APPENDIX C

Initial Study

CITY OF HOLLISTER

Initial Study
Environmental Checklist Form

1. Project title: City of Hollister Domestic Wastewater System Improvements and San Benito County Water District Recycled Water Facility Project

2. Lead agency name and address: City of Hollister
Public Works
375 5th Street
Hollister, CA 95023

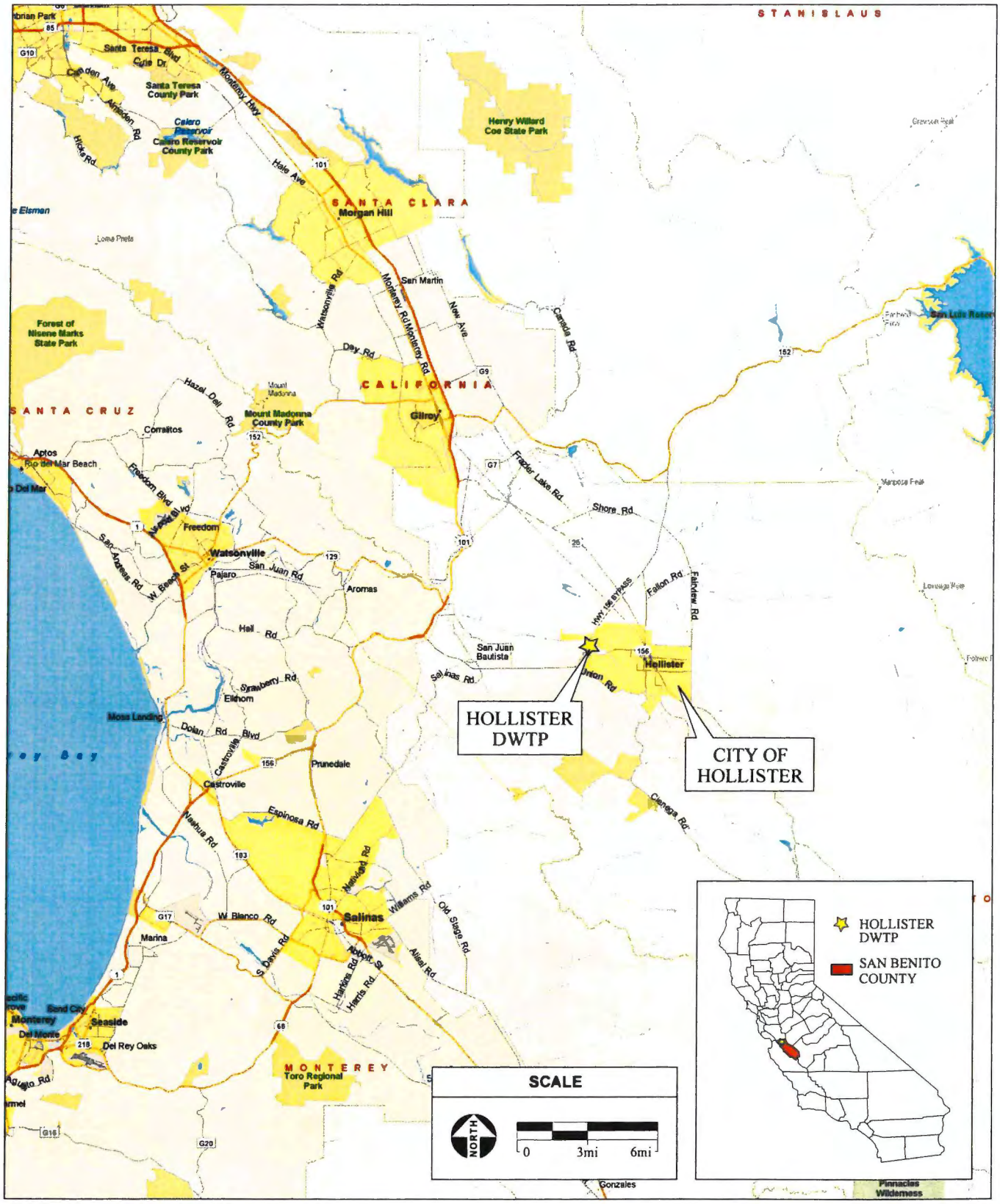
3. Contact person and phone number: Steve Wittry, Interim Engineering Manager
(831) 636-4340

4. Project location:

The DWTP site is bisected by State Route 156 (SR-156) just north of the intersection with San Juan-Hollister Road (**Figures 1 and 2**). Project components of the DWSI Project that will occur on the existing DWTP site include the construction of a membrane bioreactor (MBR) treatment facility, a septage receiving station, and a seasonal storage pond. The MBR facility would be located east of SR-156 on an area currently developed with a storage pond. The septage receiving station would also be located east of SR-156 on an area located in the vicinity of the plant entrance. The seasonal storage pond would be located west of SR-156 on an area currently developed with disposal beds.

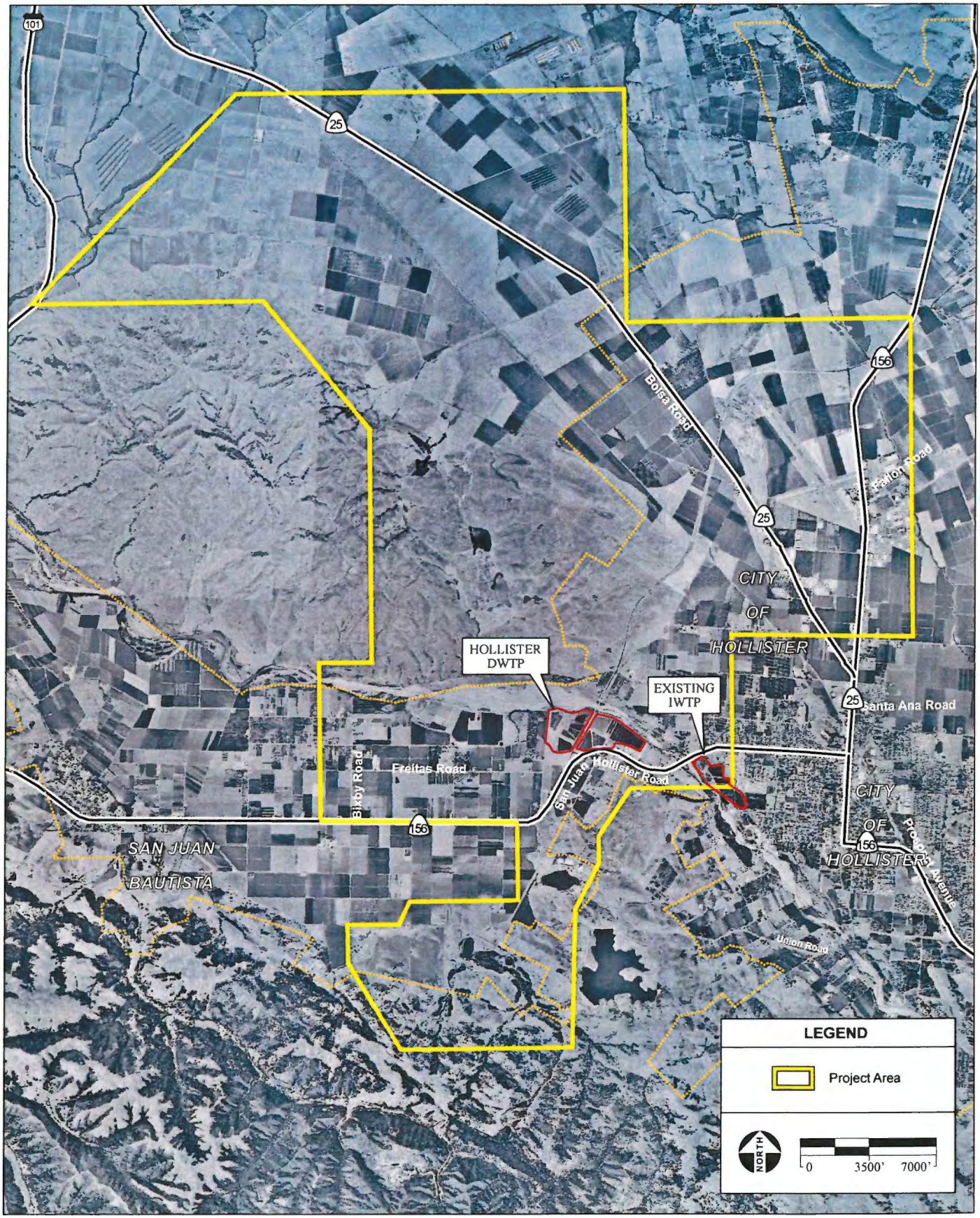
The Proposed Project includes the development of disposal sprayfields that will utilize recycled water generated by the DWTP. **Figure 2** identifies the area where treated wastewater could be feasibly disposed of via sprayfields, during the initial phase of the Proposed Project. This area was chosen based on proximity to the DWTP, land uses, infrastructure costs, and regional groundwater management goals. The Proposed Project would result in the initial development of sprayfields at the Hollister Municipal Airport, and recycled water use at the San Juan Oaks Golf Club. Selection of additional sprayfield and recycled water projects would be based on landowner interest, infrastructure costs, feasibility, consistency with groundwater management plans, adherence to recycled water regulations, environmental constraints, and other concerns. This area may be expanded to include additional irrigation use in surrounding areas as phases of the project progress.

5. Project sponsor's name and address: City of Hollister
Public Works
375 5th Street
Hollister, CA 95023



SOURCE: Microsoft Streets & Trips, 2004 ; AES, 2004

Figure 1
Regional Location



SOURCE: RMC Water and Environment, 2005; San Benito County Water District, 2005; City of Hollister, 2005; USGS Aerial Maps; AES, 2006

Figure 2
Site and Vicinity

6. Description of project:

The Proposed Project consists of improvements to the DWTP to increase the quality of effluent produced and to increase the treatment capacity of the plant. The Proposed Project would also change the way that treated effluent is disposed of. Currently, all of the treated effluent produced at the DWTP is disposed of by percolation beds located adjacent to the San Benito River. The Proposed Project would reduce the amount of water disposed of by percolation by developing disposal sprayfields and providing treated effluent as a recycled water supply for agricultural and urban irrigation. Because of high levels of salts and minerals in the treated DWTP effluent, agricultural and urban irrigation would be limited. To broaden the range of crops that could be irrigated with the treated effluent and to reduce the amount of salts and minerals entering the groundwater basin, a salt management program is included in the Proposed Project. The salt management program would utilize education programs and rigorous source control, including but not limited to, the elimination of on-site regenerating water softeners and a household water softener ordinance to reduce sources of salts and minerals entering the wastewater system. Reverse osmosis treatment or electro-dialysis reversal would be used to demineralize groundwater or treated effluent to achieve recycled water supply quality goals.

Specific components of the Proposed Project and the expected phasing schedule are shown in **Table 1** below.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting (briefly describe the project's surroundings):

Land uses surrounding the DWTP consist of open space, agricultural, industrial and residential development. The DWTP is bordered on the north by the San Benito River floodplain, which is a broad vegetated area with a narrow river channel. To the east and south of the DWTP is an industrial area that consists of a variety of business and a few residential uses along the north side of San Juan Road. Businesses located in this area include VK Manufacturing, S&K Foods Etc., A Tool Shed, Five Star Limousines, Hell Bent Custom Manufacturing, San Juan Woodworks, a piano refinishing business, Hollister Transmission Repair, Hawkins Auto Repairs, San Benito Sand & Bead Blasting, Hollister Landscape Supply, MiniMax Storage and RV parking, Eagle Recycling, and other businesses. Several single-family homes are also located on San Juan Road. To the south of the project side are industrial and residential uses. On the south side of San Juan Road, east of San Juan Hollister Road is Pacific Scientific, a manufacturer of ordnance. West of San Juan Hollister Road, just south of San Juan Road are several single-family homes that continue along south. An agricultural area with several homes is located north of the San Benito River.

Existing land uses in the Phase I disposal area include irrigated agriculture, rangeland, rural residential, urban residential, commercial, industrial, public/quasi public, recreation and open-space. Irrigated agriculture and rural residential are the dominant forms of land use in the project area.

TABLE 1
PROJECT COMPONENTS AND PHASING

Phase I (2008-2013)	Phase II (2014-2023)
DWSI Project	
Treatment	
4.0 MGD[1] Membrane Bioreactor Facility	5.0 MGD Membrane Bioreactor Facility
New Septage Receiving Station	
Storage	
1,500 AF[2] Storage Reservoir	An additional 670 AF of seasonal storage capacity either at the existing DWTP site or at an undetermined off-site location.
Disposal	
Disposal sprayfields at the Hollister Municipal Airport	Additional disposal sprayfields (only as necessary to dispose of treated wastewater that cannot be recycled due to quality or market conditions - more likely phasing out of disposal sprayfields due to development and transition of recycled water use to high-value food crops).
Additional disposal sprayfields in the project area	
Continued percolation at the DWTP	Reduced percolation at the DWTP
Storage and disposal at the IWTP	Gradual elimination of storage and disposal at the IWTP
Salt Management Program	
Salinity education program	Demineralization and concentrate disposal
Industrial salt control in municipal wastewater	
Water softener ordinance	
RWF Project	
Recycled water use at San Juan Oaks Golf Club	Other irrigation projects (e.g. Ridgemark Golf Courses).
Recycled water demonstration project (40 to 100 acres) in the Freitas Road Area	Deliver recycled water (700 mg/L TDS[3]) to San Juan Valley, Freitas Road and Wright Road and/or Buena Vista Road areas for agricultural use.
Recycled water for existing irrigated areas	

Notes: [1] Million gallons per day; [2] Acre-feet, [3] Total dissolved solids (measure of salinity).
Source: AES, 2006.

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

The City anticipates that approvals for the Proposed Project may be required from the San Benito County Water District, San Benito County, Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District, California Department of Health, California Department of Transportation, California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game, and other agencies. These agencies will likely rely on this EIR in considering whether to grant approvals.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

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

☐ Aesthetics	☒ Agricultural Resources	☒ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Cultural Resources	☒ Geology / Soils
☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☒ Hydrology / Water Quality	☒ Land Use / Planning
☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise	☒ Population / Housing
☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation	☒ Transportation / Traffic
☒ Utilities / Service Systems	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance	

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On behalf 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 a 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 the earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

_____ _____

Planner's Signature Date

_____ City of Hollister

Planner's Printed name For

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, a brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources. 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 projects outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock croppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

San Benito County General Plan

The San Benito County General Plan does not include specific goals and policies directly relevant to the aesthetics of the Proposed Project.

City of Hollister General Plan

The Hollister General Plan includes maps delineating the designated land uses within the City's Planning Area boundaries. The City of Hollister Planning Area encompasses the City limits, sphere of influence, and unincorporated land that bear a close relationship to the City. As shown in these figures, the existing DWTP and IWTP are located within the Public/Institutional designation, which specifically provides for the location of wastewater treatment plants. Designated land uses surrounding the existing DWTP depicted in the land use maps include Open Space/Conservation to the north along the San Benito River, General Industrial to the east, General Industrial and Residential to the south, and Agriculture to the west. The DWTP is separated from a low-density residential area to the north of the San Benito River and east of Highway 156 by areas designated for agricultural and open space.

Section II of the 2005 City of Hollister General Plan (p. 64) includes the following policies relevant to the proposed project:

GOAL LU1 Maintain and enhance Hollister's small town charm and identity. Organize and design the city with an attractive and positive image.

POLICY LU1.5 Underground Utility Lines

Maintain the existing regulations that promote the undergrounding of utility lines.

GOAL LU3 Develop and maintain attractive landscaping on public and private properties, open space and public gathering spaces.

LU3.4 Existing Trees

Preserve existing significant trees and tree groupings where possible. Replace trees removed due to site development.

GOAL LU11 Encourage well-designed buildings that are compatible with their surroundings.

Regional Setting

The project area is located within the Hollister and San Juan Valleys of San Benito County, which are bordered by the Gabilan Range to the south, the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Northwest, and the Diablo Range to the east. The Hollister and San Juan Valleys are characterized by agricultural uses on the alluvial plain, rolling grasslands in the foothills, and the rural residential and urban areas of Hollister. Agricultural uses consist of intensive row crop production as well as orchards and pastures. While Hollister grew rapidly in the 90s, it retains a small town atmosphere.

DWTP Site and Vicinity

The existing DWTP is located west of the urban area of Hollister at the junction of State Route 156 and San Juan Hollister Road. The visual character of the existing DWTP site is defined be expansive treatment, storage and disposal ponds, headworks, and operations building. The DWTP site is bordered by the San Benito River to the north, which consists of a broad vegetated floodplain and a typically dry channel. North of the San Benito River, the rolling grasslands of the Flint Hills lie west of State Route 156 and agricultural fields lie to the east. Both areas include scattered rural residential uses. To the east of the DWTP is an industrial area which contains an assortment of commercial and industrial uses along with several residences located along San Juan Road. South of the DWTP is an area of rural residential uses along San Juan Hollister Road as well as an industrial facility (Pacific Scientific) just south of San Juan Road. To the west of the DWTP is an area of agricultural use and scattered rural residences.

The most common view of the DWTP site is from Highway 156. Some homes located in the hills north and south of the DWTP have more distant views of the site. No component of the viewshed is designated as a scenic vista.

Impact Discussion

Questions A through C

No component of the project area viewshed is designated as a scenic vista. The Proposed Project would result in the realignment of percolation beds and the development of structures on the existing DWTP site. The most extensive proposed features, the proposed seasonal storage reservoir, would not present a substantial addition to the visual environment

since percolation beds and ponds are already located on the site and have a limited profile. The proposed structures would include the following buildings: 1) Operations Building, 2) Chemical Storage Building, and 3) MBR/MCC/Blower Building. Other structures would include: the Pretreatment Facility, Odor Control Biofilter, Chlorine Contact Basin, Effluent Pump Station, and Plant Water Pump Station. The proposed buildings and structures would be limited in height to approximately 35 feet above grade. The buildings would be more extensive than the existing buildings and would be constructed in an area currently developed as a storage pond adjacent to State Route 156, however the project design will include landscaping of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation to break up the view of proposed buildings and facilities from State Route 156 and surrounding areas in compliance with the Hollister General Plan policies. The resulting visual impact would be less than significant.

Question D

Security lighting would be included at the proposed DWTP buildings and facilities. As such, security lighting would be visible at night, though shielded so as not to encroach upon adjacent properties or impact view of the night skies in the project areas. Because security lighting is currently provided on the site, the Proposed Project would not result in a noticeable increase in light sources in the project area. A less than significant impact would result.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURAL 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 Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the Project:				
a) Convert Prime farmland, Unique farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting

The Hollister and San Juan Valleys are a rich agricultural area with deep alluvial soils and superior growing conditions. Moderately to steeply sloping soils which occupy adjacent hill areas are used primarily as grazing land for cattle. Irrigated agriculture, rangeland, and pasture are the primary land uses in San Benito County.

Lands near the City of Hollister and surrounding unincorporated San Benito County are in row crops and orchards. Some of the most common vegetable crops grown in this region include lettuce, bell peppers, onions, celery, broccoli, and turf. Common orchard crops are walnuts,

grapes, apricots, and apples (SBCWD & WRASBC, 2003). The proposed Treatment Plant site is located on an area already developed with wastewater facilities.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-C

Improvement to the DWTP plant would take place entirely within the existing City DWTP property. Additionally, increased perculation at the IWTP would take place entirely with the IWTP property. However the proposed off-site storage basin, spray fields, and recycled water irrigation sites may be located on productive agricultural land.

Findings

The EIR shall analyze the Proposed Project's impact to agricultural resources resulting from the development of the proposed off-site storage basin, pipelines and sprayfields. This analysis shall be included within the Land Use and Planning chapter.

	Potentially Significant	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant	No
III. AIR QUALITY- Where applicable, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable neat increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting

Air pollution standards are regulated through the Federal Clean Air Act of 1970 and the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1977. Current standards are set for sulfur dioxide (SOx), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbons, ozone (03), and particulates less than 10 microns in size (pM 10). The state standards, established by the Air Resources Board (ARB), are generally more restrictive than national standards, and incorporate additional pollutants such as hydrogen sulfide.

Proposed project facilities are located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which is managed by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD). The MBUAPCD prepared the most recent Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the NCCAB in 2000. The AQMP relies on a multi-level partnership of governmental agencies at the federal, state, regional and local level. These agencies include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), ARB, local governments, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and the MBUAPCD. AMBAG works closely with the MBUAPCD to prepare plans that meet state and federal standards for ozone.

Impact Discussion

Question A-C

Operation of the plant would not be a significant source of air pollutants. However, construction of the plant and the disposal system will require land disturbance by heavy equipment. This will create a temporary, but potentially significant source of air pollutants primarily from fugitive dust. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question D

Scattered rural residences exist in the vicinity of the treatment plant. Additionally, some of the properties being evaluated for disposal system and storage facilities may be near sensitive receptors. These sensitive receptors could be exposed to a temporary increase in pollutants as a result of construction activities. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question E

The Proposed Project would increase the DWTP's treatment capacity thereby increasing the volume of wastewater and potential odor generating activity. The effluent resulting form the proposed improvements at the DWTP would be tertiary-treated and disinfected, and would have significantly less odor than the current secondary-treated effluent. However, as the overall amount of effluent would increase, this could result in odor related impacts with nearby sensitive receptors. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Findings

Potential air quality impacts associated with construction should be evaluated in the EIR. The EIR should analyze the level of odors anticipated from the tertiary treated effluent.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native residents or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Within the project boundary, commercial and residential areas are focused near the airport, east of the wastewater treatment facility, and along Freitas Road. Several sensitive habitats exist within the City and adjacent areas including central coast willow scrub, freshwater marsh, and alkali marsh. In addition, highly modified habitats, including sewage ponds, pastures, agricultural fields, and golf courses are found within and near the City.

Habitat at the DWTP is provided by storage and percolation ponds, as well as trees and other vegetation surrounding the facility. The DWTP sedimentation basin is a cement-lined pond surrounded by a cement walkway, resulting in a lack of vegetation, though not a lack of birds. The percolation beds are unlined and surrounded by annual grassland. Willow riparian scrub exists outside the northern fence, along the San Benito River, and young coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) are growing along the border of Highway 156.

Impact Discussion

Question A-C

The pipelines, off-site storage basin, and recycled water irrigation areas all have the potential for significant impacts to biological resources and wetlands unless mitigated. The EIR will evaluate these sites and seasonal restrictions for construction of these facilities.

Question D- F

The pipelines and off-site storage basin have a potential to impact fish and wildlife passage, local ordinances or policies, and habitat conservation plans, compared to a direct river discharge.

Findings

The project EIR should address the avoidance or reduction of impacts to special status biological resources and wetlands, and the avoidance or reduction of impacts to fish and wildlife passage, local ordinances, and habitat conservation plans.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting

Previous surveys found no evidence of historic or prehistoric cultural resources at the DWTP. Development of pipelines, sprayfields, and other system facilities in the project area, however, may affect known or unknown cultural resources.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-D

Construction of pipelines and sprayfields has the potential to impact cultural resources unless mitigated. The potentially significant impacts would come from unexpected artifacts or other materials that are encountered during excavation activities in the construction phase. The EIR will include a records search of known historic and prehistoric sites, as well as a report of field surveys.

Findings

The project EIR should describe the avoidance or reduction of impacts to cultural resources through information gathering and standard mitigation measures.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY & SOILS -- Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known Fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f) 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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
g) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☒	☐	☐	☐
h) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The project is located within an alluvial valley of the Central Coast Range of California. The DWTP site is relatively flat, sloping slightly toward the west. The DWTP is located at an elevation of approximately 245 feet above mean sea level (msl). Soils in the project area are mapped as Metz sandy loam (Soil Survey of San Benito County, 1969).

The entire Hollister area is located in a seismically active region. The two primary fault systems in the project area are the San Andreas and the Hayward/Calaveras. The San Andreas Fault system runs the entire length of San Benito County, and is located about two miles southwest of the DWTP site. The Hayward/Calaveras fault extends through the center of Hollister Valley and is situated about 2.5 miles northeast of the site. Both faults are active and can produce large magnitude earthquakes in the region.

Impact Discussion

Question A

Hollister is in a seismically active area, and therefore special design measures will be required to ensure public safety. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question B

Construction of project facilities may contribute to soil erosion unless mitigated. During construction and operation, standard provisions for erosion control should be implemented. These standard erosion control and restoration techniques should be discussed in the project EIR.

Question C

Due to proximity of active faults, significant ground shaking could occur which could result in the failure of proposed structures. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Questions D-G

The development of pipelines could require construction near hillsides, which would pose a landslide risk. Development could also occur in areas of unstable soil conditions or could result in soil erosion. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

Question H

The percolation beds will be sited and designed to adequately dispose of the City's domestic wastewater. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Findings

The project EIR should contain a discussion of construction and operation erosion control that will mitigate geology and soil impacts to a less than significant level. The EIR should address how geotechnical and engineering studies have investigated the adequacy of the percolation beds to dispose of wastewater and reduce geology and soil impacts.

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

Setting

The former Whittaker facility (now Pacific Scientific) is located south of the DWTP across San Juan Hollister Road. The site was used for munitions and explosives manufacturing from the 1950s until 1991, which resulted in groundwater contamination from volatile organic compounds and perchlorate. Remediation of groundwater contamination has been ongoing since the mid-1990s under the supervision of the CCRWQCB.

Groundwater monitoring reports are prepared for the facility on a semi -annual basis in accordance with the CCRWQCB requirements. These reports indicate that groundwater below the property is impacted predominantly with trichloroethene (TCE) and perchlorate. The data shows that groundwater bearing zones at several different depths have been impacted. No other documented sources of soil or groundwater contamination are known to affect the DWTP site. Surrounding areas proposed for pipelines, sprayfields, and other system facilities, however, may be affected by known or unknown sites with contaminated soils or groundwater.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-B

During construction of both the treatment plant and the disposal system, there will be fuels and lubricants transferred, stored, and used on site. The handling and storage of these hazardous materials will be subject to standard state and federal requirements. During operation of the treatment plant and disposal system, there will be chlorine and other hazardous materials transferred, stored, and used on site, also subject to standard state and federal requirements. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

Question C-D

Neither the treatment plant nor the disposal system utilize or release hazardous materials within the designated distance of a new or proposed school. No project related sites have been identified as a hazardous materials site.

Question E-F

Neither the treatment plant nor the disposal system presents a safety hazard to operations of the Hollister Airport that is located between one and three miles north of all of the proposed facilities. Recycled water use at the Hollister Airport would require compliance with regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Question G-H

Emergency access could potentially be obstructed during construction of the off-site pipelines. Additionally, construction of proposed facilities could result in an increased risk of wildland fires. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

Findings

The project EIR should discuss the standard requirements during construction and operations for the transfer, storage, and use of the hazardous materials required for both the treatment plant and the disposal system.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. HYDROLOGY & WATER QUALITY- Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☒	☐	☐	☐
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☒	☐	☐	☐
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☒	☐	☐	☐
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The San Benito River extends generally east-west along the northern boundary of the DWTP. The San Benito River is the largest tributary to the Pajaro River, with a drainage area of approximately 661 square miles. Portions of the DWTP site are located within the 100-year floodplain, based on the Flood Insurance Rate Map for San Benito County Unincorporated Areas (panel 060267).

The main groundwater basin in San Benito County is the southern portion of the Gilroy-Hollister groundwater basin. The groundwater basin underlies the Hollister, San Juan, and Santa Clara Valleys.

The DWTP is recognized by the San Benito County Water District as contributing to the groundwater recharge of the region. In their analysis of the groundwater basin percolation recharge, the San Benito County Water District identified recharge from the DWTP as

contributing to the Hollister West and San Juan subbasins of the Gilroy-Hollister groundwater basin. The DWTP is one of five sources of municipal wastewater percolation recharges to the basin. The significant percolation inflows to the basin are through stream percolation, rainfall, wastewater, irrigation, and groundwater inflow.

Surrounding areas that also drain to the San Benito River and the same groundwater basin may be proposed for pipelines, pump stations, percolation beds, and other DWSI facilities.

Impact Discussion

Question A

The Proposed Project would need to comply with the wastewater discharge requirements of the Central California Regional Water Quality Board (CCRWQB) and other state and federal regulations. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question B

The proposed project could indirectly increase water demand and therefore could deplete groundwater supplies. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question C-F

Development of the Proposed Project could result in the alteration of drainage patterns and erosion, flooding, and water quality impacts. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

Question G

The Proposed Project would not result in the development of housing in a flood zone.

Question H-I

The Proposed Project includes the construction of a seasonal storage reservoir within the 100 year floodplain that would affect flood waters. Flooding and levee failure issues will be addressed in the EIR.

Question J

The Proposed Project is not located in an area affected by tsunami, or mudflows. The proposed storage reservoir is not large enough to be affected by seiche related impacts.

Findings

The EIR will analyze the Proposed Project's impact to water quality, including compliance with water quality standards, and the potential impacts associated with flooding.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. LAND USE & PLANNING -- Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting:

The City of Hollister is located in northern San Benito County within the inland agricultural region near the north end of California's Central Coast Region, approximately six miles east of the City of San Juan Bautista. Agricultural land uses surrounding the City include irrigated row crops, orchards, and rangeland. Rural residential uses occur within the agricultural areas. Although agricultural operations and related activities continue in the region, the pattern of urban development in the area has resulted in the incremental loss of agricultural land.

The DWTP site is located at the intersection of State Route 156 and San Juan Hollister Road. State Route 156 bisects the DWTP site. The DWTP consist of treatment, storage and percolation ponds, headworks and an operations building. Land uses surrounding the DWTP consist of open space, agricultural, industrial and residential development. The DWTP is bordered on the north by the San Benito River floodplain, which is a broad vegetated area with a narrow river channel. To the east and south of the DWTP is an industrial area that consists of a variety of business and a few residential uses along the north side of San Juan Road. The DWTP site is located partially within the City of Hollister and partially within the unincorporated area of San Benito County.

Impact Discussion

Question A

The proposed facilities would not divide an established community. Improvements to the DWTP would occur at the existing site. Proposed sprayfields would be developed in rural areas and would not result in a significant change in land use.

Question B

Development of some project components, including a seasonal storage reservoir during Phase II may conflict with adopted land use plans. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question C

There is no adopted habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan for the project area.

Findings

The project EIR should address potential impacts from the proposed facilities, including consistency with general plan goals and policies and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

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

Setting

The northern San Benito County area includes areas mapped as significant sources of aggregate by the State of California under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMRA). The purpose of the mapping program under SMRA is to ensure that significant mineral resources can be protected from premature and/or incompatible development and will be available for extraction. Within the project area, mineral resource zones are found along the San Benito River and near Hollister Municipal Airport, and principal economic minerals identified are sand and gravel deposits of the San Benito River and along the San Andreas Fault.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-B

Areas along the San Benito River have been identified as significant sources of aggregate and designated as mineral resource zones. These areas are located with the Phase I disposal boundary and could feasibly be developed with sprayfields. The development of sprayfields could be incompatible with mineral extraction. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Findings

As the Proposed Project may result in conflicts with mineral resource extraction, this issue will be further analyzed in the EIR. This analysis shall be included within the Geology and Soils chapter of the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. NOISE -- Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration noise levels?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Noise is defined as unwanted or objectionable sound. Sound is comprised of three variables: magnitude, frequency, and duration. Noise intensity is typically measured on the "decibel" scale, which indicates the relative amplitude of a sound. Noise is typically characterized using the A weighted sound level (dBA). This scale gives greater weight to those frequencies to which the human ear is most sensitive.

Sensitive noise receptors near the DWTP site consist of three residences located south of the project site along San Juan Hollister Road, within San Benito County. The major source of existing noise near the DWTP site is from vehicles traveling on San Juan Hollister Road and State Route 156.

The Noise Elements of the General Plans for San Benito County and the City of Hollister identify noise and land use compatibility standards for various land uses. The noise guidelines are expressed in decibels Ldn which represents the average noise level during a 24-hour period, with a penalty of 10 dBA added to sound occurring between the hours of 10 PM and 7 AM. The County's and City's acceptable noise level for residential land uses is 65 dBA Ldn or less. In addition, City and County policies call for control and reduction of construction-related noise impacts.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-D

Construction and operation of the Proposed Project would increase noise and vibration levels in nearby areas. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Questions E-F

Construction of the proposed facilities would occur in proximity to the Hollister Municipal Airport, however no homes or offices would be developed as part of the project in proximity to the airport.

Findings

As the Proposed Project may result in noise impacts, this issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

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

Setting

San Benito County was the fastest-growing county in California during the 1990s, and most of that growth has concentrated in Hollister, where the population grew at an annual rate of 6 % between 1990 and 2000. Development pressure has begun to change the rural character of the region as people who work in urban employment centers closer to the Bay Area buy homes in relatively rural parts of San Benito County. This demographic shift has resulted in agricultural activities becoming less integral to the local economy. Based on growth projected to occur in the County by the California Department of Finance, the City expects an increase in population to 46,427 in 2009 which marks the end of the current Housing Element planning period.

In November 2002, voters in the City enacted a Growth Cap Initiative (Measure U) to limit new residential development (City of Hollister Community Development Department 2003). This initiative has been incorporated into the City of Hollister Municipal Code as Chapter 16.64 Growth Management Program. The City Council found it necessary to adopt the Growth Management Program to implement the policies and objectives of the General Plan and to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

The intent of the Growth Management Program is to encourage a rate of residential growth within the City which will not exceed the City's ability to provide adequate and effective public services, including sewer and water. The program is to be implemented by setting five year housing goals and annual growth limits. The initial five-year period was defined to begin on January 1, 2004, or when the City's sanitary sewer treatment plant is available to accept capacity. Since the current WWTP is at capacity and a Building Moratorium Ordinance (Ordinance 974) was enacted in May 2002, the beginning of the first five-year period would begin at such time that the Proposed Project would be operational. The annual growth limit established by the Growth Management Program is 244 residential units per year. This

number is based upon 2.25 percent of the City population as established by the 2000 census, using a State of California estimate of 3.168 persons per housing unit.

At present, the Building Moratorium Ordinance provides that no building permits shall be granted for the following:

1. The construction of new commercial, residential or industrial buildings which require connection to the City sewer system;
2. The construction of a new dwelling unit;
3. A building addition which includes the installation of a new plumbing fixture unit.

The Hollister City Council enacted the Building Moratorium Ordinance due to inadequate wastewater capacity. The moratorium will not be lifted until the Proposed Project or other improvements are completed to increase wastewater capacity.

Impact Discussion

Question A

The treatment plant upgrades will primarily address water quality issues, but will also result in increased wastewater treatment and disposal capacity. While the Proposed Project would not directly result in the construction of housing and population increase, the additional treatment capacity would have the potential to accommodate growth within the district and buildout of the Hollister General Plan. Specifically, when improvements to the DWTP are completed, the Building Moratorium Ordinance will most likely be repealed, allowing growth to occur. However, the City's Growth Cap Initiative of 244 homes per year would still limit the number of homes constructed. Compliance with the Growth Cap Initiative would result in an annual growth rate of less than 2.3 percent, lower than that envisioned in the Housing Element. Regardless, this growth could result in physical impacts to the environment. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question B and Question C

The use of recycled water for sprayfields and agricultural irrigation would not result in a change of land use that would displace existing housing. Additionally, sites selected for the pipeline routes and the off-site storage basin would likely avoid parcels with inhabitable residential units due to the increased cost of purchasing a site with higher market value. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project facilities will not displace existing housing nor will the people be displaced from existing housing; therefore there are no impacts.

Findings

The EIR shall analyze potential population growth that would occur as a result of increased wastewater treatment capacity at the DWTP. This issue shall be discussed primarily in the growth-inducing impacts chapter.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES- Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service rations, response time or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Police Protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Fire

Fire protection for the project site and Hollister planning area is provided by three Fire Departments. The Hollister City Fire Department is responsible for areas within the City limits, while the San Benito County Fire Department provides protection for unincorporated county land. Under a mutual aide agreement, the City Fire Department provides initial response to areas within the County, and the County Fire department provides initial response to areas within the City. Areas of the County that are designated as wildlands are the responsibility of the California Department of Forestry (CDF). The fire hazard of unincorporated County land that is beyond the City's Planning area has been classified by the CDF on a scale of low to very high. In the project area, the Flint Hills are designated as having a moderate fire danger, while the hills adjacent to the San Benito River near the DWTP are designated as a high fire hazard.

Police

Law enforcement for the project site is the responsibility of the Hollister Police Department within City limits, and the San Benito County Sheriff's Department in unincorporated areas.

Schools

The Hollister School District operates the public elementary and middle schools in the project area, while the San Benito High School District operates grades 9 through 12. Most schools within the Hollister School District are at or above capacity due to growth in the area and delays in funding. San Benito High School currently has an enrollment of 2,700 students and a maximum capacity of 3,000. The schools in closest proximity to the DWTP are Calaveras Elementary located approximately 2.14 miles to the east and R.O. Hardin Elementary located approximately 2.27 miles to the southeast.

Parks

Approximately 16 parks are located within the City of Hollister. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Hollister requires an average of 4 acres of parks and recreational facilities for every 1,000 citizens. The Master Plan indicates that currently the city provides

approximately 4.1 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. This is over the required acreage and considered consistent with the City's policy.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-F

Development of the Proposed Project would result in land uses similar in nature to the land uses that previously existed on the DWTP site and disposal sites. As a result, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Project would require the need for additional public services above that which previously served the project site.

Findings

As it was determined that the Proposed Project would not directly result in adverse impacts to public services, this issue will not be addressed in the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV RECREATION --				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have been ad adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Hollister requires an average of 4 acres of parks and recreational facilities for every 1,000 citizens. The Master Plan indicates that currently the city provides approximately 4.1 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. This is over the required acreage and considered consistent with the City's policy. However bicycle and pedestrian trail are limited. San Benito County has adopted a bikeway plan, which would provide a connection between the existing parks and other pedestrian oriented centers.

Impact Discussion

The Proposed Project would not physically impact recreational facilities, as it would not result in the conversion of parkland. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not directly increase the population of Hollister and would therefore not lead to deterioration of recreational facilities as a result of accelerated use.

Findings

As it was determined that the Proposed Project would not directly result in adverse impacts to recreational facilities, this issue will not be addressed in the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase on either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The DWTP is located on San Juan Hollister Road, just north of the intersection with State Route 156. Access to the DWTP is provided from a private driveway that extends from the frontage road along the north side of San Juan Hollister Road. The entrance to the DWTP is gated and controlled by treatment plant staff. Traffic in this area could potentially be affected by the Proposed Project, as well as in other areas that may be proposed for facilities such as pipelines, sprayfields, storage basins, and other system facilities.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-B

Construction of the proposed pipelines would necessitate temporary construction zones. This would temporarily increase construction traffic on adjacent roadways and negatively affect circulation flow. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Question C-D

Recycled water use at the Hollister Airport would require compliance with regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration. The proposed sprayfields would not result in a physical change to the airport's operations and would therefore not affect air traffic. Additionally, the design features of the project do not propose physical changes to area roadways; therefore the project would not increase hazards.

Question E

Construction of the proposed transmission pipeline could temporarily block access to driveways adjacent to construction activities, and potentially interfere with emergency response vehicles. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Questions F-G

The Proposed Project will have no impacts to parking or alternative transportation programs.

Findings

The EIR shall analyze construction related impacts to traffic and roadway conditions, as well the adequacy of emergency access for fire protection, law enforcement and emergency medical services.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. UTILITIES & SERVICE SYSTEMS- Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☒	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☒	☐	☐	☐
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting

Water

Three water suppliers serve the Hollister Planning Area: the SBCWD, the Sunnyslope County Water District (SCWD) and the City of Hollister. SBCWD is charged with the wholesale supply of CVP surface water through the San Felipe Project in the Hollister Valley. SBCWD has purchased CVP water since 1986 under a 40-year contract and is entitled to a total supply of 35,550 acre-feet per year (AFY) for agricultural uses and 8,250 AFY for municipal and industrial uses. There are issues of availability and reliability of San Felipe water as a source of water and there have been significant reductions in San Felipe water for long-term planning (SBCWD & WRASBC, 2003).

City of Hollister and the SCWD supply retail water primarily to municipal and industrial customers within the Hollister Planning Area. In general, the City water service area includes the west side of Hollister, north Hollister, and a portion of the Cienega Valley. The SCWD provides water to portions of the City of Hollister and adjacent unincorporated portions of the County generally east and southeast of Hollister. The District currently provides water

service to 5,200 accounts, of which approximately 60% are within the City of Hollister. Water supplies come from both groundwater sources and surface water through the newly built Lassalt treatment plant, which treats CVP water for use as domestic water supply.

Wastewater Facilities

Currently, the DWTP disposes of treated effluent in fifteen percolation beds located on the east and west sides of State Route 156, and additional beds located at the IWTP. The treatment plant system is capable of disposing of all of the current effluent flow of approximately 2.7 mgd. However, the percolation beds are operating at maximum capacity and the system will not accommodate projected growth within the City. Additionally, while the current treatment plant meets all existing Waste Discharge Requirements, the CCRWQCB has indicated that a new treatment plant would be required to meet nitrate limits as established in the local groundwater basin plan. The existing treatment plant is not capable of meeting this nitrate requirement. The disposal of treated effluent at the existing percolation beds has also been identified as contributing to high groundwater levels and high salinity levels in the San Juan Groundwater Sub-Basin of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Solid waste disposal within the Hollister Planning Area is currently provided under contract via the Hollister Disposal Company. Solid waste is disposed of at the John Smith landfill that is the only permitted landfill (a Class III non-hazardous solid waste disposal facility) serving the Hollister area. The landfill is located on John Smith Road, east of Fairview Road. The landfill is owned by the County of San Benito and is operated by Hollister Disposal Company, under contract with the County. Currently, only 28 acres of the 57-acre landfill are being utilized, which provides sufficient capacity to dispose of waste at a level of 250 tons per day for an estimated 15 to 18 years. The landfill currently handles an average of approximately 75 tons per day. The Hollister Disposal Company is currently updating its permit to allow full utilization of all 57 acres of the landfill site. Although it is uncertain how technology will alter current packaging and disposal methods and affect long-term success of recycling efforts, it is estimated that the full utilization of the full site would provide a life span of between 40 and 45 years, based upon projected population growth in the service area.

Impact Discussion

Questions A-B

Construction of the Proposed Project is planned to occur without extended interruption to the DWTP operations. However, because construction of the MBR facility requires the abandonment of Pond 2, which currently provides storage capacity, additional storage capacity at the DWTP would be required for storage of treated effluent during the winter months. Lack of sufficient storage capacity could result in an emergency release of treated effluent. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Questions C

The Proposed Project would not result in substantial additional impervious surfaces at the DWTP site, as the proposed facilities are similar to those that currently existing. Therefore, there would not be a substantial increase in stormwater run-off.

Question D

The Proposed Project would not indirectly increase water supply demands in the region by supporting planned growth in the service area.

Questions F-G

The proposed MBR facility will generate additional solid waste in the form of sludge. This waste will be placed into a sludge stabilization basin (SSB). It is estimated the SSB will reach capacity in 15 years. At this time, the sludge will have to be removed, dewatered and hauled offsite for disposal. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

Findings

As potential adverse impacts to utilities have been identified, these issues will be discussed in the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --				
a) Does the project have the potential to 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plan or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environment effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐	☐	☐