible barrier to a prescribed burn intended for habitat restoration and not as part of wildfire management activities. Firebreaks are typically 15 ft wide and tie into existing features such as roads, rocky ground, mowed areas, etc. The depth of the scrape is likely around 2" and is typically not expected to be greater than 6".

Additional Conditions:

- Firebreaks in steeper terrain will include erosion control measures based on soils, slope, and adjacent vegetation.
- Firebreaks where the topsoil and vegetation have been scraped take longer to rehabilitate. If vegetation hasn't regrown within 1 year of the burn, seeding and revegetation will be included and will be monitored until returned to pre-construction conditions.
- Plants for revegetation of the firebreak will be selected based upon site-specific conditions.
- Native plants characteristic of the local habitat type will be the preferred alternative.
- The practice area and volume of grading apply only to the firebreak, and maximum depth limit is 2 feet. The burn area is not included in the area of practice.
- The prescribed burn activities will be permitted with applicable agencies such as CalFIRE and Air District separately from this program.

Environmental Benefits:

- Remove unwanted vegetation that degrades wildlife habitat.
- Reduce woody vegetation and risk of uncontrolled/catastrophic wildfire.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
2 ac	2,000 cy	2 ft

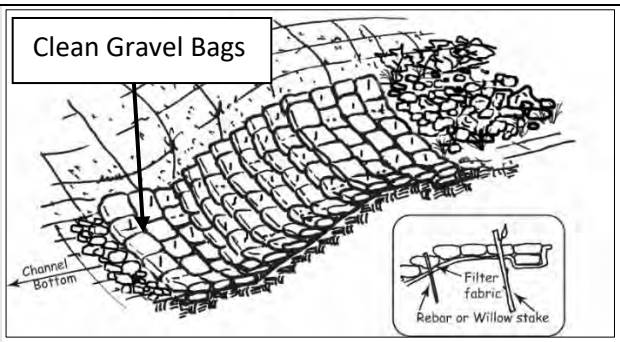
The Firebreak conservation practice type includes a temporary strip of bare land to contain prescribed burns for restoration purposes only. Firebreaks under this program create a defensible barrier prior to a prescribed burn to control invasive plants, improve rangeland, or wildlife habitat. Firebreaks are typically 15 ft wide and tie into existing features such as roads, rocky ground, mowed areas, etc. The depth of the scrape is likely around 2 inches ” but is typically not expected to be greater than 6 inches”.

The RCD will not be implementing any wildfire fuels treatment, i.e. vegetation management (mechanical or manual) or prescribed burns, under the Master Permit. Those wildfire fuels reduction activities are covered under other permitting mechanisms, including the Board of Forestry CalVTP, the Monterey County Public Works Program, or CalFire or local Air District for prescribed burns. The above-mentioned permitting mechanisms, however, do not provide permit coverage for any grading activities, such as those associated with a bare soil firebreak. As such, this conservation practice type is intended for use in very limited circumstances and has been included because it was identified as a gap and potential permit need should a bare soil firebreak be needed to contain a prescribed burn.

11 – Grade Stabilization Structure (410)*

Before

After



Installation of a structure and/or grading in a gully to control the grade and prevent head cutting to protect downstream water quality.

The Grade Stabilization Structure project type includes regrading and/or installing structures in a gully to reduce the erosive impacts of concentrated water and repair or slow the growth of gullies. This practice refers to rock, timber, or vegetative structures, such as a brush mattress, placed to slow water velocities above, below or in the structure. This practice also involves earthmoving to reshape the area impacted by the gully.

Additional Conditions:

- No structures will be installed in fish-bearing streams.

Environmental Benefits:

- Decrease the yield of sediment and improve downstream water quality.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
1.5 ac	1,000 cy	20 ft

RIPARIAN AND INSTREAM PROJECT TYPES

Project type 12 is installed in riparian and in-stream habitats to improve habitat for wildlife species and for grade control and head cutting reduction.

Timing: June 15* To October 15

Tools and Materials: Loader, bulldozer (as needed), crane (as needed to lift bridge in place), drilling equipment (as needed for drilled piers), excavator, backhoe/skid steer, rock screen, haul trucks, roller (as needed for asphalt on rebuilt road), and compaction equipment (sheepsfoot roller or equivalent, as needed), native erosion control seed mix, native plants, fiber rolls, D-blocks, boulders, rock slope protection, engineered streambed materials, logs, concrete, asphalt

**Approval start date in riparian and instream habitat is dependent on requirements from regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over those waterways.*

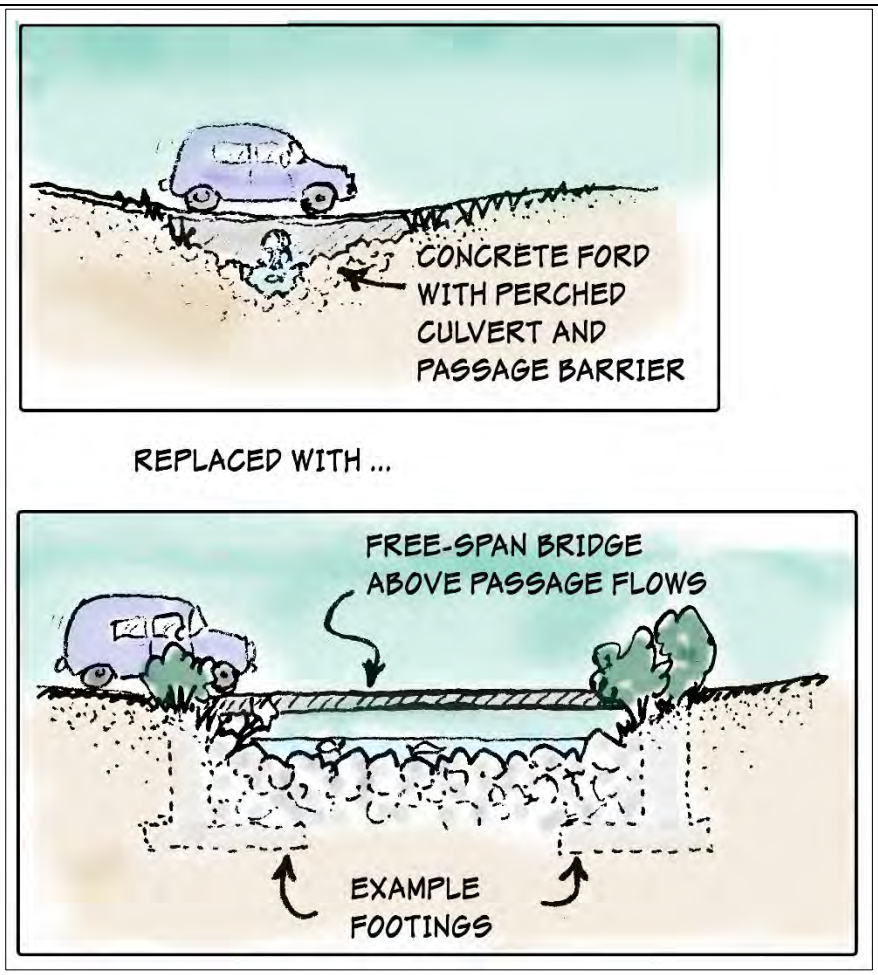
12 – Stream Habitat Improvement

Includes Practices:

- Stream Habitat Improvement (395)*
- Aquatic Organism Passage (396)*
- Streambank Protection (580)*
- Stream Crossing (578)*
- Channel Bed Stabilization (584)*

Before fish passage barrier removal

After fish passage barrier removal



The Stream Habitat Improvement project type is used to improve, enhance or create aquatic or riparian habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms by providing shade, controlling sediment, restoring pool and riffle stream characteristics, and improving passage and stream function. Aquatic habitat improvements will be based on an assessment of watershed, stream, and riparian conditions, including a site-specific assessment of erosion sources, local hydrology, channel morphology, geomorphic setting, aquatic species presence, riparian and floodplain conditions, and any habitat limitations such as water quantity and quality, food supply, and restriction of up- and downstream movement of aquatic species. Emphasis will be on establishing an ecologically self-sustaining stream-riparian system, improving floodplain-to-channel connectivity, and enhancing wetland and off-channel habitats consistent with the local climate and hydrology of the stream. The activities will be designed to work within the context of the watershed, including accounting of upland land uses and management that may adversely affect aquatic and riparian functions.

Although stream habitat improvement (e.g., revegetation or placement of woody debris) on its own may not typically require a County permit, the Stream Habitat Improvement (395) practice is being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that would require a County grading permit.

The Stream Habitat Improvement project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Stream Habitat Improvement (395): This practice includes activities that enhance aquatic habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms by providing shade, controlling sediment, and restoring pool and riffle stream characteristics. Activities may also include adding habitat features such as spawning substrates or structural elements like boulder

clusters for step pools, root wads, large woody structures, summer rearing pools, overhead cover, and other elements that result in stream complexity.

- Aquatic Organism Passage (396): This practice includes removing hardened crossings, culverts, logjams, dams, weirs, etc. that limit fish or other aquatic organism passage and gravel and wood recruitment. It addresses functional and physical conditions in channels to improve target species' population status by restoring access to spawning, rearing, and foraging habitat.

- Streambank Protection (580): Streambank protection treatments are used to stabilize and protect banks of natural or constructed channels along streams, lakes, or estuaries against scour and erosion to prevent the resultant offsite or downstream effects of sedimentation and improve the stream corridor for fish and wildlife habitat. The protection treatment will be designed to maintain or improve flow capacity. Typical activities include regrading steepened or undercut slopes or installing bio-engineered slope stabilization solutions. Rock will only be used in circumstances where there is a threat to infrastructure, structures, etc. with approval from the agencies.

- Stream Crossing (578): This practice replaces a crossing (culvert, bridge or other structure) where an in-stream barrier has been removed. At a minimum, passage structures will be designed and evaluated for hydraulic performance and structural integrity at bankfull discharge and 2-year peak flow events.

- Channel Bed Stabilization (584): This practice is applied when an imbalance in a stream system causes damage to the bed, and the channel is experiencing unsustainable aggradation or downcutting that cannot be effectively controlled by modifying vegetation, protecting banks, or installing upland water control measures. The practice includes installing suitable structures or plantings to stabilize the bed of a channel to maintain or alter the bed elevation or gradient, modify sediment transport or deposition, or manage surface water and groundwater levels in floodplains and riparian areas. In some situations, this practice can be used to remove sediment (in non-fish bearing streams) to improve biological functioning of the stream and restore channel capacity.

Additional Conditions:

- For streambank protection and channel bed stabilization, "bioengineered" solutions using vegetation and soft materials (as opposed to concrete and rip rap, for example) are the preferred options where conditions are favorable for their use.
- Activities will occur during the driest conditions of the summer months.
- Dewatering may be required for some projects to isolate the work area using temporary structures such as cofferdams and the pumping of water around the worksite to maintain flows downstream.
- Given the potential adverse effects of dewatering on salmonid populations, in some instances large wood will be installed within the active stream channel without dewatering. Such actions will be approved by appropriate state and federal agencies, and an approved biologist will be on-site during all activities to monitor for direct mortalities.
- Sediment removal from a stream may only occur when the stream is not flowing and does not have standing water.
- Sediment removal will occur as a one-time practice (not repeated maintenance) and sediment will not be stored in wetlands or waterways (including floodplains and floodways).
- No chemically-treated timbers will be used for channel stabilization structures or other instream structures.
- Applications of rip rap will be backfilled with soil and planted with native vegetation representative of the species and density to pre-construction condition.
- Stream crossings will be designed to allow the passage of reasonably foreseeable flood risks including bedload and potential debris.
- When a project involves the replacement of a fish passage barrier with a bridge, bridge plans will be designed by a structural engineer, and soil information will be supplied to the County by a civil engineer or geotechnical engineer. A building permit will be obtained from the County for a bridge project.

Environmental Benefits:

- Banks of streams and water bodies are protected by vegetation to reduce sediment loads causing downstream damage and water quality impairments.
- Improved and stabilized streambed and banks for fish and wildlife habitat.
- Protect adjacent land from erosion damage and downstream land from potential increased sediment loads.
- Enhances/creates essential habitat for steelhead and other aquatic species.
- Potentially reduces downstream flooding.

Guides:

- Projects will be designed and implemented in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's *California Salmonid Stream Habitat and Restoration Manual*.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
5 ac	7,500 cy	25 ft

WETLAND PROJECT TYPES

Project type 13 is installed to improve existing wetlands or create new wetlands for increased hydraulic function or improved habitat for wildlife species.

Timing: June 15* and October 15

Tools and Materials: Excavators, backhoe/skid steer, water truck, native seed mix and plants, rock, clay or sodium bentonite, corrugated metal and plastic pipe for culverts and pre-fabricated fiberglass or concrete, wooden, or metal water control structures.

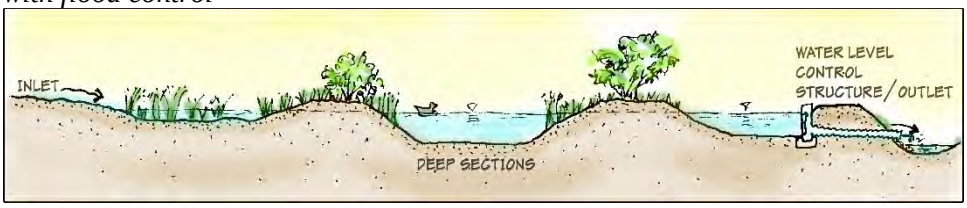
**Approval start date in wetland habitat is dependent on requirements from regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over those wetlands.*

13 – Wetland Management

Includes Practices:

- Wetland Restoration (657)*
- Wetland Creation (658)*
- Wetland Enhancement (659)*
- Structure for Water Control (587)*
- Wetland Wildlife Habitat (644)

Castroville slough multi-benefit wetland that receives agricultural runoff, provides habitat, and helps with flood control



Wetland with water level control structure

The wetland practices restore and enhance wetlands conditions similar to those that existed prior to disturbance, degradation or altered hydrologic conditions, or create a new wetland for increased hydraulic function or wildlife habitat.

Although the enhancement of wetland wildlife habitat on its own may not typically require a County permit, the Wetland Wildlife Habitat (644) practice is being included under the Program for Coastal Development Permit coverage in the Coastal Zone and/or for projects that involve over 100cy of soil displacement that would typically require a County grading permit.

The Wetland Management project type may include the following conservation practices:

- Wetland Restoration (657): This practice applies to projects where wetland hydrology is restored by converting abandoned land (possibly abandoned agricultural land) to a depressional wetland by excavating and redistributing soils in the wetland area and modifying levees or berms to return water to the site.

- Wetland Creation (658): This practice applies to an area where surface runoff may be intercepted and ponded in an excavated depression to provide increased hydrology for floodwater storage, water quality improvements or for wildlife habitat.

- Wetland Enhancement (659): This practice applies to former or degraded wetland areas that are planned to be enhanced beyond the existing conditions. Activities may include grading in multiple areas throughout the project site to increase the depth and duration of surface hydrology. Project may include moving soil or deepening existing wetlands and swales. Other enhancement activities will improve habitat for wetland-dependent wildlife requiring additional hydrology for all or portions of their life cycles.

- Structure for Water Control (587): These are structures such as gates, flashboard risers, or culverts installed in pipes or open channels to control the velocity or direction of the water or maintain a desired water surface elevation.

- Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644): This practice applies to wetlands requiring adaptive management such as cutting of vegetation limbs that impede access of birds into nests, maintenance of desirable plant communities, repairing/replacing damaged fences or wildlife structures, cleaning of debris around wildlife structures, creation of small mounds, and adjusting wetland water levels to meet specific shorebird, waterfowl, mammal, fish, reptile, or amphibian habitat needs. Water levels may be lowered via pumping or adjustment of water level control structure.

Additional Conditions:

- Activities will seek to emulate the functions of undisturbed conditions and will not result in significant loss of vegetation or disturbance which would negatively impact species' habitat, cover, food, etc.
- Practices will have a safe and stable outlet that conveys runoff to a point where outflow will not cause damage.
- Practices will not involve the diversion of water from a waterway or redirection of flow to a different waterway or subwatershed.
- Projects that include an embankment that impounds over 3 ft of water require additional analysis and are only installed when they present a low risk to downstream areas.
- No floodway will be impeded, and base flood elevations should not be elevated more than 12" from modifying existing berms or levees.
- Once constructed, the maintenance of the practice(s) is allowable, including management of water levels and a wide range of vegetation management activities to maintain or improve the vegetative composition on a site.

Environmental Benefits:

- Restores, enhances and creates wetlands to improve habitat for wildlife species.
- Improves ecosystem functions lost from land use and/or climate change.
- May increase the amount of water infiltrating and contribute to groundwater recharge.
- May reduce downstream flooding.

Limitations:

Area of Practice	Volume of Grading (cut and fill)	Maximum Depth
18 ac	30,000 cy	10 ft

Attachment A-1

ATTACHMENT A-1: RCD of Monterey County's Conservation Practice Type 3-Tier Approach

RCD of Monterey County groups conservation practice types into three tiers based on the complexity of the project, potential for impact, and regulatory requirements. Tier I projects are located in upland areas with no special status species present (as determined by a County-approved biologist), while Tier II and III projects include work in streams and/or in habitat for special status species. Depending on the tier level, additional agency consultation will be required.

Conservation Practice Type Tiers

	Tier I	**Tier II**	**Tier III**
Project Requirements	• Projects in upland areas only (no work in streams, riparian or jurisdictional wetlands). • Special status species or their habitat does not occur or is very unlikely to occur within the project area (as determined by County-approved biologist during reconnaissance level survey).	• Projects in streams, riparian areas or jurisdictional wetlands, (may require temporary water diversion and dewatering), and; • Special status species or their habitat does not occur or is very unlikely to occur within the project area (as determined by County-approved biologist during reconnaissance level survey).	• Projects in streams, riparian areas or jurisdictional wetlands, (may require temporary water diversion and dewatering), and/or; • Special status species or their habitat occurs or is likely to occur (as determined by County-approved biologist during reconnaissance level survey).
Agency Review Required	• CDFW • USFWS	• CDFW • USFWS • RWQCB • USACE	• CDFW • RWQCB • USFWS • USACE • NOAA (if applicable)
Conservation Practice Types	Conservation practice type in upland areas, including: 1) Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitat 2) Critical Area Planting	Any conservation practice type in streams, riparian areas or jurisdictional wetlands, including: All Tier I Conservation Practice Types 1-11 and;	Any conservation practice type in streams, riparian areas or jurisdictional wetlands, including: All Conservation Practice Types 1-13

	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
	3) Upland Wildlife Habitat Management 4) Road Improvement, Relocation, or Decommissioning 5) Lined Waterway 6) Underground Outlet 7) Water and Sediment Control Basin 8) Bioreactor 9) Infiltration Basin 10) Firebreak 11) Grade Stabilization Structure	12) Stream Habitat Improvement 13) Wetland Management	

State and Federal Agency Permitting Mechanisms for Tier Consultations

Agency	Regulatory Mechanisms	Tier Consultation Requirements
California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Trustee Agency California Endangered Species Act (CESA) CDFW's issuance of an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b), section 2080.1 (Consistency Determination), section 2080 (Natural Community Conservation Plan, or NCCP), section 2086 (Voluntary Local Program, or VLP), section 2089.2 (Safe Harbor), section 1654 (Habitat and Restoration Enhancement Act, or HREA) CDFW authorization for "incidental take" coverage under a Scientific Collection Permit for scientific, educational, and propagation purposes, or other CDFW-approved mechanism Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq.	**All Conservation Practice Types** **(Tier I, II, III)**

	Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act (HREA) Fish and Game Code section 1650-1657	
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification or Waste Discharge Requirement Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for small habitat restoration projects Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements for Restoration Projects Statewide NPDES Construction General Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan	**Tier II, III**
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Regional General Permit, Section 404 and Section 10 of the Federal Clean Water Act 2022 Nationwide Permits 13, 27 and 33 Multi-Agency Implementation of Aquatic, Riparian, Floodplain and Wetland Restoration Projects to Benefit Fish and Wildlife in California (PBA) (FWS Reference: 2022-0005149-S7)	**Tier II, III**
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Biological Opinion under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act Habitat Conservation Plan under Section 10 of the Federal Endangered Species Act Programmatic Biological Opinions for Listed Species and Geographic Regions (i.e., California Red-legged Frog, 08EVEN00-2020-F-0226 and 08EVEN00-2020-I-0292) Multi-Agency Implementation of Aquatic, Riparian, Floodplain and Wetland Restoration Projects to Benefit Fish and Wildlife in California (PBA) (FWS Reference: 2022-0005149-S7)	**Tier I, II, III**
NOAA Fisheries	Biological Opinion under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act Habitat Conservation Plan under Section 10 of the Federal Endangered Species Act NOAA Restoration Center Programmatic Biological Opinion (WCR-2015-3755) NMFS Programmatic Bio-Engineered Bank	**Tier III**

	Stabilization Programmatic Biological Opinion (WCRO-2020-00688) Multi-Agency Implementation of Aquatic, Riparian, Floodplain and Wetland Restoration Projects to Benefit Fish and Wildlife in California (PBA) (FWS Reference: 2022-0005149-S7)	

Attachment B

Notification and Communication Procedures for the Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program (EESP~~i.e., Programmatic Restoration Permit~~)

Pre-Construction Notification:
The RCD will provide an electronic Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) for each project to County of Monterey HCD-Planning by May 1st of each year.

All PCNs will include the following information:

- Project identification and location, including a map with key features and site constraints (such as wells or septic systems within 200ft of the limit of work).
- Conservation Plans (visual map or illustration showing area of treatment activities) or engineering design plans (if applicable).
- Nature of work and description of project need.
- Project construction timeline.
- Photos of the project area and immediate surroundings annotated to describe the project area and any applicable site features.
- Environmental setting – surrounding habitat, adjacent land use, land use planning area, zoning designation, etc.
- When native vegetation will be removed and revegetation will occur, a visual assessment of dominant native shrubs and trees, approximate species diversity and approximate coverage; and information about the plant species to be used for revegetation.
- If the project includes removal of native, 6-inch or greater diameter native trees (excluding dead, dying or hazardous trees with arborist tree removal waiver form, as needed), provide recommended restoration measures including number and tree species planted to mitigate the removed trees.
- Potential presence of listed species (i.e., indication that CNDDB map has been consulted for species) (checkbox).
    - Information on special status species/habitat present in relation to the work area, potential impacts to special status species/habitat, and all applicable environmental protection and mitigation measures.
- Indication that the appropriate paleontological and cultural resource investigation and tribal consultation (included in Exhibit A) has been completed (checkbox).
- Indication that the County FEMA map has been consulted to determine if the project is located in a FEMA identified flood hazard area (checkbox).
    - If a project has potential to impact a floodway or floodplain, the PCN will indicate that a qualified individual or registered civil engineer has completed an analysis indicating that the project will not decrease

floodwater storage, modify floodwater conveyance, increase the base flood elevation, or otherwise create an adverse impact either on the site or upstream or downstream of the site (checkbox).

- List of conservation practices to be installed.
  - Indication whether the project includes in-stream work and those practices that potentially directly or indirectly impact fish-bearing streams.
  - Description of any proposed wetland disturbance, including description of how project/practice will increase functional capacity of the wetland, and a description of the wetland delineation methodology.
  - Description of work in riparian area (checkbox)
- The volume of any proposed grading, including the offsite location to which the fill will be exported (if location is not a municipal landfill).
- Where grading exceeds 5,000 cubic yards, that plans have been designed and signed by a qualified engineer practicing in accordance with the standards of the State of California (checkbox). Engineering design plans will also be submitted.
  - The compaction requirements and finished maximum cut and fill slopes, as applicable.
- For all other project types requiring a qualified individual or Registered Civil Engineer (RCE) review/approval, as indicated in Exhibit B (i.e., for conservation practices designated with asterisks in Exhibit B), certification that an RCE has reviewed, analyzed, and/or designed the project (checkbox).
- Indication if the project area is within ~~50 feet of~~ a County right-of-way (checkbox).
- Certification that site is not on the Cortese list of hazardous materials sites (checkbox).
- Indication that landowner access consent has been obtained for the project site and any properties that must be crossed to implement the project (checkbox).
- Proposed strategies for implementation of CEQA mitigation measures as specified in the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the EESP and applicable information regarding CEQA mitigation monitoring.
- Description of the criteria that will be used to measure success for each project, and the time frame to be used to monitor the identified success criteria.

- Construction Management Information
  - Hours of operation
  - Truck routes
  - Estimated number of truck trips
  - Number of construction workers
  - Map showing the staging and parking location

All PCNs will include a cover sheet signed by the RCD certifying that each proposed project meets the criteria to qualify under the Monterey County Environmental Enhancement Streamlining Program for a Programmatic Restoration Permit.

Review of Preliminary PCN and Issuance of Final PCN:
Monterey County Housing and Community Development will provide comments or recommended revisions within 30 working days of receipt of a PCN. If County staff determines there are projects that require further review and/or modification to meet the criteria established by the Program, the County will contact the RCD to discuss those specific projects and resolve the outstanding issues. During these discussions, if the County determines that additional protection measures or other project revisions are required, they will work with the RCD to determine how these measures/revisions will be incorporated into the project. The County and RCD will attempt to achieve resolution of outstanding concerns within 30 days of the receipt of the Preliminary PCN. Following discussions with the County and other participating agencies, the RCD will send a revised PCN (Final PCN) to the County and other participating agencies, incorporating any revisions necessary to meet the criteria established by the Programmatic Restoration Permit that resulted from the County's review of the Preliminary PCN. If no comments are made on a Preliminary PCN, that PCN becomes final and work may proceed within the estimated timeline provided on the PCN.

Winter Grading Approvals: Every attempt will be made to finish all grading and to install erosion control measures prior to October 15. Any additional grading work beyond October 15 must be pre-approved by Monterey County Planning and all regulatory agencies permitting the project.

Annual Report: By March 1 of each year, the RCD will submit a status report for review to the County in the form an end-of-the-season Annual Report documenting all projects. The Annual Report will list currently active projects, and describe each project's purpose, area affected, environmental enhancements accomplished, amounts/volumes of yardage and cut/fill, finish slopes, etc. It will also list conservation benefits and any net gains in wetlands and riparian areas, describe actions taken to avoid adverse effects to and enhance habitat of listed species, and provide photo documentation of before and after site conditions.

Mitigation Monitoring Program: The PCN and/or the Annual Report (as indicated below) will include documentation of progress made towards implementation of each of the Program's mitigations as specified in the CEQA Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Program, including listing any additional actions that may be needed to fully implement the CEQA mitigations and meet success criteria, with proposed strategies for ensuring that such actions are taken in the upcoming or following year. For all situations where mitigation measures are not being sufficiently implemented and/or

success criteria are not being met in a timely manner, the Annual Report will provide recommended remediation measures (and an implementation schedule for them) designed to meet mitigation targets and/or individual project success criteria. The County and/or the participating agencies may require additional and/or different changes as necessary to ensure that the projects continue to meet the criteria of the Programmatic Restoration Permit.

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