MONTECITO RANCH

APPENDIX M

AGRICULTURE TECHNICAL STUDY

for the

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SP01-001; TM 5250RPL[6]; P04-045;
LOG NO. 01-09-013; SCH NO. 2002021132

MAY 2008

Information for the Reader

This technical report analyzes agriculture-related elements associated with construction and operation of the Montecito Ranch Project. The reader should note that refinement of the location of a Circulation Element roadway (SA 330) between Montecito Road and SR 67 is included as a Circulation Element change in the project description provided in the Montecito Ranch Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Because construction of this segment of the roadway is not anticipated as this time (buildout of the roadway segment will be completed by another entity in the future), and does not comprise part of the Montecito Ranch Project, this report does not contain analysis regarding the segment of SA 330 south of Montecito Road. For readers interested in potential effects (all assessed as less than significant) associated with the relocated road segment, please refer to Section 5.8.6, Extension of SA 330 Design Scenario Alternative, of the EIR. When construction is contemplated, impacts will be confirmed. Construction of this roadway would be completed by others.

MONTECITO RANCH

AGRICULTURE TECHNICAL STUDY

SP01-001; TM 5250RPL[6]; P04-045; LOG NO. 01-09-013; SCH NO. 2002021132

APRIL 2008

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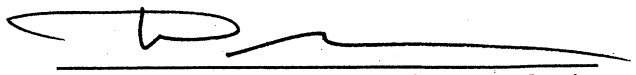

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MONTECITO RANCH
AGRICULTURE TECHNICAL STUDY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Montecito Ranch Project (Proposed Project) proposes development of a rural residential community consisting of 417 single-family residential units on lots ranging from 0.5 to 1.8 acres, with a total residential development area (including private streets and utilities) of approximately 293.5 acres. Between approximately 549.1 and 573.8 acres (59 and 61 percent) of the 935.2-acre site would be designated as open space (including biological and other open space such as trails), depending on the wastewater management option selected (as outlined below). The Project Applicant would fully develop and dedicate an 8.3-acre local park, dedicate land for an 11.9-acre historic park site encompassing the Montecito Ranch House and an equestrian staging area, provide 7.9 acres for Homeowner's Association (HOA) lots, dedicate land for a 10.6-acre charter high school site, and provide 29.0 acres for on-site public roadways.

The Proposed Project would require construction of off-site utility improvements to provide water service to the Project, including two 4,000-foot (0.75-mile) long pipelines located in Montecito Way and Ash Street, a water booster pump station, and an off-site water storage tank with an associated pipeline and access road. Two design (capacity) options are associated with the water tank, with these options related to the wastewater management options described below.

The Proposed Project includes off-site roadway improvements. Off-site roadway improvements would involve the widening of Ash Street, the construction of Montecito Ranch Road between Ash Street at the eastern SPA boundary and Montecito Way at the southern boundary, the widening of Montecito Way, and the widening of Montecito Road from Montecito Way to Main Street.

The Proposed Project also includes two wastewater management options, only one of which would be implemented. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, wastewater management for the Project would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District and off-site sewer improvements would be required. Specifically, off-site sewer improvements would consist of a sewer force main extending south from the Project site within Montecito Way, easterly on Montecito Road, and southerly on Kalbaugh Street to an existing manhole approximately 50 feet south of the terminus of Kalbaugh Street and north of Santa Maria Creek. The wastewater from the Proposed Project would be treated at Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP), if capacity becomes available. The off-site water tank described above would require a capacity of 1.26 million gallons under this wastewater management option. Under Wastewater Management Option 2, all wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be treated at an on-site wastewater reclamation facility (WRF). The total area required for wastewater-related facilities under this option would be approximately 24.7 acres, and would result in a total on-site open space area of approximately 549.1 acres. The off-site water tank described above would require a capacity of 0.91 million gallons under this wastewater management option (due to the fact that reclaimed water would be produced and used for on-site irrigation).

Wastewater Management Option 1 would result in a total on-site open space area of approximately 573.8 acres, including the 549.1 acres noted above under Wastewater Management Option 2, and the 24.7 acres associated with the on-site wastewater treatment facilities for that option.

The Proposed Project includes a General Plan Amendment to remove the following three agricultural conditions currently identified in the Ramona Community Plan (County of San Diego 2002):

- Condition 40: Future potential agricultural uses located within the property shall be defined by more detailed study to determine not only the precise areas for agricultural production, but also the economic considerations associated with that use.

- Condition 41: The minimum lot size permitted within any future agricultural pursuit area shall also be determined by the above analysis. It is presently intended that a minimum lot size of four acres be allowed within that area, and the above study shall address any modifications to that requirement.

- Condition 42: The approximately 103 acres of prime agricultural soils - the Visalia sandy loams (VaA and VaB) and Ramona sandy loam (RaB) - in the southwest portion of the Montecito Ranch property shall be preserved for agricultural pursuits. Any lot created on these 103 acres shall be identified as agricultural lots.

Because these conditions are proposed to be removed from the community plan, associated potential impacts related to Proposed Project conformance are not discussed in this document. A discussion of the justification for, and implications of, removing the noted agricultural conditions is provided in Subchapter 3.1, Land Use and Planning, of the Proposed Project EIR (County of San Diego 2008).

The Proposed Project includes a change in the on-site Animal Schedule Designator, which identifies restrictions and requirements related to uses such as animal sales, raising and enclosures (pursuant to Section 3100 of the County Zoning Ordinance). Specifically, Project implementation would change the on-site Animal Schedule Designator from "L" to "A" or "F," with the "A" and "F" Designators generally more restrictive to animal uses. This proposed change in the on-site designator of "A" is based on the generally small lot sizes associated with the proposed development (1.8 acres maximum and typical lot sizes of 0.5 acre), as well as the fact that agricultural-type animal uses such as keeping/raising large animals or large numbers of smaller animals would not be compatible with the residential nature of the Proposed Project. Residential lots that would allow horses (1 through 30) would have an animal designator of "F," which allows two horses plus one per 0.5 acre over one acre. Because the Proposed Project would be developed as a Specific Plan Area (SPA), the Project applicant has also proposed to include a number of additional restrictions to on-site agricultural activities (including animal-related uses) through the use of covenants, codes and restrictions (CC&Rs) that would be attached to sales documents for individual residential properties. Specifically, proposed CC&Rs would preclude all agricultural-related animal uses within the Project site.

The following five alternatives to the Proposed Project are also evaluated in this analysis: No Project–No Development Alternative, No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative, Reduced Development Footprint Alternative, Reduced Density Alternative, and Closed Water System Alternative. Under the No Project Alternative–No Development Alternative, the site would remain in its current state, with no on- or off-site development. The No Project-Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative would include up to 196 single-family residential units on minimum 2- to 4-acre lots and dedication of an historical park site (containing the Montecito Ranch House). Off-site facilities identified for the Proposed Project would not be constructed under this alternative, with other potential off-site roads to be provided based on "fair share" contributions by individual developers, and water/wastewater service provided either through on-site facilities (i.e., wells and septic systems) or "fair share" off-site facilities as noted for roadways. The Reduced Development Footprint Alternative would include 417 single-family residential units on minimum 10,000-square

foot lots, as well as the same park sites, charter high school site, off-site water facilities, and on- and off-site roadway and wastewater management options as the Proposed Project. The Reduced Density Alternative would develop 244 single-family residential units on minimum 1-acre lots, with the same general development footprint as described for the Proposed Project (except that the charter high school site would be dedicated as additional open space). Montecito Road would not be widened from Montecito Way to Main Street under this alternative, with all other off-site road and utility improvements (including wastewater management options) the same as those described for the Proposed Project. The Closed Water System Alternative would be identical to the Proposed Project, except that the off-site water storage tank and the associated pipeline/access road would not be constructed. The water line connections to the Project site and the water booster pump station would still be required under this alternative, with the pump station to also include a holding/surge tank within the same 10,000-square foot area identified for the Proposed Project. Additional descriptions and impact analyses of Project alternatives are provided in Section 5.0 of this report.

The Instruction Manual (1997) for the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Model was one of the methods used to determine potential direct agricultural impacts from the Proposed Project. The LESA Model has two major segments: (1) the land evaluation segment, which includes soil characteristics related to Land Capability Classification and Storie Index ratings; and (2) the site assessment segment which includes factors associated with project size, water availability, surrounding agricultural lands and protected resource lands. The Proposed Project's total LESA score is 38.458. Because this score is less than 40, the LESA Model indicates that Project implementation would not result in associated significant impacts.

No areas designated as California Department of Conservation (CDC) Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland are located within the site, with no associated impacts from implementation of the Proposed Project. The Project site does include approximately 107.1 acres of U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Prime Farmland Soils. The loss of these areas for potential agricultural use is not considered a significant impact, based on the LESA Model analysis; the lack of CDC Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland within the site; the fact that no agricultural activity has occurred on the Prime Farmland Soils since at least the 2001/2002 growing season (with no irrigated agriculture having occurred for at least the past 40 years); and requirements for prohibitively expensive mitigation that would be associated with agricultural impacts to sensitive biological resources (e.g., purchase of off-site habitat credits).

Direct impacts to off-site agricultural resources and operations would be less than significant, due to the generally small size of the affected areas, the lack of impacts to CDC Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance, and the location of most impacts to agricultural operations along the boundary of existing cultivated areas and adjacent roadways.

No Williamson Act contract lands or agricultural preserves are located within the Project site or the associated zone of influence (ZOI), with no associated impacts from the Proposed Project. Because the entire site would be zoned S-88 (Specific Plan) under the Proposed Project, as well as the fact that there is no current or proposed on-site agricultural activity (with the most recent agricultural use conducted during the 2001/2002 season), no significant impacts related to conflicts with existing or proposed zoning designations would result from Project implementation.

The proposed change in on-site Animal Schedule Designator from "L" to "A" and "F" (with the "A" and "F" designators more restrictive to animal-related uses), along with the use of CC&Rs to further

restrict agricultural-related animal uses (as described above), would not result in significant agricultural impacts. This conclusion is based on the low likelihood of such uses being proposed on site, the lack of on-site agricultural-related animal uses since 2000, and the fact that historical agricultural-related animal uses within the last 100 years were limited to periodic grazing of a small number of beef cattle (i.e., up to approximately 50 head).

No indirect impacts to or from the Proposed Project were identified, based on the compatibility of the proposed rural development design with surrounding land uses, Project consistency with local planning documents, and required conformance with regional air and water quality plans.

Cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Project would be less than significant in relation to both the regional production/resource evaluation, and the analysis of combined impacts for the Proposed Project and the identified list of projects within the agricultural cumulative study area. Specifically, the conclusion for cumulative impacts to regional production/resources is based on the generally minor loss of dry-farmed oat hay production (i.e., relative to Countywide production and annual variances associated with rainfall levels), as well as the incremental nature of impacts to eucalyptus farming, grazing acreage and the number of cattle relative to Countywide totals. Conclusions on cumulative agricultural impacts for the list of projects analysis are based on considerations including the lack of Project impacts to crops such as orchards and vineyards which occur within one or more of the cumulative project sites; the relatively small area/level of combined impacts to eucalyptus farming, oat hay and cattle grazing; the lack of impacts to CDC Prime Farmland/Farmland of Statewide Importance and Williamson Act contracts/preserves from the Proposed Project; and the incremental nature of combined impacts to CDC Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance and Grazing Land, as well as NRCS Prime Farmland Soils.

Based on the above assessment that no significant impacts related to agricultural resources or uses would occur, no mitigation is proposed.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 LOCATION

The Montecito Ranch Specific Plan Area (SPA) encompasses approximately 935.2 acres within the community of Ramona in unincorporated San Diego County. Ramona is located in central San Diego County approximately 20 miles northeast of the City of San Diego (Figure 1).

The Montecito Ranch SPA is located approximately one mile northwest of the Ramona Town Center (Figures 2a through 2c). State Route (SR) 78 borders the northern Project site boundary, while Montecito Way extends southerly from the southernmost Project site boundary. Cedar Street and Summer Glen Road are also adjacent to the southern site boundary and Ash Street is adjacent to the eastern site boundary, all of which currently provide access to the site. To the immediate northwest lies property owned by the Lemurian Fellowship, a residential/religious use with various facilities. The eastern and southeastern Project site boundaries abut semi-rural and estate residential development, with the Ramona Airport located approximately 0.5 mile to the south (Figures 2a through 2c). Figure 2a shows the locations of potential off-site options for roadway improvements relative to the proposed specific plan site, while Figures 2b and 2c show the locations of the proposed off-site water and potential off-site sewer facilities. Additional discussion of roadway and utility design options is provided below in Section 1.2.

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Specific Plan Land Uses

Montecito Ranch proposes development of a residential community intended to integrate features of an environmentally sensitive planned community with the rural character distinctive of Ramona. Specifically, less than half of the 935.2-acre Project site is planned for development, with the majority of the site to be designated as open space (i.e., either 549.1 or 573.8 acres [59 or 61 percent of the site], depending on the selected wastewater management option as described below).

The Proposed Project would create parcels and graded pads for 417 single-family detached residential units on lots ranging in size from approximately 0.5 acre (20,000 square feet minimum) to 1.8 acres (Figure 3). Residential sites and related private roadways/infrastructure would encompass approximately 293.7 acres, while up to approximately 573.8 acres of the property would be designated as open space (including biological and other open space such as trails), depending on the selected wastewater management option as discussed below. The Proposed Project would fully develop an 8.3-acre local park, dedicate land for an 11.9-acre historic park site encompassing the Montecito Ranch House (including an equestrian staging area), and include 7.9 acres for Homeowner's Association (HOA) lots. In addition, land for a 10.6-acre charter high school site has been identified within the subject SPA and would be dedicated by the Project Applicant. The Project site also would include 29.0 acres dedicated for on-site public roadways, with this area intended primarily for the construction of Montecito Ranch Road. Specifically, the Proposed Project would construct Montecito Ranch Road between Ash Street at the eastern site boundary and Montecito Way at the southern site boundary, as well as associated internal roadways (refer to Figure 3). As previously noted, the Proposed Project includes several off-site water facilities, as well as two distinct

options for the design of off-site roadways and on-/off-site wastewater management facilities, as described below.

The Proposed Project would require construction of off-site utility improvements to provide water service to the Project. An approximately 4,000-foot (0.75-mile) long, 14-inch diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) water line would be extended north along Montecito Way to the Project site, from the existing 24-inch main in Montecito Road (refer to Figure 2b). A second 14-inch PVC water line would be constructed along Ash Street, with this pipeline extending approximately 4,000 feet (0.75 mile) west from an existing 14-inch line in Pine Street to the Project site. The proposed off-site connections would be installed during construction of the Project improvements to Montecito Way and Ash Street. In addition, a water storage tank would be installed just west of the Project site within an adjacent property. A pipeline would connect the water storage tank to the proposed pipeline in Montecito Way, with the water tank pipeline to be located under an associated 20-foot-wide access road. The water storage tank and associated pipeline/access road would encompass an area of approximately 2.2 acres off site and 1.7 acres on site. Two design (capacity) options are associated with this tank, with these options related to the wastewater management options described below in this section. The described pipelines, access road and associated acreage for the water tank site would be the same under either design option. The Proposed Project would also include the installation of a water booster pump station. This facility would be located on a 10,000-square foot (0.23-acre) lot at the northwestern corner of the Montecito Road/Montecito Way intersection (refer to Figure 2b).

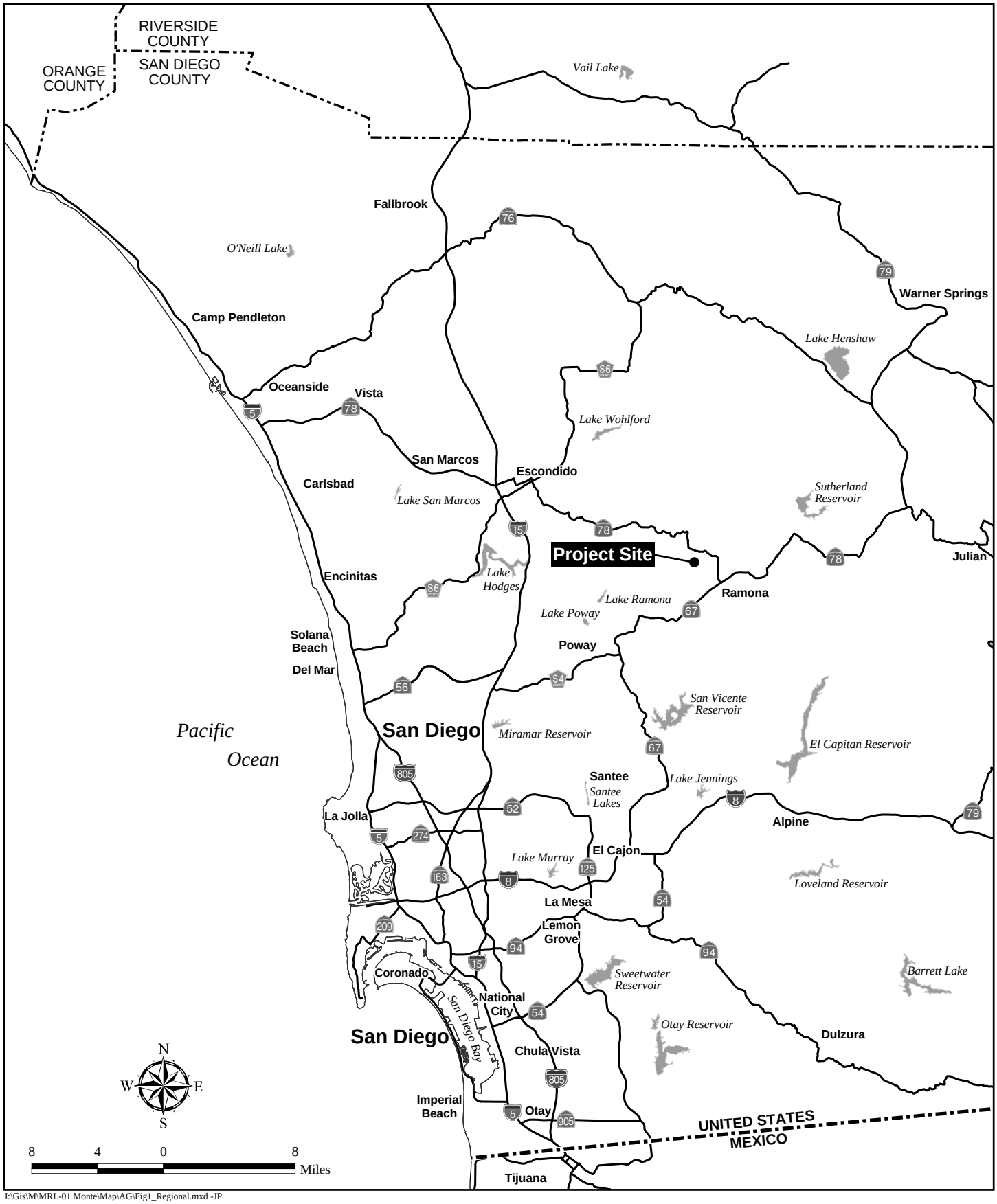
San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and telecommunications companies would extend service to the site from existing utilities and infrastructure located within the adjacent residential communities to the southeast. These dry utilities would be installed within the proposed on-site roadway rights-of-way. Existing utility lines within and adjacent to the roadways proposed to be widened by the Proposed Project would be relocated/installed in consultation with the responsible utility service providers, as necessary.

Off-site Roadway Improvements

Access to the proposed Montecito Ranch development would be via: (1) Ash Street from Pine Street (SR 78); and (2) Montecito Way (SA 330) and Montecito Road from Main Street (SR 67). The Project would include widening Ash Street between Pine and Alice streets, widening Montecito Way between the Project site and Montecito Road, and widening Montecito Road from Montecito Way to Main Street (refer to Figure 2a). In addition, to mitigate Project-related traffic impacts, improvements would be required to the intersections of Ash Street/Pine Street, Main Street/Pine Street, Main Street/Montecito Road, Montecito Road/Montecito Way, SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road and SR 67/Archie Moore Road.

On- and Off-site Wastewater Management Options

Two wastewater management options are under consideration for the Proposed Project, only one of which would be implemented. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, wastewater management for the Project would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District, and off-site sewer improvements would be required. Specifically, off-site sewer improvements would consist of a sewer force main extending south from the southwestern corner of the Project site within Montecito Way, easterly on Montecito Road, and southerly on Kalbaugh Street (unpaved) to an existing manhole approximately 50 feet south of the terminus of Kalbaugh Street and north of Santa Maria Creek. The



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Regional Location Map

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 1

LEGEND

- Proposed Off-site Ash Street Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Montecito Way Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Montecito Road Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Intersection Improvements

Project Site

Proposed
Montecito Ranch Road

Ash Street

Montecito Way

Montecito Road

RAMONA AIRPORT

RAMONA

Pine Street

Main Street

0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

Job No: MRL-02 Date: 01/03/08

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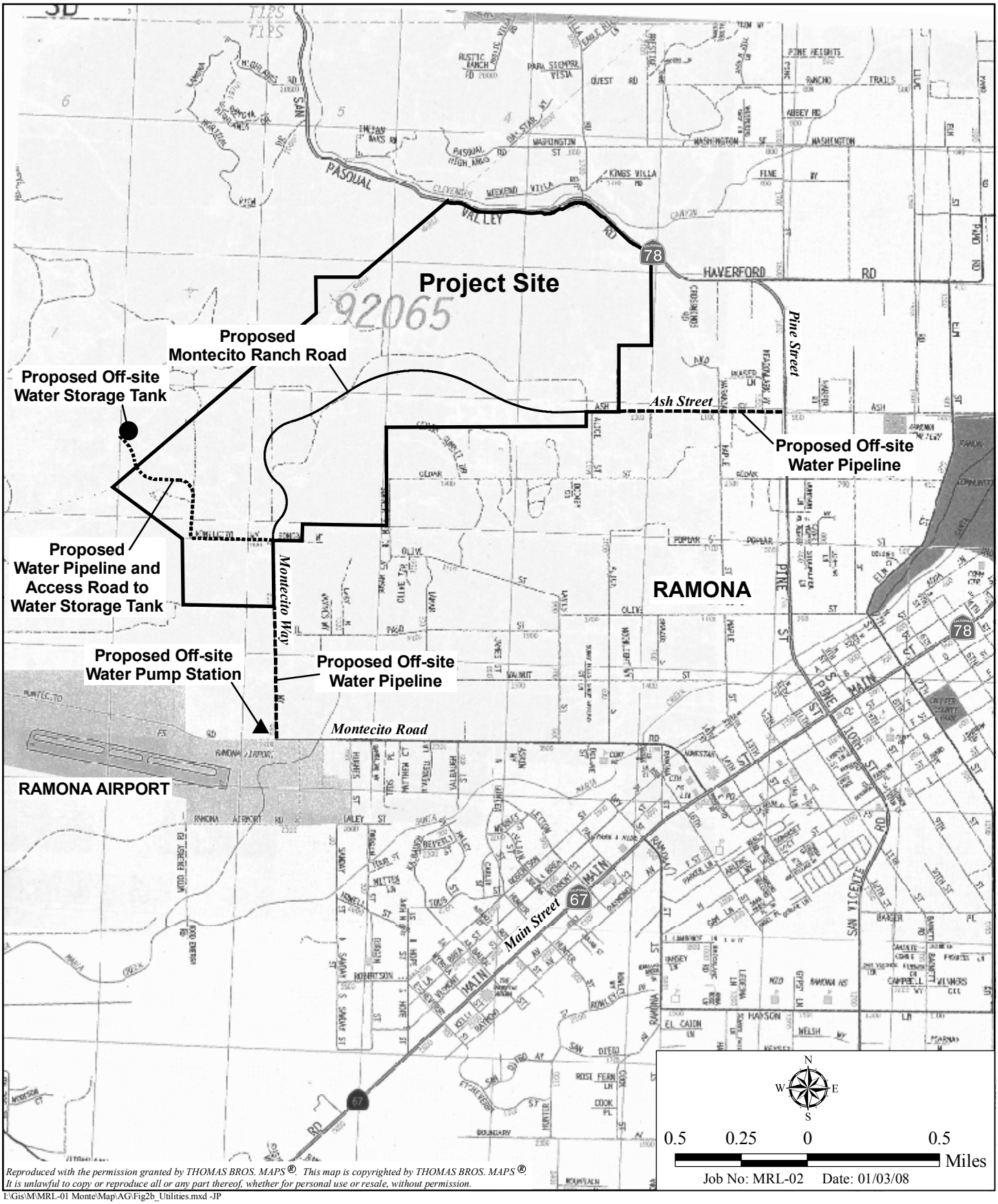
Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Roadway Improvements

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 2a



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Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Water Facilities Improvements

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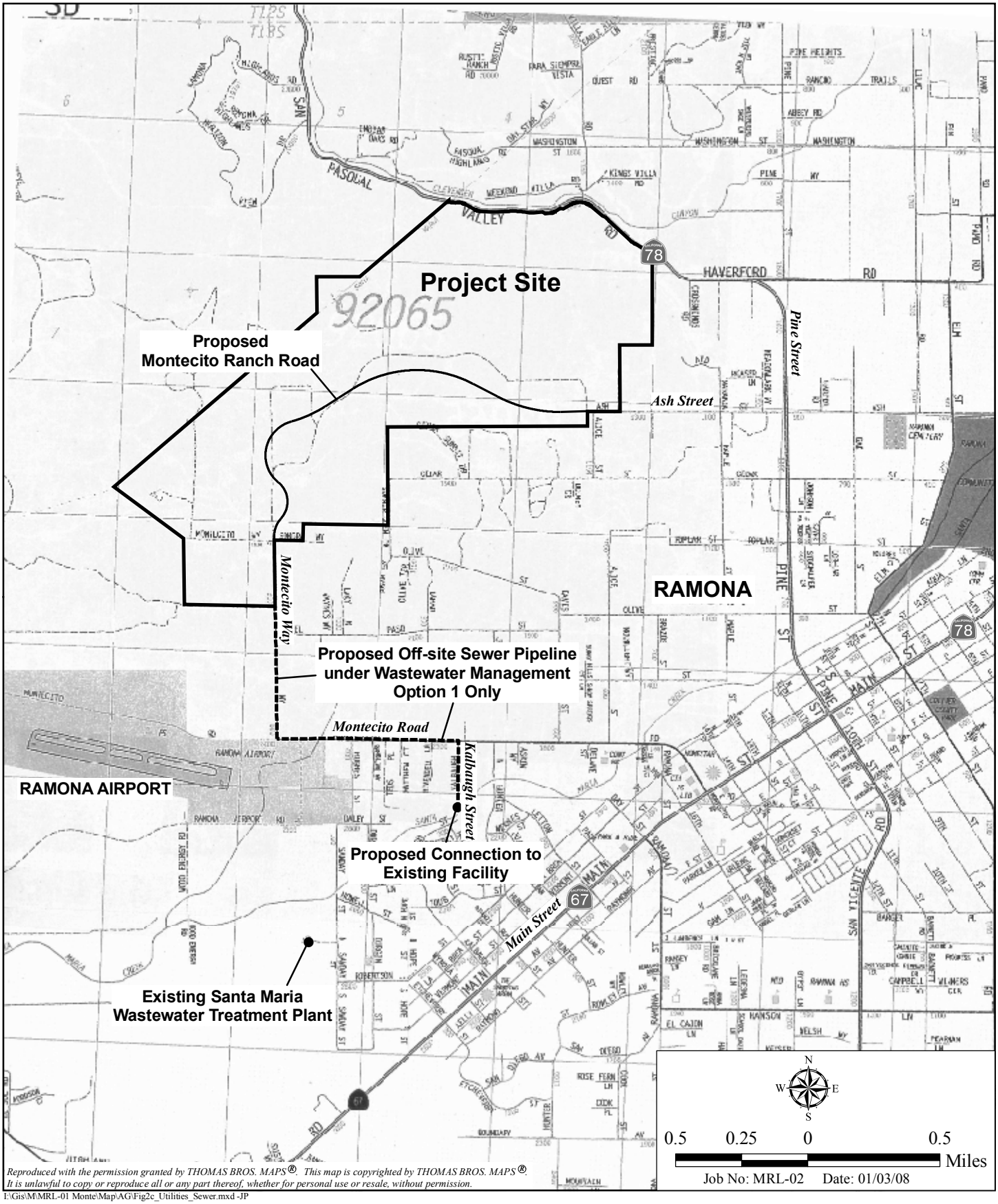
HELIX

Figure 2b



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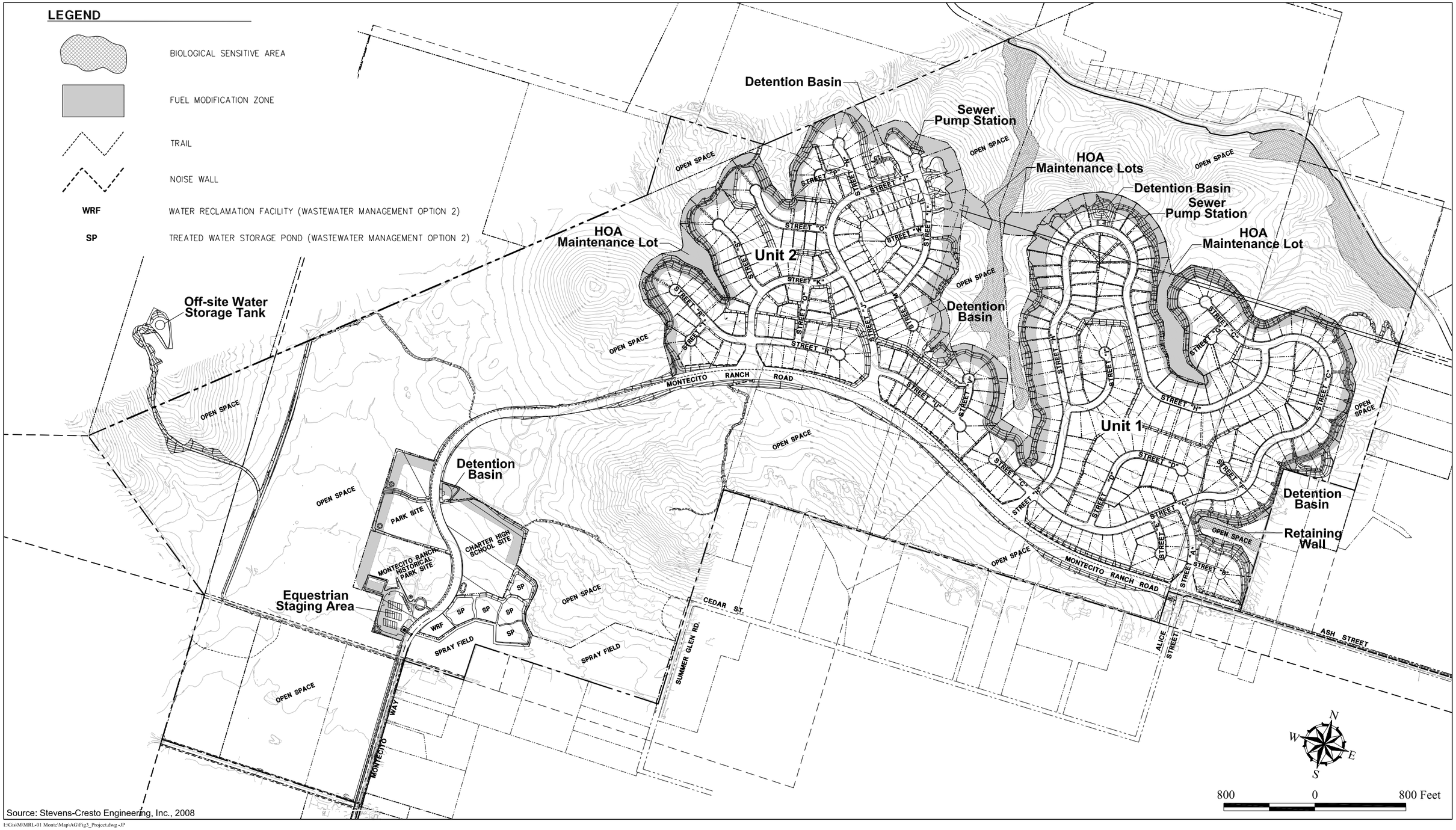
Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Wastewater Facilities Improvements

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

Figure 2c

HELIX



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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Proposed Project Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 3

wastewater from the Proposed Project would be treated at Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP), if capacity becomes available. Wastewater Management Option 1 would result in a total on-site open space area of approximately 573.8 acres. The off-site water tank described above would require a capacity of 1.26 million gallons under this wastewater management option.

Under Wastewater Management Option 2, all wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would be treated at an on-site wastewater reclamation facility (WRF), which would have a capacity of 110,000 gallons per day (refer to Figure 3). At Project buildout, approximately 60 percent of the reclaimed water generated by the wastewater reclamation facility would be used for on-site irrigation (i.e., for parks, etc.), with the remainder to be distributed over a proposed spray field. The total area required for wastewater-related facilities under this option would encompass approximately 24.7 acres, including 0.9 acre for the WRF, 6.9 acres for the effluent storage ponds, and 16.9 acres for the spray field. This scenario would result in a total on-site open space area of approximately 549.1 acres. The off-site water tank described above would require a capacity of 0.91 million gallons under this wastewater management option (due to the fact that reclaimed water would be produced and used on site).

Proposed General Plan Amendment for Agricultural Conditions

The Proposed Project includes a General Plan Amendment to remove the following three agricultural conditions currently associated with the Project site, as identified in the Ramona Community Plan (County of San Diego 2002):

- Condition 40: Future potential agricultural uses located within the property shall be defined by more detailed study to determine not only the precise areas for agricultural production, but also the economic considerations associated with that use.

- Condition 41: The minimum lot size permitted within any future agricultural pursuit area shall also be determined by the above analysis. It is presently intended that a minimum lot size of four acres be allowed within that area, and the above study shall address any modifications to that requirement.

- Condition 42: The approximately 103 acres of prime agricultural soils - the Visalia sandy loams (VaA and VaB) and Ramona sandy loam (RaB) - in the southwest portion of the Montecito Ranch property shall be preserved for agricultural pursuits. Any lot created on these 103 acres shall be identified as agricultural lots.

Because these conditions are proposed to be removed from the community plan, associated potential impacts related to Proposed Project conformance are not discussed in this document. A discussion of the justification for, and implications of, removing the noted agricultural conditions is provided in Subchapter 3.1, Land Use and Planning, of the Proposed Project EIR (County of San Diego 2007).

Proposed Change in On-site Animal Schedule Designator

The Proposed Project includes a change in the on-site Animal Schedule Designator, which identifies restrictions and requirements related to uses such as animal sales, raising and enclosures (pursuant to Section 3100 of the County Zoning Ordinance). Specifically, Project implementation generally would

change the on-site Animal Schedule Designator from "L" to "A," with the "A" Designator generally more restrictive to animal uses. (Residential lots that would allow horses [1 through 30] would have an animal designator of "F," which allows two horses plus one per 0.5 acre over one acre.) Because the Proposed Project would be developed as a SPA, the Project applicant has also proposed to include a number of additional restrictions to on-site agricultural activities (including animal-related uses) through the use of covenants, codes and restrictions (CC&Rs) that would be attached to sales documents for individual residential properties. Specifically, proposed CC&Rs would preclude all agricultural-related animal uses within the Project site. Additional discussion of the proposed change in the on-site Animal Schedule Designator and the use of CC&Rs is provided below in Section 3.0, Impacts.

1.3 METHODS

This report assesses potential agricultural impacts related to construction of the proposed Montecito Ranch SPA residential community. Proposed Project impacts are based on the Tentative Map and roadway/utility plans provided by the Project Applicant, including the off-site roadway and utility options described above in Section 1.2 (all of which are evaluated at an equal level of detail). Project-related agricultural impacts were assessed using the following methods: (1) the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Model; (2) evaluation of direct impacts to California Department of Conservation (CDC) Important Farmlands and U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Prime Farmland soils within the site; (3) evaluation of off-site impacts to agricultural resources and operations (including the various road and utility options described above in Section 1.2); (4) assessment of indirect impacts to and from the Proposed Project; and (5) evaluation of cumulative impacts, including effects from the potential loss of regional (Countywide) agricultural production and resources, as well as the combined effects of the Proposed Project and identified projects within the cumulative study area. Information for this report was gathered from official sources as cited throughout the report and in the references section. Additionally, HELIX staff conducted a site visit on September 28, 2001, researched historic aerial photos and interviewed previous site users. Please see the Montecito Ranch Visual Technical Report for site photos (HELIX 2008), and the Draft Project EIR Land Use and Planning Section (County of San Diego 2008) for discussions of land use compatibility (including planning/zoning concerns) and Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) issues.

1.4 CROP HISTORY

The history of farming on the Montecito Ranch site was assessed through review of historic aerial photos, an historical/archaeological report prepared for the site (Gallegos & Associates 1992) and interviews with Messrs. Kurt Ballentyne and Dave Madison, who have farmed or grazed cattle on the site for much of the last four decades. Mr. Ballentyne lived on the site for 26 years (until 2000) in the Montecito Ranch House. Although the date of initial agricultural activity on the property is unknown, the cultivation of oat hay and livestock grazing has occurred on site since at least the 1880s. The Montecito Ranch House dates back to the mid-1800s when the first ranching and farming in the area was recorded. The "Historical/Archaeological Survey Report for Montecito Ranch Property" prepared by Gallegos & Associates (1992) notes that Bernard Etchevery raised Merino sheep in the "Valle de Pamo" that included the Montecito Ranch site beginning around 1880. Mr. Etchevery also grew wheat and barley in the Valle de Pamo area. In the 1800s and 1900s, the rancho lands in the Valle de Pamo area were split into sections and changed hands a number of times. In 1911, Malcolm McDougall purchased Montecito Ranch and planted peach and apricot orchards. The source(s) of

water for these orchards is unknown, although it/they may have included one or both of the on-site springs described below in Section 2.2.2. Montecito Ranch again changed hands in 1950 and no clear agricultural history is described in the referenced Gallegos & Associates report (as described below). Figure 4 shows the total historically farmed (i.e., disked) area of the site dating back to 1960 based on data provided in historic aerial photos and interviews.

1.4.1 Historic Aerial Photos

Historic aerial photos reveal a consistent pattern of past agricultural disturbance in the more level southwestern and northeastern portions of the Montecito Ranch site (Landiscor 1997, 1987, 1971). The oldest photo, dated October 2, 1971, clearly reveals disking in the southern and northeastern portions of the site (Figure 5a). The remainder of the site appears to have supported mildly disturbed to undisturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub (DCSS) intermixed with grasslands. The northern portion of the site appears undisturbed with thick DCSS and chaparral habitats throughout, whereas the southern portion appears to have had thinner DCSS mixed with grasslands (with thicker DCSS patches on the steeper slopes). Several ravines within the northern DCSS/chaparral area support coast live oak woodlands. The Ranch House and other buildings (barns and sheds) are also apparent. A rectangular patch of what appears to be sparse eucalyptus woodlands was located just north of the Ranch House.

A second photo, dated April 21, 1987, does not clearly show active row-cropping, although aspects of the landscape had clearly been altered from their former state (Figure 5b). One notable change is that the areas that appear disked in the 1971 photograph have apparently become grazing lands for livestock. The 1987 photo shows little to no encroachment of DCSS into these previously disked areas, suggesting that the area continued to be disturbed prior to the 1987 photo date. While the ridgelines containing DCSS, chaparral and coast live oak woodlands in the northern section of the property appear as they did in the 1971 photo, the scrub habitat that once blanketed the southern portion of the site is substantially reduced and replaced by grassland in the 1987 photo. While the exact cause of this reduction of DCSS habitat is unknown, it is probable that the area was cleared for crop production or grazing. The Ranch House appears unchanged from the 1971 photo, although a large barn visible in the older photo was no longer present in 1987. The eucalyptus woodland area to the north of the Ranch House appears unchanged.

The third photo, dated January 19, 1997 (Figure 5c) shows active row-crop agriculture, although the areas in the central portion of the site that were previously cleared appear to have patches of recovering DCSS encroaching on the edges. The DCSS/chaparral area and coast live oak woodlands in the northern portion of the property appear undisturbed and unchanged from both prior photos, while the southern area that was cleared in the 1987 photo appears to have grown back to conditions similar to those observed in the 1971 photo. The Ranch House and surrounding buildings appear unchanged, and the eucalyptus trees appear to be substantially reduced in number.

In more recent years, the site has been cultivated for hay production (Figures 5d and 5e). In 2000/2001, approximately 100 acres were cultivated on the flat areas west of Montecito Way and south of the eucalyptus woodland. The northeastern area was not farmed, and grazing did not take place on site in 2001. In 2001/2002, the oat hay cultivation area was expanded to approximately 246 acres throughout much of the site that has historically been used for row-cropping (REC Consultants, Inc. 2007). The site has been fallow since the 2001/2002 farming season. See Figure 5d (2000/2001) and Figure 5e (2001/2002) for the limits of the agricultural disturbance areas on site.

The site currently supports ten plant communities including: southern coast live oak riparian forest, open Engelmann oak woodland, dense Engelmann oak woodland, southern riparian scrub, disturbed wetland, DCSS, southern mixed chaparral, chamise chaparral, non-native grassland and eucalyptus woodland. Developed land can also be found on site as depicted in Figure 5f (August 2003).

1.4.2 Interviews

Interviews with farmers regarding past agricultural activities on Montecito Ranch were conducted via telephone (Madison, personal communication, 2001) and during an on-site meeting held on October 16, 2001 (Madison and Ballentyne, field meeting, 2001). Based on these interviews, it was determined that the area was consistently cultivated from the 1960s until 1989 with dry-farmed oat hay and was used for grazing. The two farmers estimated that as much as 600 acres were farmed with oat hay on the flat areas in the southwestern and northeastern portions of the site. Based on historic aerial photos it appears that these estimates may be high, however, with actual cultivation closer to 300 acres. The farmed area was disked twice yearly for weed control (in the fall and spring), seeded between December and January, and then harvested and baled in June. The site was estimated to have averaged an annual yield of 2 to 4 tons of hay per acre. After harvesting, the entire ranch site was utilized for grazing by up to 50 head of cattle from June until September. Water for livestock and domestic use was provided by groundwater wells and natural springs on site (refer to Section 2.2.2). The two farmers had no information regarding agricultural use prior to 1960, but it can be assumed that the area was converted to oat hay and grazing use before 1960 and sometime after its planting as a peach and apricot orchard in 1911.

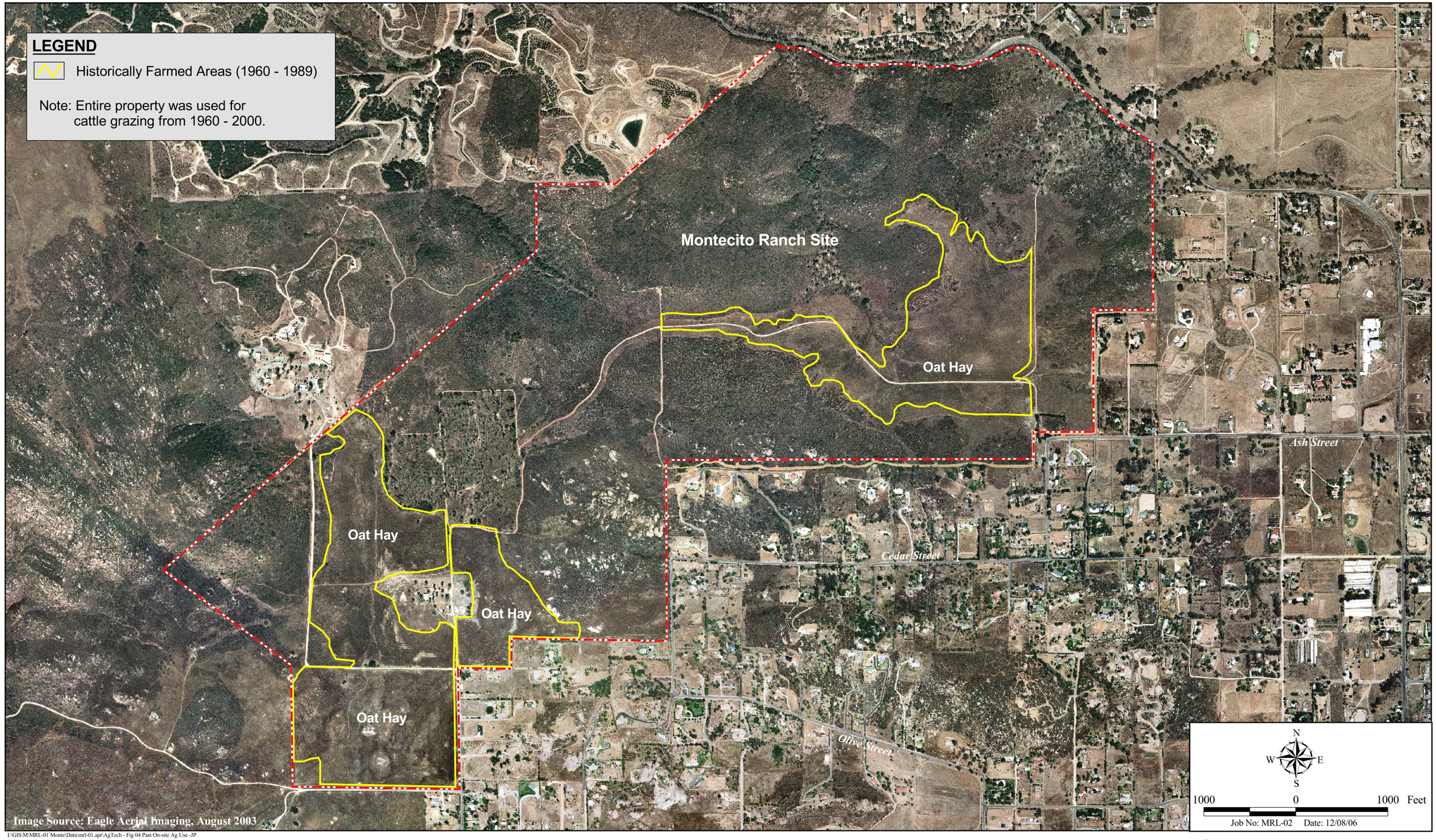
Throughout the 1960s and 70s, the site was farmed continuously for oat hay by one of two men: Fred Elliot or Dick Cawyer, both of whom are deceased. Both men reportedly farmed the full 600 acres and also ran between 40 and 50 beef cattle on the site (although the cultivated area was likely closer to 300 acres as noted above). The cultivated areas can be seen in the 1971 aerial photo described above.

In 1974, Kurt Ballentyne moved into the farmhouse, which he and his family occupied for 26 years until 2000. During that time, Mr. Ballentyne recalled farming oat hay on the site for only one year, 1975. From 1976 to 1988, he leased land to several individuals for oat hay farming, including Kurt Bowen, Clarence Owens and Dave Madison. Although Mr. Ballentyne did not cultivate oat hay after 1975, he kept horses on approximately 10 acres surrounding the Ranch House, cross-fenced the property to facilitate cattle grazing, and ran 50 head of beef cattle from 1989 through 2000 during which time all oat hay farming ceased. Both Kurt Bowen and Dave Madison estimate they farmed between 400 and 600 acres of the site for oat hay, although as noted above, the actual cultivation area was likely closer to 300 acres. Clarence Owens had produced oat hay for several years and then switched to cattle grazing in the early 1980s.

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 GENERAL SETTING

The Montecito Ranch topography is typical for the Ramona area, including low to high angle slopes, ridgelines, numerous rock outcroppings and flat valley bottoms. The southern portion of the site is



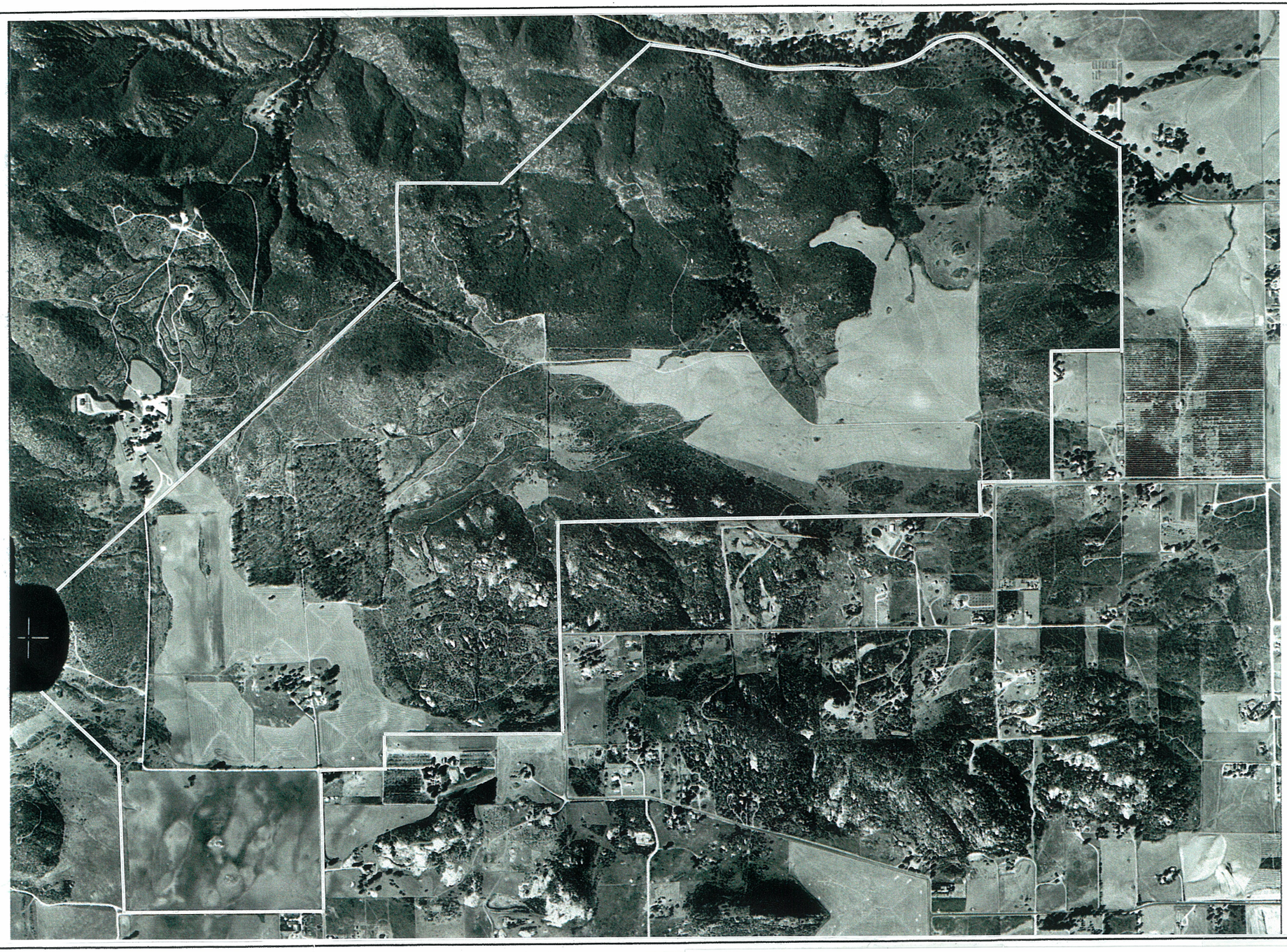
I:\GIS\M\MRL-01 Monte\Data\mrl-01.apr\AgTech - Fig 04 Past On-site Ag Use -JP

Past On-site Agricultural Use

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 4



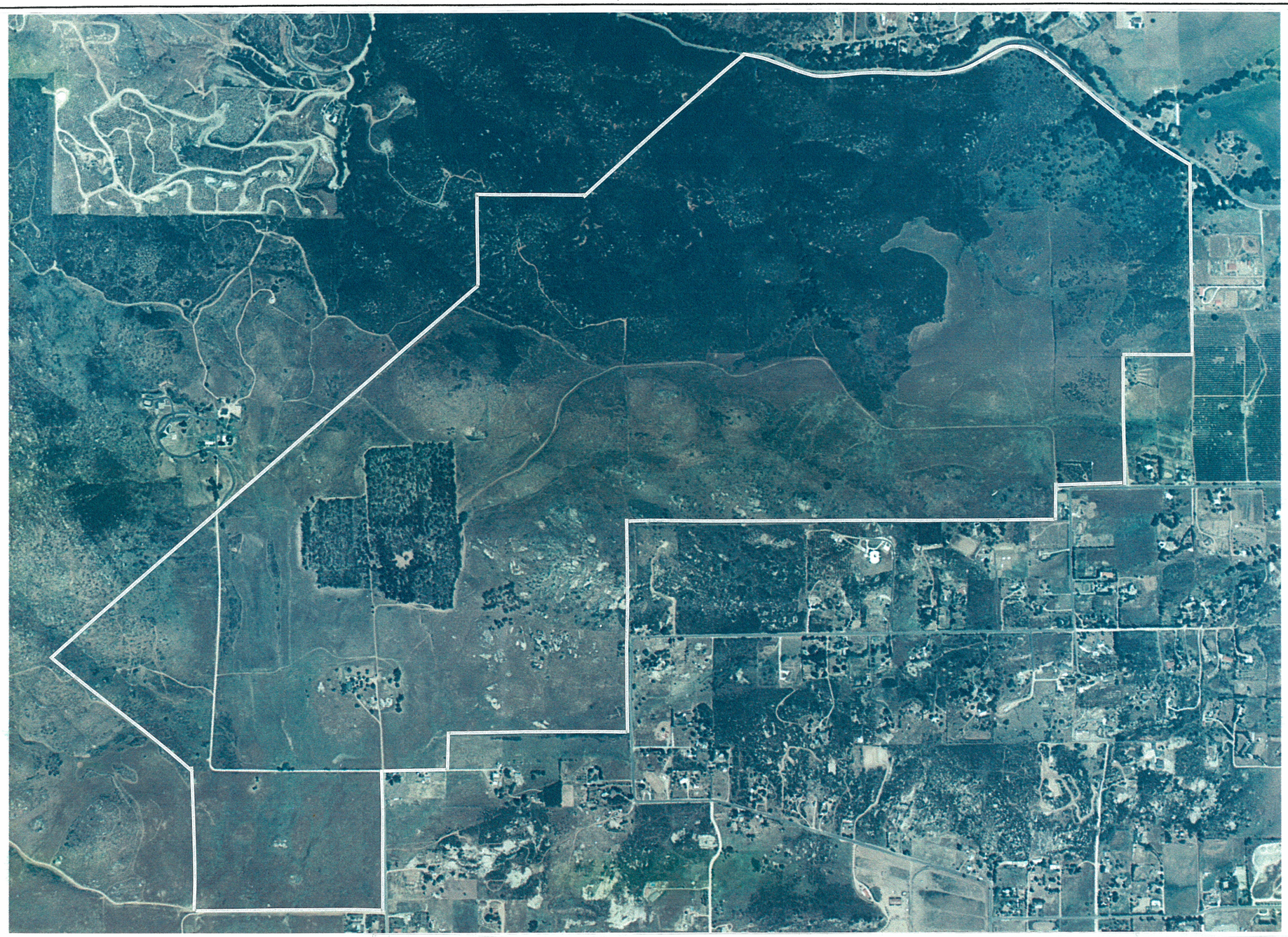
Scale: 1" = 1000'

1971 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

Figure 5a

HELIX



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Scale: 1" = 1000'

1987 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

Figure 5b

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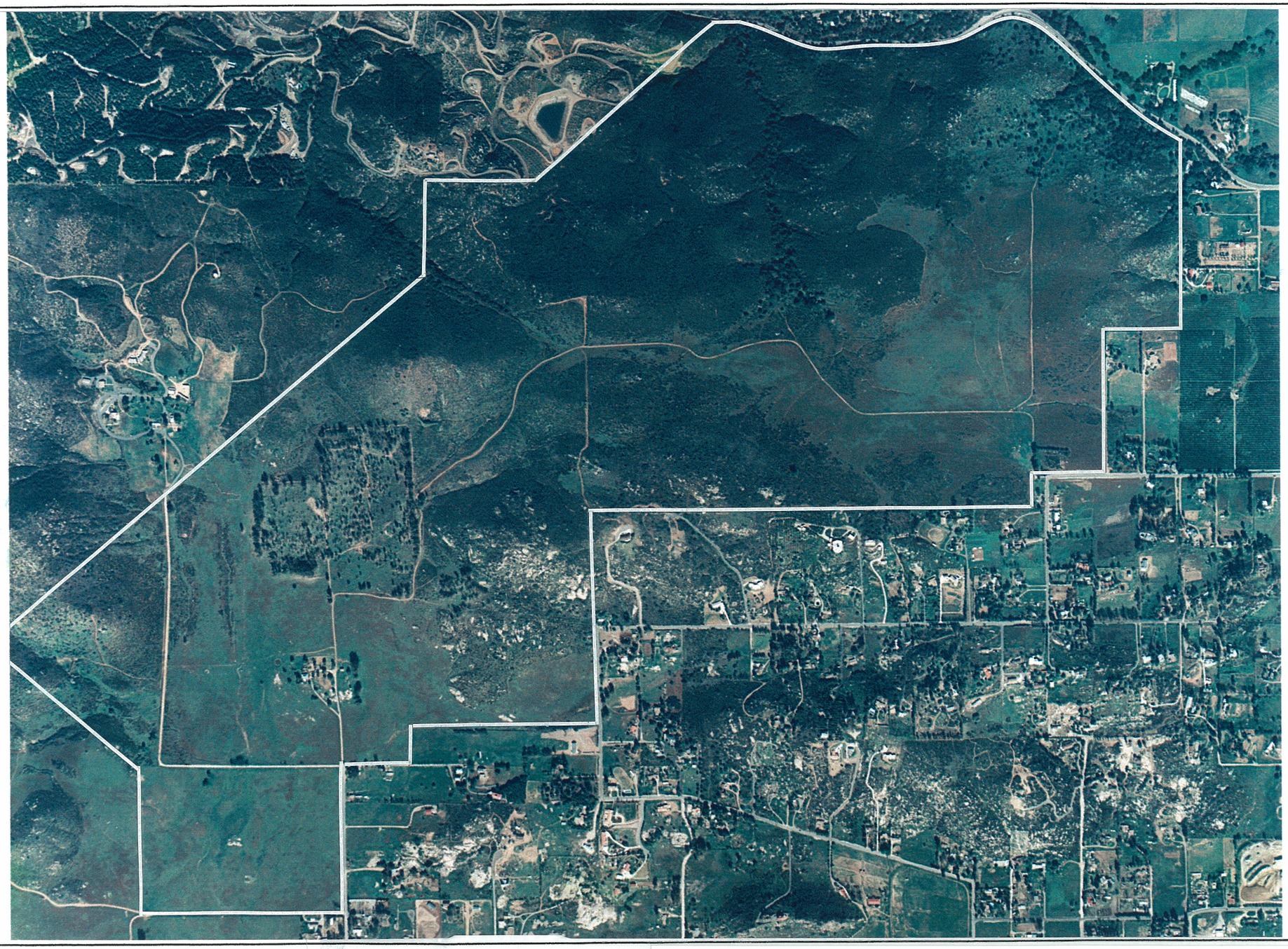

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Scale: 1" = 1000'

1997 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

Figure 5c

HELIX

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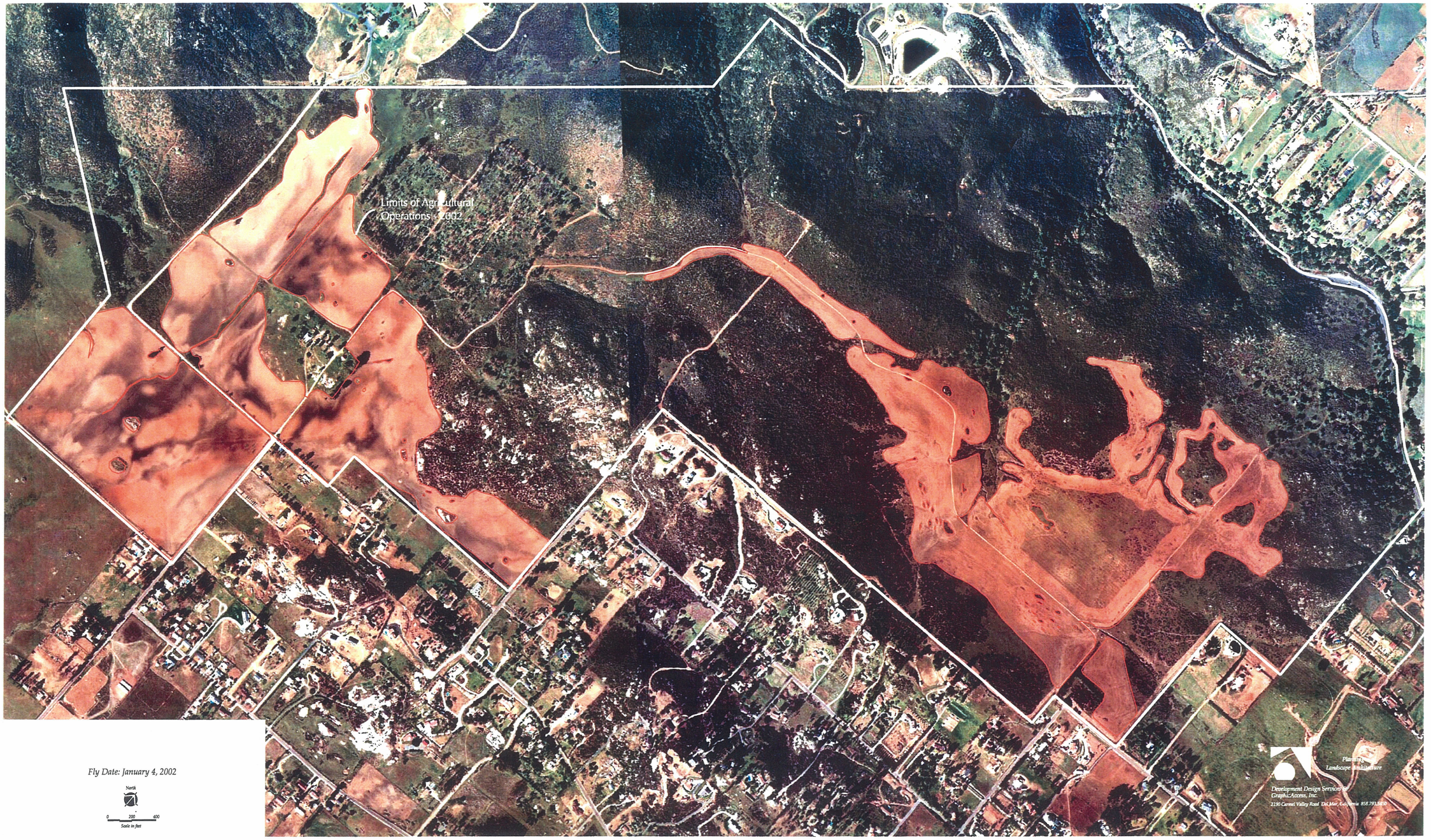
2001 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 5d



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2002 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

Figure 5e

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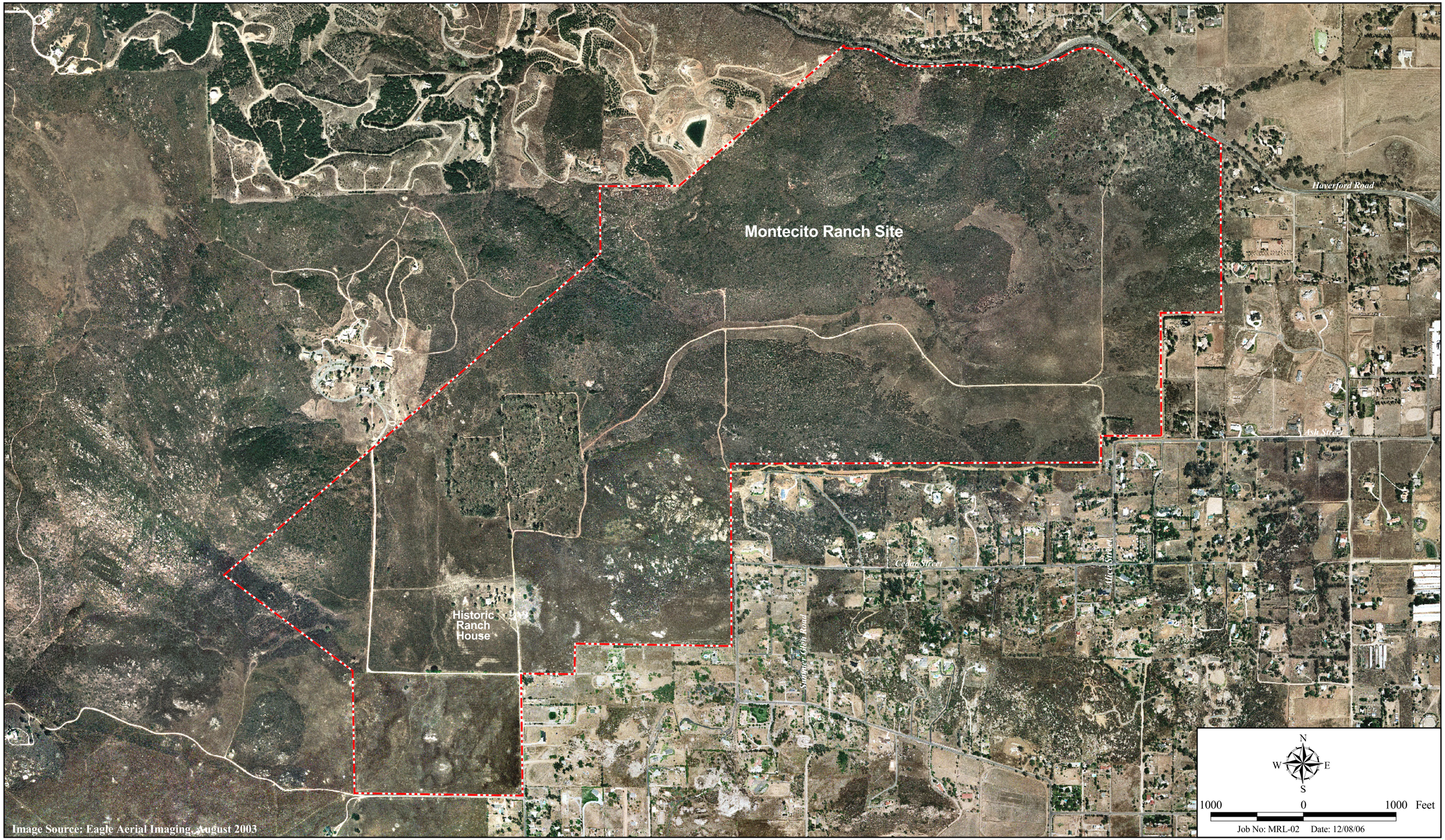

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2003 Aerial Photo

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 5f

predominantly flat, while the northwestern border of the site is composed of a series of steep to moderate ridgelines with numerous rock outcroppings. The southeastern border is reflective of the northwestern topography, but less dramatic in elevation and slope. The middle third of the property contains a gently rolling valley that extends in a northeasterly direction from the larger southern valley bottom to the northern property boundary.

During the 2000/2001 season, approximately 100 acres were farmed with oat hay within the Montecito Ranch property, with the remainder of the historical farming and grazing areas in the process of reverting to DCSS or non-native grassland communities. Firebreaks continue to be maintained with disking, most recently in 2004. Communities of oak woodland, eucalyptus woodland, and DCSS are also present as previously discussed. (Please refer to the Biological Technical Report for the Proposed Project by REC Consultants, Inc. [2008] for additional information on vegetation communities).

The Montecito Ranch property was disked for dry-farming in the 2001/2002 season. The majority of this activity took place in the flatter areas of the property that, as previously mentioned, have historically supported dry-farming. See Figures 5d and 5e for the 2000/2001 and the 2001/2002 season dry-farming areas, respectively. Currently, no agricultural activity occurs on site, with existing development limited to unpaved roads/trails and the Montecito Ranch House. A 220.5-acre area in the southwestern portion of the Project site has been dedicated as biological open space, to provide mitigation for previous farming-related impacts.

The surrounding terrain is characterized by rocky ridges and hills flanked with small valley bottoms. Surrounding land uses are primarily residential and agricultural, with the Lemurian Fellowship property also located adjacent to the site on the northwest (Figure 6). The major existing agricultural pursuits in the surrounding area include livestock grazing, citrus orchards, egg ranches and avocado farming on variously sized agricultural lots (County of San Diego 2002). In addition, two areas of oat hay cultivation and a eucalyptus farm (used to provide decorative elements for floral arrangements) are present along the off-site corridors for Montecito Way and Montecito Road, and within the proposed off-site pump station site (located near the Montecito Road/Montecito Way intersection). Additional discussion of these agricultural sites and associated Project-related impacts is provided below in Section 3.2.3.

2.2 CROP SUITABILITY

2.2.1 Weather

The Ramona area is particularly conducive to the commercial production of eggs, dairy ranching and avocado farming (with local restrictions based on frost susceptibility). Other smaller markets include beef, livestock, hay, kiwis, and subtropical fruits and nuts. Located in eastern San Diego County, the Ramona area experiences warmer summer temperatures, cooler winter temperatures and less fog than regions closer to the coast. Summer temperatures average a high of 91 degrees Fahrenheit (° F) and a low of 57° F in August, while winter temperatures average a high of 66° F in January and a low of 37° F in December (weather.com 2006). Portions of the Project site have been historically dry-farmed for oat hay (as described above), with this type of farming dependent on natural rainfall. Average annual precipitation in the Ramona area is approximately 16 inches, with January (3.4 inches), February (3.42 inches) and March (3.56 inches) representing the wettest months, and June (0.08 inch), July (0.12 inch) and August (0.36 inch) typically the driest months (weather.com 2006).

2.2.2 Water Supply

As noted, crops within the site were historically dry-farmed and no known water rights or connections to public water systems are present. Water for livestock and domestic use was provided by several wells and springs, including approximately 15 hand-dug wells in various locations throughout the site (Ballentyne 2001). Currently, one well located near the ranch house is operable, and previously provided water for on-site residents. In addition, livestock have historically watered at two springs, including one located at the head of the oak woodlands in the northern portion of the property, and one located between the oak woodlands and previously cultivated area in the northeastern portion of the property. The RMWD provides public water service in the Project site area. Water for the proposed Montecito Ranch development would require the extension of two off-site pipelines to connect with existing RMWD water mains to the south in Montecito Road, and to the east along Pine Street (refer to Section 1.2).

2.2.3 Soils

Soils within the Project site and vicinity have been mapped by the NRCS (formerly the U.S. Soil Conservation Service [SCS] 1973). The Project site includes 7 distinct soil series and 21 individual soil types as shown on Figure 7. Based on the Soil Candidate Listing for Prime Farmland Soils in San Diego County (NRCS 1995), the Project site contains approximately 107.1 acres of NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils, including 85.57 acres of Ramona sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes (RaB); 18.46 acres of Visalia sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (VaA); and 3.07 acres of Visalia sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes (VaB, Figure 8).

2.2.4 Important Farmland Map Categories

Based on the most current CDC Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Important Farmland Maps (CDC 2006, 2004), the Project site contains approximately 137.7 acres designated as Farmland of Local Importance (14.7 percent of the site), 51.6 acres designated as Grazing Land (5.5 percent of the site), and 745.7 acres designated as Other Land (79.75 percent of the site, see Figure 9). Applicable off-site areas include approximately 0.13 acre designated as Unique Farmland, 23.8 acres of Grazing Land, 1.9 acres of Urban and Built-Up Land, and 6.95 acres of Other Land. Specifically, these areas encompass the proposed off-site water tank and related access road, the off-site portions of roadways including Montecito Way and Montecito Road identified for potential widening, and the proposed pump station near the intersection of Montecito Way and Montecito Road (refer to Section 1.2). It should also be noted that the described CDC Important Farmland categories within the site and vicinity have not changed since at least 1994 (i.e., the initial set of maps reviewed for the Project site).

2.3 WILLIAMSON ACT AND AGRICULTURE PRESERVES

There are no properties under a Williamson Act contract or designated as an agricultural preserve on the Montecito Ranch SPA or other properties within the 0.25-mile "zone of influence" (ZOI) surrounding the Project site (Figure 10). The ZOI is defined and discussed in more detail in the Project Impacts section of this report (Section 3.0).

LEGEND

- Montecito Ranch Site
- SPA
- Proposed Off-site Water Pipeline Alignments
- Proposed Off-site Sewer Pipeline Alignment Under Wastewater Management Option 1 Only
- Proposed Off-site Road Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Intersection Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Water Pump Station
- Proposed Water Storage Tank

Undeveloped
Rural Residential/ Horizon View Farms
Residential
Agriculture (oat hay)
Haverford Road
Religious (Lemurian Fellowship)
Montecito Ranch Site
Undeveloped
Rural Residential
Undeveloped
Davis SPA
Ash Street
Historic Ranch House
Summer Glen Road
Alice Street
Pine Street / SR 78
Cedar Street
Agriculture
Rural Residential
RMWD Spray Fields/Grazing
Olive Street
Undeveloped
Montecito Way
Equestrian Facilities
Agriculture (oat hay)
Santa Maria Creek
Ramona Airport
Agriculture (oat hay)
Montecito Road
Main Street
Rangeland Road
Kalbaugh Street
Undeveloped
Downtown Ramona
Ramona Airport Road
Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant
Sandy Street
Residential
Santa Maria Creek
Agriculture (oat hay)
Etcheverry Creek
Cumming Ranch SPA

N
W E
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2500 0 2500 Feet

Air Photo Source: Eagle Aerial, 2003
Job No: MRL-02 Date: 02/11/08

Detail of SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road Intersection

Highland Valley Road
Cumming Ranch SPA
Agriculture
Rural Residential
Dye Road
Fire Station

Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

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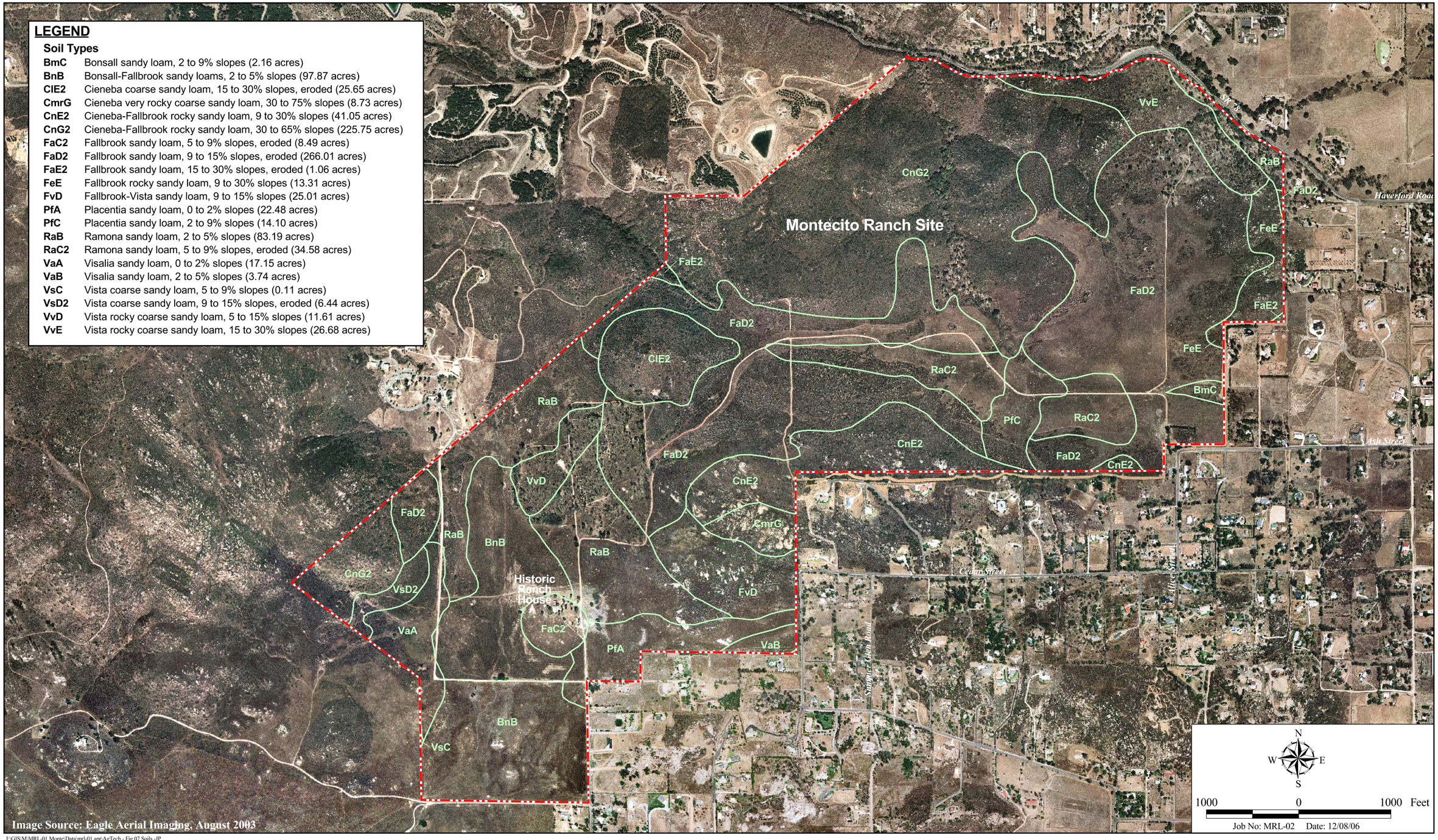
On-site and Surrounding Land Uses

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 6



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Soils Map

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 7

LEGEND

Farmland Classifications

Prime Farmland Soils

VvE
RaB
CnG2
FaD2
FaE2
FaD2
FeE
FeE
ClE2
RaC2
PfC
BmC
RaC2
FaD2
RaB
CnE2
CnE2
VvD
FaD2
CmrG
CnG2
RaB
VsD2
FvD
FaC2
VaA
PfA
VaB
BnB
VsC

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Job No: MRL-02 Date: 12/12/06

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NRCS Prime Farmlands Soils Map

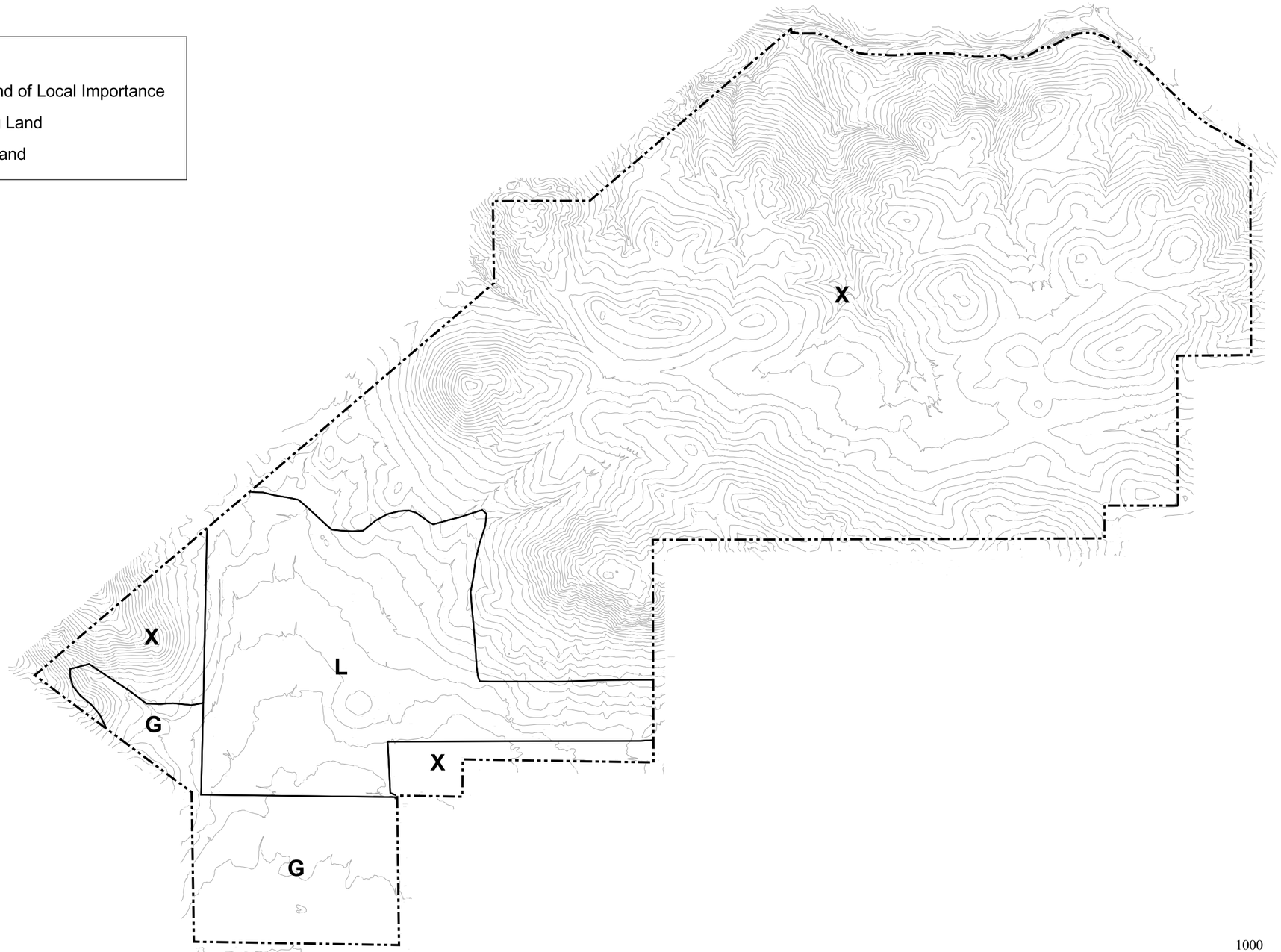
MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 8

LEGEND

L	Farmland of Local Importance
G	Grazing Land
X	Other Land



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CDC Important Farmland Map

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 9

LEGEND

- Montecito Ranch Site
- SPA
- Proposed Off-site Water Pipeline Alignments
- Proposed Off-site Sewer Pipeline Alignment Under Wastewater Management Option 1 Only
- Proposed Off-site Road Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Intersection Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Water Pump Station
- Proposed Water Storage Tank

Undeveloped
Rural Residential/ Horizon View Farms
Residential
Agriculture (oat hay)
Haverford Road
Zone of Influence Boundary
Religious (Lemurian Fellowship)
Montecito Ranch Site
Undeveloped
Rural Residential
Ash Street
Davis SPA
Undeveloped
Historic Ranch House
Summer Glen Road
Alice Street
Cedar Street
Pine Street / SR 78
Agriculture
Rural Residential
RMWD Spray Fields/Grazing
Olive Street
Undeveloped
Montecito Way
Equestrian Facilities
Agriculture (oat hay)
Santa Maria Creek
Ramona Airport
Agriculture (oat hay)
Montecito Road
Main Street
Rangeland Road
Undeveloped
Kalbaugh Street
Downtown Ramona
Ramona Airport Road
Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant
Sandy Street
Residential
Santa Maria Creek
Agriculture (oat hay)
Etcheverry Creek
Cumming Ranch SPA

Detail of SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road Intersection

Highland Valley Road
Cumming Ranch SPA
Agriculture
Rural Residential
Dye Road
Fire Station

Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

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2500 0 2500 Feet

Air Photo Source: Eagle Aerial, 2003
Job No: MRL-02 Date: 02/11/08

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LESA Model Zone of Influence

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 10

2.4 LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Ramona Community Plan

As noted above in Section 1.2, Project Description, implementation of the Proposed Project would include a GPA to remove Agricultural Conditions 40 through 42 from the Ramona Community Plan, and would change the on-site Animal Schedule Designator. For the reasons noted in Section 1.2, potential impacts associated with the community plan conditions are not discussed further in this document, with the reader referred to Subchapter 3.1, Land Use and Planning, of the Project EIR for additional information. Potential effects related to the proposed change in the on-site Animal Schedule Designator are discussed below in Section 3.2.5.

3.0 PROJECT IMPACTS

3.1 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project-related impacts associated with agricultural resources are considered potentially significant if one or more of the following thresholds are exceeded:

- The Proposed Project will convert CDC-designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) that is deemed to be significant pursuant to the LESA Model to a non-agricultural use. A project is considered to be significant under the LESA Model if the total LESA Model score is greater than or equal to 40 Points, and the subscores for the Land Evaluation (LE) and Site Assessment (SA) segments are each greater than or equal to 20 Points as indicated by the LESA Scoring Table listed below. The LESA Model must be applied to generate LESA Scores.

Total LESA Score Scoring Decision	
0 to 39 Points	Not Considered Significant
40 to 59 Points	Considered Significant only if LE and SA subscores are each greater than or equal to 20 points
60 to 79 Points	Considered Significant unless either the LE or SA subscore is less than 20 points.
80 to 100 Points	Considered Significant

- The Proposed Project will place or establish non-permitted uses on Williamson Act contract lands. The placement or establishment of any non-permitted uses on Williamson Act contract lands will result in a significant adverse environmental effect.

- The Proposed Project will place or establish non-permitted uses in existing agricultural zones. The placement or establishment of non-permitted uses in existing agricultural zones will result in a significant adverse environmental effect.

- The Proposed Project will result in a cumulatively considerable loss of Farmland or NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils that are deemed to be significant pursuant to the LESA Model, or the Proposed Project will result in a cumulatively considerable loss of active agricultural operations or resources.

3.2 DIRECT AGRICULTURE IMPACTS

3.2.1 Evaluation Under the LESA Model

The Instruction Manual for the LESA Model (CDC 1997) was used to determine potential direct agricultural impacts from the Proposed Project. The LESA Model has two major segments: (1) the land evaluation segment, which includes soil characteristics related to Land Capability Classification and Storie Index ratings; and (2) the site assessment segment which includes factors associated with project size, water availability, surrounding agricultural lands and protected resource lands. These two segments are evaluated in a weighted analysis and compared to the LESA Model Scoring Thresholds to determine the potential significance of converting agricultural lands, as described below.

Land Evaluation Segment

As noted, this segment includes soil data related to the Storie Index and Land Capability Classification ratings, with these designations described below.

Storie Index

The Storie Index designation "[e]xpresses numerically the relative degree of suitability, or value, of a soil for general intensive agriculture. The rating is based on soil characteristics only. It does not take into account other factors, such as the availability of water for irrigation, the climate, and distance from markets, which might determine the desirability of growing specific crops in a given locality. For these reasons, the index, in itself, cannot be considered an index for land valuation" (SCS 1973).

The four factors that represent the inherent characteristics and qualities of the soil (profile characteristics, texture of surface soil, slope, and other conditions that limit use of the soil) are considered in the index rating. The final rating can fall between 100 (excellent) and less than 10 (very poor).

Capability Grouping

The soils capability grouping concept is defined by the SCS (1973) as follows:

> Capability groupings show, in a general way, the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops. The groups are made according to the limitations of the soils when used for field crops, the risk of damage when they are used, and the way they respond to treatment. The grouping does not take into account major and generally expensive landforming that would change slope, depth, or other characteristics of the soils; does not take into consideration possible but unlikely major reclamation projects; and does not apply to rice, cranberries, horticultural crops, or other crops requiring special management. In the capability system, all kinds of soils are grouped at three levels:

the capability class (Roman numeral designation), the subclass (letter designation), and the unit (Arabic numeral designation).

Soils are divided into Classes I through VIII, with these designations representing a range in quality from Class I soils that have few limitations for agricultural use, to Class VIII soils that have no commercial crop production capability. Capability Classes are further divided into subclasses and capability units to define limitations for agricultural use. Subclasses indicate limitations in soil erodibility (e), water regime (w), depth and/or texture (s), and climate area (c). Capability units further reveal the main limitation for the placement of a soil into the given class and subclass. Numerals used to designate units within the classes and subclasses include the following: (0) sand and gravel in the substratum; (1) erosion hazard; (2) wetness caused by poor drainage or flooding; (3) slow or very slow permeability; (4) coarse texture or excessive gravel; (5) fine or very fine textured soil; (6) salts or alkali; (7) cobblestones, stones or rocks; (8) nearly impervious bedrock or hardpan; (9) toxicity or low fertility.

Table 1 summarizes the Land Evaluation portion of the LESA Model, with on-site soil locations shown on Figure 7. As indicated, the capability classification score is 44.3814 while the Storie Index score is 37.4513. Each score represents 25 percent of the weighted factor rating in the LESA Model.

Table 1
LAND CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION AND STORIE INDEX SCORES

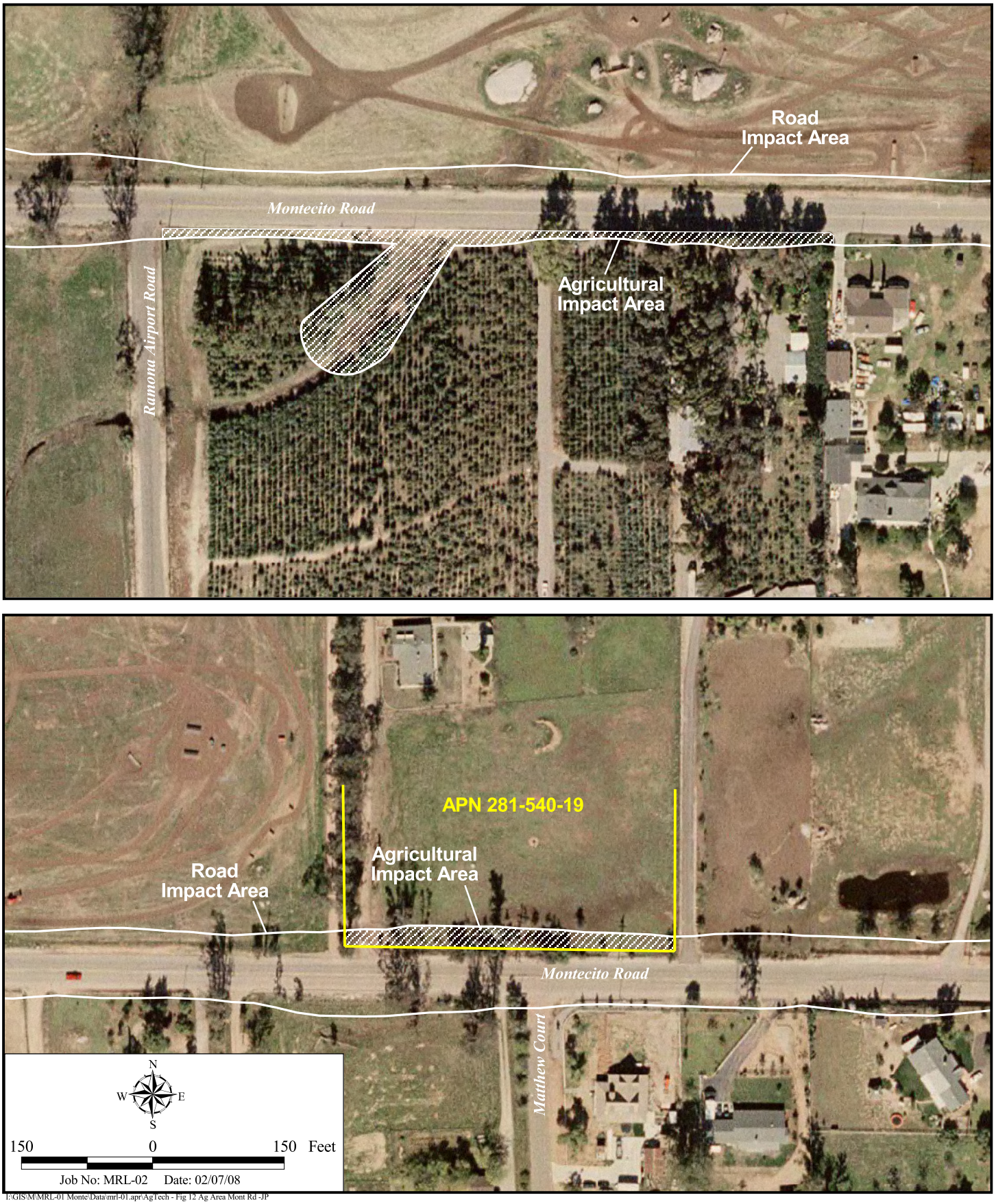
Soil Symbol[1]	Capability Unit	Storie Index Rating	Land Capability Classification	Acreage On Site	Proportion of Project Area (%)	Land Capability Classification Score	Storie Index Score
BmC	IIIe-3	51	70	2.16	0.23	0.1617	0.1178
BnB	IIIe-3	49	70	97.87	10.46	7.3258	5.1281
CmrG	VIIs-8	<5	10	8.73	0.93	0.0934	0.0467
C1E2	VIe-1	15	20	25.65	2.75	0.5486	0.4114
CnE2	VIe-7	18	20	41.05	4.39	0.8779	0.7901
CnG2	VIIe-7	7	10	225.75	24.14	2.4140	1.6898
FeE	VIe-7	13	20	13.31	1.42	0.2847	0.1850
FaE2	VIe-7	35	20	1.06	0.11	0.0227	0.0397
FaC2	IIIe-1	51	70	8.49	0.91	0.6355	0.4630
FaD2	IVe-1	48	50	266.01	28.45	14.2225	13.6536
FvD	IVe-1	54	50	25.01	2.67	1.3372	1.4442
PfA	IIIs-3	67	60	22.48	2.40	1.4423	1.6106
PfC	IIIe-3	60	70	14.1	1.51	1.0554	0.9046
RaB	IIe-1	65	90	83.19	8.90	8.0061	5.7822
RaC2	IIIe-1	51	70	34.58	3.70	2.5884	1.8858
VaA	I-1	90	100	17.15	1.84	1.8339	1.6505
VaB	IIe-1	81	90	3.74	0.40	0.3599	0.3239
VsC	IIIe-1	45	70	0.11	0.01	0.0082	0.0053
VsD2	IVe-1	40	50	6.44	0.69	0.3443	0.2755
VvD	VIe-7	27	20	26.68	2.85	0.5706	0.7703
VvE	VIe-7	22	20	11.61	1.24	0.2483	0.2731
			TOTAL	**935.17**	**100.00**	**44.3814**	**37.4513**

[1] See Figure 7 for soil locations within the site.
Source: SCS 1973

Site Assessment Segment

The site assessment consists of four parts: (1) project size; (2) water resource availability; (3) surrounding agricultural lands; and (4) protected resource lands. First, the project size factor is assessed. The Project site includes 104 acres of Class I and Class II soils, 179.8 acres of Class III soils and 651.3 acres of Class IV – VIII soils. Since there are 80 or more acres of Class I and Class II soils, the LESA project size scoring system assigns a score of 100 points (see Table 2), with this score representing 15 percent of the overall weighted factor rating. Second, the water resource availability is rated. The parcel contains no known water rights or connections to public water systems, with the only active well supplying primarily household use. As a consequence, while irrigated production is not feasible, rainfall is adequate for dryland production in non-drought years, but not in drought years. Thus, the water availability scoring of the LESA Model gives the parcel a water resource score of 20. This represents 15 percent of the weighting factor. Third, the surrounding agricultural land use rating is based upon a ZOI, which is determined by creating the smallest rectangle that completely contains the project site, and then extending that rectangle 0.25 mile on all sides, as shown on Figure 10. The ZOI includes 1,852.4 acres (i.e., 2,787.6 acres for the outer rectangle minus 935.2 acres in the parcel. Based on the air photo shown in Figure 10, approximately 210 acres (or 11 percent) of the ZOI area appears to be in agricultural use. Since less than 40 percent of the surrounding land is in agriculture, the surrounding agricultural land score is zero (i.e., based on LESA criteria). This represents 15 percent of the weighted factor rating. It should be noted that cattle grazing has historically occurred (and is ongoing) at the Davis Ranch property, which is adjacent to the Project site on the west (refer to Figure 10). This property was not included as a surrounding agricultural use, however, based on the following considerations. The Davis Ranch property was previously designated as a SPA by the County of San Diego, with the LESA Model Instruction Manual (CDC 1997) identifying a non-agricultural designation for "[l]and that is permanently committed by local elected officials to non-agricultural development…". The Davis Ranch property was recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy, and will be retained as an open space (grassland) preserve. Thus, even though cattle grazing is present and will continue on the Davis Property as a means of weed control (The Nature Conservancy 2005), the site is committed to permanent use as an open space preserve and is not included as a surrounding agricultural use. Fourth, the surrounding protected resource land rating was determined. This rating is an extension of the surrounding land rating. Protected resource lands are those with long-term use restrictions that are compatible with or supportive of agricultural uses of land. No agricultural preserves or Williamson Act contract lands are located within the ZOI, with protected lands therein including applicable portions of the Davis Ranch property as described above. Specifically, approximately 282 acres (or 15.2 percent) of the ZOI are within the Davis Ranch property. Since less than 40 percent of the ZOI contains protected lands, the protected resource land score is zero. This represents 5 percent of the weighted factor rating, with a summary of the Project LESA Model scoring provided in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, the total LESA Model score for the Proposed Project site is 38.458. Because this score is less than 40 points, the LESA Model indicates that agricultural use of the Project site is not viable, and no significant impacts related to the conversion of the site to non-agricultural use would result from Project implementation (refer to the LESA Model scoring table in Section 3.1).



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Agricultural Areas on Montecito Road

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 12

Table 2 MONTECITO RANCH LESA SCORE SHEET			
Factor Name	**Factor Rating**	**Factor Weight**	**Weighted Factor Rating**
Land Evaluation			
1. Land Capability Classification	44.3814	0.25	11.095
2. Storie Index Rating	37.4513	0.25	9.363
		LE Subtotal	**20.458**
Site Assessment			
1. Project Size	100	0.15	15.000
2. Water Resource Availability	20	0.15	3.000
3. Surrounding Agricultural Lands	0	0.15	0.000
4. Protected Resource Lands	0	0.05	0.000
		SA Subtotal	**18.000**
		TOTAL LESA SCORE	**38.458**

3.2.2 Conversion of On-site Important Farmlands and Prime Farmland Soils

Based on the most current available CDC data, no areas designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland are located within the Project site (CDC 2006). Accordingly, no associated impacts from conversion of such areas to non-agricultural use would occur from implementation of the Proposed Project. The Project site does include approximately 107.1 acres of NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils. This designation is similar to the CDC Prime Farmland category, with the principal difference being that the CDC designation requires that the subject areas have supported irrigated agriculture sometime within the previous two mapping cycles (typically four years). Approximately 64.4 acres (or 60 percent) of the mapped on-site Prime Farmland Soils are located within the existing on-site biological open space easement, and are thus currently unavailable for agricultural use. The remaining 42.7 acres would be impacted by the Proposed Project, either through development or the dedication of additional biological open space. The loss of these areas for potential agricultural use is not considered a significant impact, based on the following considerations: (1) based on the LESA Model analysis outlined above in Section 3.2.1, no significant impacts were identified in relation to converting the Project site to non-agricultural use, with the LESA Model incorporating similar soil quality criteria as the NRCS designation; (2) based on the information noted above, none of the on-site soils are designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland by the CDC (with on-site CDC designations unchanged since at least 1994, refer to Section 2.2.4); (3) no agricultural activity has occurred on the NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils since at least the 2001/2002 growing season, and no irrigated agriculture has occurred in these areas (or the entire the Project site) for at least the past 40 years (refer to Section 1.4.2); and (4) areas of NRCS Prime Farmland Soils that contain sensitive biological habitats would likely be unavailable for agricultural use even without implementation of the Proposed Project, due to the prohibitive costs associated with mitigating associated biological resource impacts (e.g., purchase of off-site habitat credits).

3.2.3 Impacts to Off-site Agricultural Resources and Operations

As outlined in Section 1.2, Project Description, the proposed design includes a number of off-site roadway and utility structures, including off-site roads, water utilities, and wastewater facilities. Because Wastewater Management Option 2 does not involve any proposed off-site facilities, it is not discussed below in this section. Potential impacts associated with the on-site facilities under Wastewater Management Option 2 are included in the LESA Model evaluation provided above in Section 3.2.1 (which evaluates the entire Project site). Potential impacts associated with off-site roadways, water utilities and wastewater facilities are described below.

Off-site Roadway Improvements

The Proposed Project would involve widening Ash Street between Pine and Alice streets, widening Montecito Way between the project site and Montecito Road, widening Montecito Road between Montecito Way and Main Street, and modifying a number of local intersections to accommodate Project-related traffic (refer to Section 1.2). Associated potential impacts to agricultural resources would include the following: (1) approximately 0.41 acre (4 percent) of the existing oat hay operation at the Montecito Way/Montecito Road intersection (not including the pump station site) (refer to Figure 11); (2) approximately 0.13 acre (5 percent) within an existing oat hay operation located along the north side of Montecito Road east of Montecito Way (Figure 12); (3) approximately 0.32 acre of CDC-designated Grazing Land and 0.06 acre of Farmland of Local Importance located at the intersection of SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road (Figure 13) and (4) approximately 0.66 acre (4.9 percent) within the portion of the 13.6-acre eucalyptus farm located along Montecito Road (refer to Figure 14).

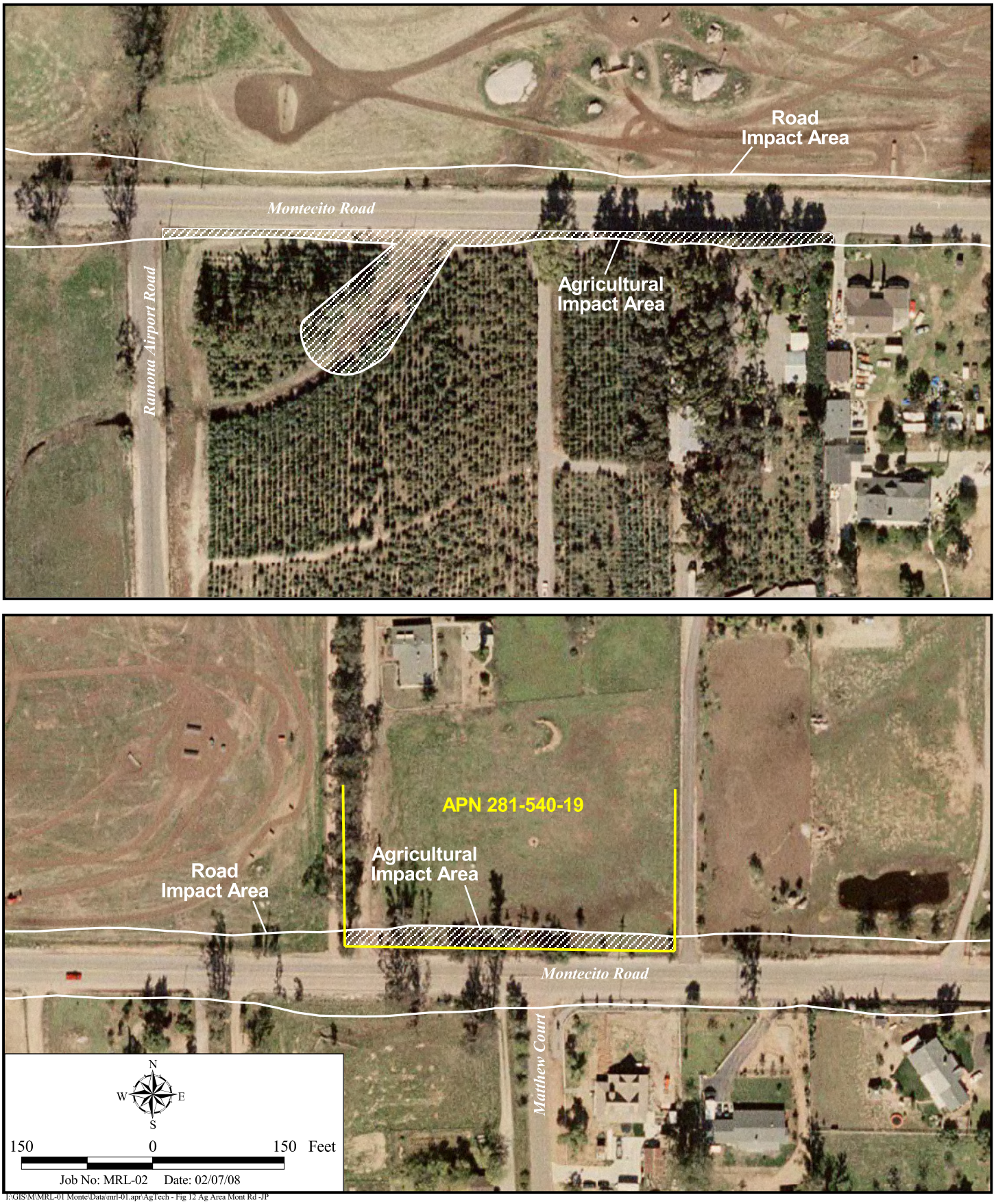
The described direct impacts to off-site agricultural operations and resources from off-site roadway improvements would be less than significant, based on the following considerations: (1) the generally small impact areas associated with oat hay/eucalyptus cultivation and grazing land; (2) the location of impacts at the boundary of existing cultivated and grazing areas (refer to Figures 11 through 13); and (3) the fact that no CDC-designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland would be affected.

Off-site Water Facilities

A potential agricultural impact associated with off-site water utilities would consist of converting approximately 0.23 acre of existing oat hay cultivation in association with the pump station site (near the Montecito Way/Montecito Road intersection, refer to Figure 11. This impact is considered less than significant due to the small areas involved, as well as the fact that no agricultural operations or areas designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Local Importance would be affected.

Off-site Wastewater Facilities

Under Wastewater Management Option 1, the on-site wastewater facilities described in Section 1.2 would not be built, and a sewer force main would be constructed from the southern Project site boundary within Montecito Way, easterly on Montecito Road, and southerly on Kalbaugh Street to an existing facility approximately 50 feet south of the terminus of Kalbaugh Street and north of Santa Maria Creek. The wastewater from the Proposed Project would be treated at Santa Maria WTP, if



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Agricultural Areas on Montecito Road

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 12

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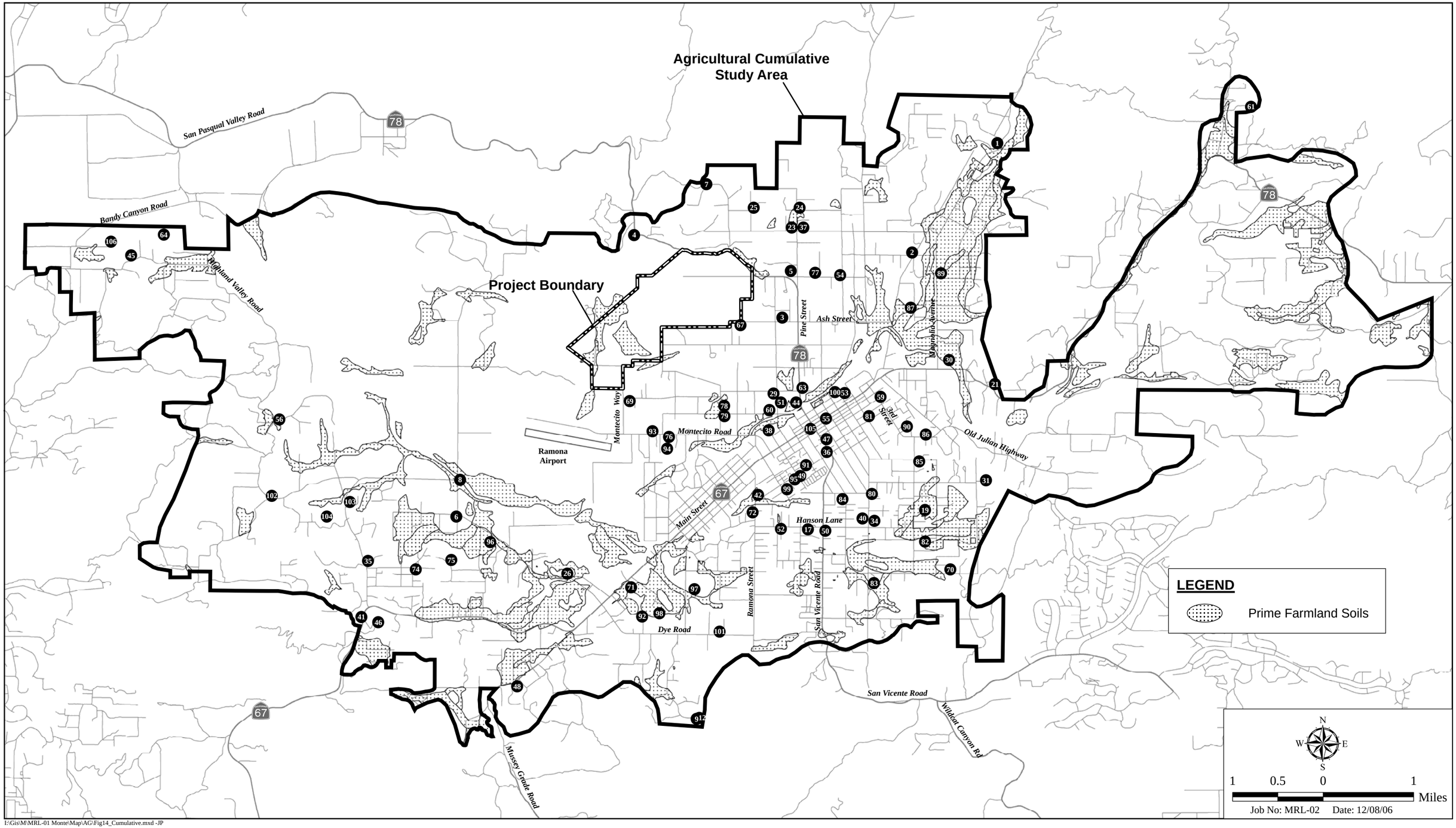
Agricultural Area at the SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road Intersection

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 13



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Agricultural Cumulative Study Area

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 14

capacity becomes available (refer to Figure 2c). The force main would be located within the roadway improvement corridors, and no impacts to agricultural lands would occur, as all disturbances would occur within roadways. As described in Section 1.2 of this report, the capacity of the proposed off-site water tank would vary between 0.91 and 1.26 million gallons depending on the selected wastewater management option. The overall disturbance area (approximately 2.2 acres) would be the same for either water tank design, however, with this area not encompassing any agricultural operations. Based on these conditions, no significant agricultural impacts would be associated with off-site wastewater management facilities.

Summary of Potential Impacts to Off-site Agricultural Resources and Operations

Agricultural impacts associated with the identified off-site facilities would be less than significant, based on the following considerations: (1) the generally small impact areas involved; (2) the location of impacts at the boundary of the existing cultivated area and adjacent roadway for the Montecito Way/Montecito Road intersection, Montecito Road, and eucalyptus farm sites; (3) the fact that no CDC-designated Unique Farmland, Prime Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance would be impacted by any of the noted options.

3.2.4 Conversion of Williamson Act Contract Lands or Agricultural Preserves

As discussed above in Section 3.2.1, no Williamson Act contract lands or agricultural preserves are located within the Project site or the associated ZOI. Accordingly, no associated impacts would occur from implementation of the Proposed Project.

3.2.5 Zoning Conflicts

The majority (926.2 acres) of the Project site is currently zoned S-88 (Specific Plan), with the remaining areas (9 acres) zoned as A-70 (Limited Agriculture). Because the entire site would be zoned S-88 under the Proposed Project, as well as the fact that there is no current or proposed on-site agricultural activity (with the most recent agricultural use conducted during the 2001/2002 season), no significant impacts related to conflicts with existing or proposed zoning designations would result from Project implementation. It should also be noted that the S-88 zoning category (and associated land use designation) that would encompass the entire site under Project implementation would accommodate certain types of agriculture, such as horticulture. While the Project would include a number of agricultural restrictions to ensure compatibility with proposed residential uses (e.g., through CC&Rs, as outlined below and in Section 1.2), activities such as small orchards and gardens would be allowed on individual lots.

As noted in Section 1.2, the Proposed Project also generally would change the on-site Animal Schedule Designator from "L" to "A." (Residential lots that would allow horses [1 through 30] would have an animal designator of "F," which allows two horses plus one per 0.5 acre over one acre.) The Animal Schedule Designator identifies restrictions and requirements related to uses such as animal sales, raising and enclosures, pursuant to Section 3100 of the County Zoning Ordinance. The "A" Designator is more restrictive to animal-related uses, and typically either precludes or requires a Major/Minor Use Permit for activities such as horse stables, kennels, and large or specialty animal raising projects (e.g., beekeeping). This designator also includes the most restrictive setback requirements for animal enclosures. The current "L" designator allows most of the described commercial animal activities (e.g., boarding and raising), with Major or Minor Use Permits typically

required for operations with larger numbers of animals. The overall result of the described change in on-site Animal Schedule Designator would be to preclude or require separate discretionary approval for most agricultural-related animal uses within the Project site. This proposed change in the on-site designator is based on the generally small lot sizes associated with the proposed development (1.8 acres maximum and typical lot sizes of 0.5 acre), as well as the fact that agricultural-type animal uses such as keeping/raising large animals (other than horses) or large numbers of smaller animals would not be compatible with the residential nature of the Proposed Project. In addition, as noted in Section 1.2, agricultural-related animal uses would be further restricted through the proposed use of CC&Rs attached to sales documents for individual residential properties. Specifically, proposed CC&Rs would preclude all agricultural-related animal uses within the Project site.

No significant agricultural impacts are anticipated from the described restrictions on agricultural-related animal activities, based on the following considerations: (1) the low likelihood of on-site residents proposing to conduct agricultural-related animal activities; (2) the lack of on-site agricultural-related animal uses since 2000; and (3) the fact that historical agricultural-related animal uses within the last 100 years were limited to periodic grazing of a small number of beef cattle (i.e., up to approximately 50 head).

3.3 INDIRECT IMPACTS

The proposed Montecito Ranch SPA development is not expected to adversely affect or be affected by existing agricultural use in the surrounding area. Specifically, the proposed rural residential development (and associated open space preserve, local park, historic park site, and charter high school site) would be compatible with surrounding rural residential, agricultural and grazing uses (i.e., within the adjacent Nature Conservancy preserve), as well as related planning and zoning requirements. The Nature Conservancy preserve (formerly the Davis SPA) adjacent to the western site boundary was purchased in December 2005 for preservation as part of the Ramona Grasslands project, although cattle grazing will continue on the site at least temporarily as a form of weed control (The Nature Conservancy 2005). The Proposed Project design, coupled with the site topography, would result in large buffer areas between existing off-site agriculture uses and proposed residential sites (refer to Figures 3 and 6). Given that the majority of the proposed home sites are located within the eastern and central portions of the property, existing agriculture that flanks the site to the north, south and west would be separated from most home sites by open space areas and/or intervening development. As noted above in Section 3.2.5, the Proposed Project would also allow limited agricultural uses on residential lots (e.g., small orchards), would allow horsekeeping on Lots 1 to 30, and would provide equestrian trails on site, which would enhance the compatibility between the Project site and surrounding rural/agricultural uses.

Potential Project-related indirect air and water pollution impacts to surrounding agricultural uses from proposed development and the related increase in motor vehicle traffic would be less than significant, based on mandatory compliance with local planning/zoning standards and the San Diego Air Pollution Control District and California Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations. Such efforts would include the proposed Project design elements (e.g., buffers) described above, as well as the use of detention basins to regulate post-development flows, control of construction-related erosion/sedimentation and other potential contaminant discharge through conformance with applicable regulatory requirements (e.g., local dust control standards and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [NPDES]), and long-term contaminant control through conformance

with County/NPDES regulatory requirements and implementation of appropriate best management practices (BMPs).

3.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As previously described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, conversion of the Project site and applicable off-site areas to non-agricultural use would not result in site-specific significant impacts. This conclusion is based on the following considerations: (1) the determination that on-site agricultural resources are not significant based on the LESA Model; (2) the lack of Williamson Act contract or agricultural preserve lands; (3) the size, location and/or nature of off-site areas to be affected; and (4) the nature and design of the Proposed Project site (e.g., the provision of buffers for off-site agricultural uses), as well as the inclusion of measures to minimize off-site effects such as increased runoff and air/water-borne contaminants.

The assessment of potential cumulative impacts involves evaluating Project contributions to agricultural effects in terms of regional (Countywide) agricultural production and resources, as well as in relation to the identified list of cumulative projects.

3.4.1 Regional Production and Resource Evaluation

The unique character of Ramona is indicative of its strong agricultural and rural lifestyle. A majority of the Ramona area is currently utilized for agricultural activities. According to the Ramona Community Plan (County of San Diego 2002, p. 8), approximately 35,500 acres are designated for general and intensive agriculture, while 27,117 acres are designated for residential purposes ranging from combined residential/agricultural use on 4- to 20-acre lots to high-density residential development (24 units/acre). Ten SPAs identified in the community plan, including Montecito Ranch, cover an additional 9,600 acres. Building restrictions based on topography, biology and community character limit development to only a portion of the total area, with less than half of the 9,600 acres eligible for development (and one property, the Davis SPA, now designated as a permanent open space preserve). Thus, after build-out the Ramona area would retain large areas of open space within estate residential communities. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this land use pattern by designating between approximately 550 and 575 acres as open space (depending on the wastewater management option selected for the proposed Project). While these open space areas and the entire Project site would be unavailable for large-scale commercial agricultural use, certain types of agriculture would be allowed and fostered onsite to support local agricultural use and retain the rural character of the site and vicinity (refer to Section 3.2.5). Based on previous discussions, the permanent conversion of the Project site and applicable off-site areas to non-agricultural use would result in the reduction of up to approximately 310 acres of dry-farmed cultivation (i.e., oat hay), 600 acres of livestock grazing and 50 head of cattle in any given year, as well as 0.66 acre of cultivated eucalyptus. Potential impacts to additional types of agriculture (i.e., irrigated crop production) are not considered in this analysis, due to the lack of such uses historically and the fact that water for the cultivation of irrigated crops within the site is currently unavailable.

For livestock grazing, potential cumulative impacts associated with the loss of 600 acres and 50 head of cattle are considered less than significant due to the incremental nature of these uses compared to Countywide totals. Specifically, data for San Diego County in 2005 identify approximately 207,000 acres of grazing land and 24,000 head of cattle and calves (County of San Diego 2005). Accordingly, potential losses associated with the Proposed Project (based on historical use) would represent

approximately 0.3 percent of the Countywide grazing acreage, and 0.2 percent of Countywide cattle and calves.

The production of oat hay in San Diego County varied substantially by year (in terms of both harvested acreage and yield) between 1986 and 2005, as shown in Table 3. These variances were due primarily to the fact that local oat hay production involves dry farming, and is therefore dependent on local precipitation levels. Because of this fact and the resulting variable production and yield data shown in Table 3, oat hay produced in San Diego County does not represent a consistently reliable source for local (or other) markets. Accordingly, oat hay users almost certainly depend on more distant irrigated sites such as the Imperial Valley to ensure a consistent supply source during years of low precipitation in San Diego County.

Table 3
SAN DIEGO COUNTY OAT HAY PRODUCTION, 1986-2005

Year	Harvested Acreage	Yield (tons)
2005	1,500	1,320
2004	1,000	860
2003	3,300	4,125
2002	5,100	4,896
2001	5,200	11,856
2000	3,285	7,063
1999	3,750	7,484
1998	4,600	8,770
1997	5,800	5,104
1996	5,400	3,024
1995	6,400	12,352
1994	3,800	2,470
1993	3,718	6,953
1992	3,768	6,330
1991	1,527	1,802
1990	1,000	950
1989	2,272	1,590
1988	3,500	5,250
1987	3,600	6,480
1986	3,730	7,087

Source: County of San Diego 2005

The average variances for oat hay harvested area (987 acres) and yield (3,134 tons) during the period of 1986 to 2005 (as shown in Table 3) exceed the estimated historical maximum acreage (approximately 310) and yield (approximately 600 to 1,200 tons) on the Project site and applicable off-site areas. Accordingly, the local production of oat hay regularly experiences variances of harvest acreage and yield that substantially exceed those for the Project site and applicable off-site areas. The removal of these areas from oat hay production, therefore, would be expected to have less of an influence on local harvest area and yield than yearly rainfall variation. Based on the above discussions of the viability, nature, extent and productivity of local agricultural use (specifically oat hay), the

Proposed Project is not expected to result in significant cumulative impacts to regional agricultural production.

Potential cumulative impacts associated with the loss of 0.35 acre along the portion of Montecito Road proposed for widening are considered less than significant. This conclusion is based on the minor acreages involved, as well as the fact that the noted impacts would not significantly decrease the viability of continued use of the eucalyptus farm for commercial agriculture. The noted impact of 0.66 acre represents approximately 0.02 percent of the Countywide ornamental tree and shrub acreage of 3,650 in 2005 (County of San Diego 2005).

3.4.2 List of Projects Evaluation

A cumulative study area and project list was developed as part of the Proposed Project CEQA analysis, with a modified version used for this evaluation. Applicable projects within the identified agricultural resource cumulative study area are shown on Figure 14, with summary descriptions of project features and identified agricultural resources/impacts provided in Table 4. The cumulative study area shown on Figure 14 is based on a number of considerations including: (1) applicable cumulative project locations relative to the Project site; (2) the presence of active agricultural activity or designations (e.g., Williamson Act contracts/preserves); (3) agricultural resource potential (e.g., the presence of substantial areas of Important Farmland designations); (4) physical barriers such as steep or rocky terrain; and (5) planning or cultural barriers such as planning area designations, major roadway corridors or substantial urban development. Based on these criteria, the area on Figure 14 was delineated to reflect boundary considerations including portions of the Ramona Community Planning area boundary to the north, northwest and southwest; steep, rocky terrain to the north, south, east, and west; urban development to the southeast; and a lack of applicable cumulative project sites in areas to the north, south and west.

Based on review of County of San Diego project files and field reconnaissance efforts, the listed projects on Table 4 and Figure 14 include agricultural resources and associated potential impacts for resources including cultivated citrus/avocado (or other subtropical) orchards, field crops, dry-farmed oat hay, alfalfa hay and vineyards, as well as areas of designated Williamson Act contracts/preserves, CDC-designated Important Farmlands and NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils. Many of the listed uses/designations and associated impacts for cumulative projects are not quantified in available information. The following approximate impact totals are provided from available information as shown in Table 4, with quantified resources assumed to be completely impacted where not specified to provide a more conservative estimate: (1) 836 acres of dry-farmed oat hay; (2) 12 acres of alfalfa hay; (3) 0.2 acre of vineyards; (4) 40 acres of citrus, avocado, or other subtropical fruit orchards; (5) 13 acres of CDC Prime Farmland; (6) 10 acres of CDC Farmland of Statewide Importance; (7) 30 acres of CDC Unique Farmland; (8) 402 acres CDC Farmland of Local Importance; (9) 593 acres of CDC-designated Grazing Land; (10) 309.54 acres of NRCS-designated Prime Farmland Soils; and (11) one Williamson Act contract and one Williamson Act preserve, both of unspecified size. Implementation of the Proposed Project is not expected to result in any significant cumulative impacts to current agricultural uses, CDC Important Farmlands, NRCS Prime Farmland Soils, or Williamson Act contract/preserve lands with respect to the identified project list shown on Table 4 and Figure 14, based on the following considerations:

- There are currently no agricultural activities within the Project site, with active agricultural use in off-site facility areas limited to approximately 0.66 acre of eucalyptus cultivation, and

approximately 0.8 acre of dryland oat hay cultivation. Historical agricultural use within the Project site included approximately 300 acres of dry-farmed oat hay cultivation and seasonal grazing of 50 head of cattle on 600 acres. Based on these conditions and the agricultural uses listed above for cumulative projects, implementation of the Proposed Project would not significantly contribute to cumulative impacts associated with alfalfa hay, vineyards, citrus/avocado (or other) orchards, or any other cultivated crops that may be associated with the identified project list.

- No areas of eucalyptus (or other ornamental tree and shrub) cultivation are identified for any of the projects listed in Table 4, with no associated cumulative impacts related to the loss of 0.66 acre of ornamental eucalyptus cultivation from the Proposed Project.
- The combined impact to oat hay cultivation from the Proposed Project and the cumulative projects listed in Table 4 is approximately 1,135 acres, with this figure similar to the average annual Countywide variance for oat hay cultivation during the period of 1986 to 2005 (i.e., 987 acres, refer to Section 3.5.1 and Table 3). Accordingly, the Countywide production of oat hay regularly experiences variances that equal or exceed the cumulative effects that would occur from the Proposed Project and the cumulative project list on Table 4. Based on these conditions, no significant cumulative impacts to local oat hay production would be associated with implementation of the Proposed Project.
- The cumulative projects listed on Table 4 identify cattle grazing activity and related impacts for only one project (TM5253, Map Key No. 8), with grazing occurring on approximately 450 acres and the number of animals not specified. Based on the Project site grazing area (600 acres), the associated small number of animals (50 head), and the relatively large grazing areas (207,000 acres) and number of animals (24,000) present Countywide (County of San Diego 2005), the potential loss of grazing area and animals associated with the Proposed Project and the cumulative projects list would not represent a significant cumulative impact.
- The Project site and off-site facility areas do not include any areas of CDC Prime Farmland, CDC Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Williamson Act contracts/preserves. Accordingly, Project implementation would not contribute to cumulative impacts associated with any of these designations.
- The Proposed Project and off-site facilities would result in approximately 47.8 acres of impact to CDC Farmland of Local Importance and 26.9 acres of impact to CDC-designated Grazing Land. The cumulative projects listed in Table 4 include approximately 402 acres of impact to CDC Farmland of Local Importance and 592.9 acres of impact to CDC-designated Grazing Land. Combined impacts to the described CDC designations from the Proposed Project and the cumulative projects from Table 4 are not considered cumulatively significant based on their incremental nature relative to mapped areas within the cumulative study area (Figure 14). Specifically, identified combined impact totals for Farmland of Local Importance (450 acres) and Grazing Land (619 acres) represent approximately 7.5 percent and 7 percent, respectively, of the respective mapped areas within the cumulative study area.
- The Proposed Project would impact approximately 42.7 acres of NRCS Prime Farmland Soils, based on the total on-site area of 107.1 acres, and the location of 64.4 acres of these soils within an existing biological preserve. The cumulative projects listed in Table 4 include approximately 310 acres of NRCS Prime Farmland Soils that would be impacted by associated development, for a total cumulative impact to NRCS Prime Farmland Soils of approximately 353 acres. Approximately 5,223 acres of NRCS Prime Farmland Soils are mapped within the

agricultural cumulative study area (NRCS 1995, SCS 1973), with this area adjusted to reflect existing development based on review of current aerial photographs and CDC designated Urban and Built-Up Land (i.e., areas where mapped Prime Farmland Soils have likely been lost or substantially altered by previous development). Pursuant to these adjustments, a total of approximately 4,700 acres of NRCS Prime Farmland Soils were identified within the Project agricultural cumulative study area, as depicted on Figure 14. Accordingly, the total area of impact to NRCS Prime Farmland Soils within the Project agricultural cumulative study area of 353 acres represents approximately 7.5 percent of the identified total of 4,700 acres. Based on the fact that approximately 92.5 percent of the identified NRCS Prime Farmland Soils within the Project cumulative study area would not be impacted by the listed projects (including the Proposed Project), no associated significant cumulative impacts would occur.

4.0 MITIGATION

No significant agricultural impacts are assessed. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

5.0 ALTERNATIVES

Project alternatives include the No Project-No Development Alternative, No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative, Reduced Development Footprint Alternative, Reduced Density Alternative, and the Closed Water System Alternative. These alternatives are assessed below in relation to agricultural resources.

5.1 NO PROJECT–NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

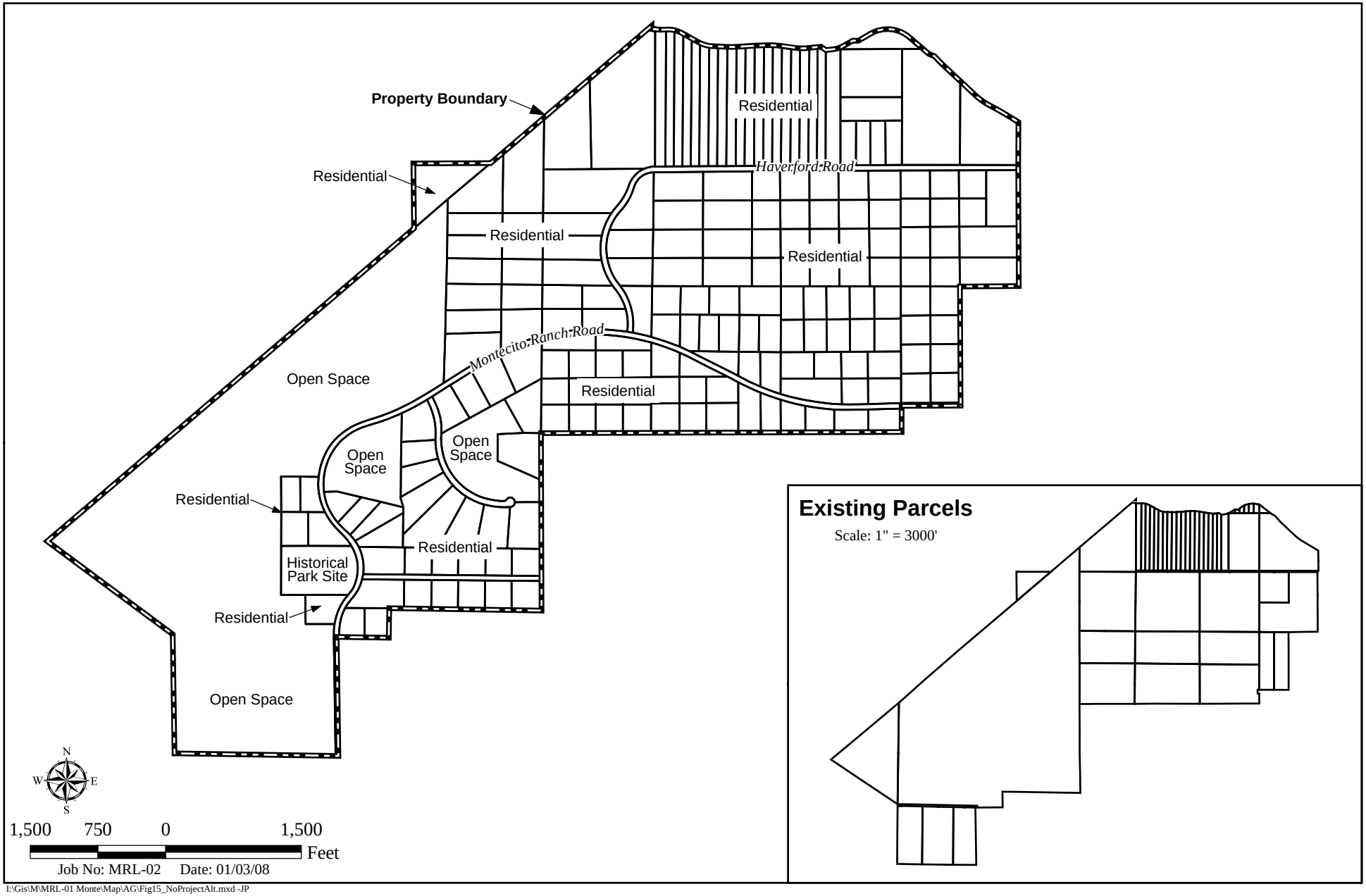
Under the No Project–No Development Alternative, the site would remain in its current state, with no on- or off-site development as described in Sections 1.2 and 5.2 through 5.5. The Project site would remain available for agricultural use (pursuant to existing restrictions and authorization requirements), with no associated impacts related to the potential loss or conversion of on-or off-site agricultural lands or opportunities.

5.2 NO PROJECT–DEVELOPMENT PER LEGAL PARCELS ALTERNATIVE

The No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative assumes that existing legal parcels within the Project site would gradually develop pursuant to existing zoning requirements via a series of applications from individual property owners. Based on current zoning, this alternative could result in up to 196 single-family residential units on minimum 2- to 4-acre lots, and would likely also require the dedication of an historical park site containing the Montecito Ranch House (Figure 15). Topographical constraints were considered in the preparation of the conceptual site plan shown in Figure 15, with lots containing steep slopes assumed to be a minimum of four acres. This alternative would not include a local park, charter high school site or wastewater reclamation facility, and would result in less on-site open space than the Proposed Project. None of the off-site facilities identified for the Proposed Project would be constructed under this alternative, with any associated off-site road improvements assumed to be provided based on "fair share" contributions from individual developments. Water and wastewater service under this alternative would be provided either through on-site facilities (i.e., wells and septic systems), or as "fair share" funded off-site facilities as noted for roadways.

Table 4
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
1	TM 4844	Black Canyon Tentative Map	134	LS	35.7[3]	Project site includes approximately 50 acres of unspecified agricultural use, and an unspecified "small" area of CDC Prime Farmland, with impacts determined to be less than significant.
2	TM 4962	MDS Development Subdivision	74.6	NA	--	No CDC designated Important Farmlands identified, although the site contains an unspecified acreage of avocado orchards.
3	TM 5091	Barret/Hibbard Subdivision	49.67	LS	--	Project site consists of an unspecified area of planted orchards, but would not impact CDC Prime Farmland.
4	TM 5194	Teyssier Major Residential Subdivison	287	LS	--	Project will impact 13 acres of CDC Unique Farmland, although LESA analysis determined that the site is not a significant resource.
5	TM 5244RPL4	Stonecrest Development	67.7	LS	--	May 2003 Agricultural analysis identifies 58.7 acres of on-site oat hay cultivation associated with a Ramona High School agricultural project, but notes that CDC Prime Farmland will not be affected and identifies a LESA Model score of 38.59 (less than significant).
6	TM 5198/RPL5	Rancho Esquilago	147	LS	20	Entire site identified as CDC Farmland of Local Importance, has been historically farmed for oat hay, and will be impacted by proposed development.
7	BC 97-0164/ TPM 13136	Clifford Douglas Subdivision	51.3	NA	--	No additional information available.
8	TM5253 RPL5	Oak Country Estates	768.5	SM	99	Project site includes grazing of an unspecified number of cattle on approximately 450 acres, with approximately 580 acres of CDC Grazing Land and 190 acres of CDC Farmland of Local Importance on-site.
9	TM 5294RPL2	Spitzbergen Property (part of Holly Oaks SPA)	311	NA	--	No additional information available.



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No Project - Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 15

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
10	MUP77-005W1	Young Life Oakbridge Camp Major Use Permit	78.3	LS	--	No additional information available.
11	SP 00-06/ MUP70-379W2	Salvation Army Divisional Camp	575	LS	--	No additional information available.
12	TM 4862 STP 95-016W3	Holly Oaks Ranch Site Plan Review	68.6	LS	--	No Additional Information Available.
13	TM 5008	Ramona Ridge Estates	218	NA	2.56[3]	Project site includes unspecified areas of CDC Prime farmland and Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve (with no contract), with no current agricultural uses.
14	TM 5016 TM 5016-2 TM 5054 SP 92-002 REZ 91-030 S 94-018 MUP 92-016	Rancho San Vicente	846.8	LS	--	No additional information available.
15	TM 5042	Stone Creek Estates Project/Lakeside Ventures	202.60	NA	--	No additional information available.
16	TM 5080RA	Mahogany Ranch	117.5	LS	--	No additional information available.
17	TM 5136	Welsh Major Subdivision	14.2	LS	--	No additional information available.
18	TM 5172RP1	Friery Major Subdivision	66	LS	--	No additional information available.
19	TPM 20415	McCandless Keyes Road Subdivision	18.84	LS	8.8[3]	No additional information available.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
20	TM 4896	Parker Minor Subdivision	27.6	LS	--	Photo-documentation of an approximately 0.2-acre vineyard, with no additional information.
21	TM 4840	Wylie/Strickfaden TM Subdivision	19.38	LS	--	No additional information available.
22	TPM 20391	Ranganathan TPM 98-14-025	33.9	LS	--	No additional information available.
23	TPM 20465	Cavins Property	40	LS	9.6[3]	Site contains unspecified area of CDC Prime Farmland and unidentified agricultural uses, with 20 acres to be preserved for agriculture and associated uses to continue.
24	TPM 19214RPL	Doshi Property	24.3	LS	0.21[3]	No additional information available.
25	TPM 20615	Weinstock Project	37.5	LS	--	No additional information available.
26	TM 5344	Cumming SPA	664	NA	127.7	Approximately 330 acres of dry-farmed oat hay to be impacted by site development.
27	MUP 84-004 W1	A Touch From Above Ministries	23.5	LS	--	No additional information available.
28	MUP 02-005	Rancho Cañada Bed and Breakfast	32	LS	--	No additional information available.
29	MUP 96-017 W3	Ramona Disposal Service	7.24	NA	--	No additional information available.
30	MUP 03-035	Mountain Valley Ranch	4.3	NA	4.3	No additional information available.
31	TPM 20766	Wakeman TPM	22.2	LS	--	Site contains approximately 10 acres of CDC Unique Farmland, 5 acres of CDC Farmland of Local Importance, and 10 acres of citrus and subtropical fruit orchard..
32	TM 5254	Rainbird Road TM	327	NA	--	No additional information available.
33	TPM 20564	McCandless Pahls Way TPM	41.5	NA	--	No additional information available.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
34	TM 5257	Sunset Vista (aka Theaker Subdivision	9.3	NA	4.8	No additional information available.
35	TM 5267	Roberts Ranch	53.4	LS	--	Project site designated as CDC Farmland of Local Importance, but was determined not to have significant impacts due to surrounding land uses. Project site does not contain agricultural uses.
36	TM 5188RPL3	Brisson	3.75	LS	--	No additional information available.
37	TPM 20498	Bagley/Quisenberry	37.4	LS	--	Site contains unspecified "small" areas of CDC Prime Farmland and dry-farmed oat hay cultivation, but would not be significantly impacted by the project.
38	TM 5347	Nickel Creek (Rilington)	10.1	NA	7.0	No additional information available.
39	TM 5307	Lakeside Ventures	203.2	NA	--	No additional information available.
40	TM 5311	Meadow Builders	8.3	NA	2.8	No CDC designated Important Farmlands or active agricultural operations.
41	TM 5329	Mt. Woodson Subdivision	84.15	NA	--	No additional information available.
42	TM 5302	Elliot Pond	22.4	NA	0.2	No additional information available.
43	TM 4979	Fenton Ranch	228.6	SM	--	Identified project impacts consist of potential odor generation from nearby agricultural uses, with related mitigation consisting of disclosure of potential odors to new residents.
44	STP 02-064	One Stop Rental (Souza)	4.1	NA	3.0	No additional information available.
45	TPM 20809	Bates TPM	30.5	PS	--	Site contains approximately 1 acre of CDC Unique Farmland, 10 acres of CDC Farmland of Statewide Importance, and unspecified areas of feedlots and Williamson Act contract lands.
46	TPM 20770	Taylor-Andrews TPM	37.7	NA	--	No additional information available.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
47	TPM 20771	Sorric TPM	1.01	NA	--	No additional information available.
48	TM 5077	Westside Knolls	19.48	LS	--	No additional information available.
49	TM 5098 STP 00-080	Oak Creek Village	5.04	LS	--	No additional information available.
50	TM 5124	Quisenberry	6.0	NS	--	No additional information available.
51	TM 5368 MUP 03-005 STP 99-070	Maple Street Business Park	2.9	NS	--	No additional information available.
52	TM 5378	Estates at McDonald's Park	12.08	NA	--	No additional information available.
53	TM 5439 REZ 05-016 STP 00-013	Casa De Rio Vista Apartments	0.64	LS	--	No additional information available.
54	MUP 00-004	Boyne Valley Ranch	4.74	NS	--	No additional information available.
55	MUP 02-008 STP 02-011	Orrin Day Office Complex	48,450 ft^2 & parking	LS	--	No additional information available.
56	MUP 03-051 MUP 03-052 ZAP 01-108	ZAP- Sky Valley Cingular Wireless	N/A	NA	2.29	No additional information available.
57	MUP 03-054 ZAP 02-073	Rancho Ballena cellular site	650 sq. ft.	LS	--	The project site contains and unspecified area of CDC Farmland of Statewide Importance, but does not currently support agricultural use.
58	MUP 03-061 MUP 03-062 ZAP 02-054	Elling Ranch / Cingular Wireless facility	NA	LS	--	The project site and surrounding area contain unspecified agriculture, but project will not significantly alter agricultural uses.
59	MUP 03-086	Changing Options Group Care Facility	0.92	NA	--	No additional information available.
60	MUP 03-094	RBS Towing and Storage Facility	1.75	NA	--	No additional information available.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
61	MUP 03-095 MUP 04-040 ZAP 02-074	Wireless telecommunications facility	0.67	NA	--	No additional information available.
62	MUP 03-123	Cell site	250 sq. ft.	NA	--	No additional information available.
63	MUP 04-052	Templo Monte Sinai	4	NA	--	No additional information available.
64	MUP 05-021 MUP 05-007	SD-639 (cell site)	14.20 acre parcel	NA	--	No additional information available.
65	MUP 72-309 MUP mod. 72-309-04 MUP 02-021	San Diego Country Estates Equine Center	73.1	LS	--	No additional information available.
66	MUP 72-393	SDCE Electric Golf Cart Storage Facility	5,445 sq. ft.	NS	--	No additional information available.
67	TPM 20403RPL1	Bushey	9.5	LS	--	Project site does not contain CDC Prime Farmland and does not support any other agricultural resources or operations.
68	TPM 20276	Smith Lot-split	36	LS	--	Site contains areas historically cleared for agricultural purposes but never completely planted, with 5.53 acres of avocado and citrus groves in northeast site corner.
69	TPM 20801	Herman minor subdivision	10	LS	--	Project file maps identify approximately 6.3 acres of CDC Farmland of Local Importance and 4.4 acres of unspecified "active agriculture."
70	TPM 20389	Brisson subdivision	27.85	LS	--	Property zoned A70 (Limited Agriculture), with approximately 24 acres of citrus groves.
71	TPM 20401	RC DK Realty	45.22	LS	12.4[3]	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or agricultural operations.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
72	TPM 20348	Vengler TPM	2.78	LS	--	ND dated 1998 stated the project site is a fallow agriculture field that has grown back with NNG.
73	TPM 19982	Lakeview Developers	16.59	LS	--	A 1997 ND stated that the parcel does not contain CDC Prime Farmland and consists of soils not suited to cultivate crops, but can be used for pasture and range. Approximately 0.75 acre along the southern site boundary is mapped as citrus and subtropical orchard.
74	TPM 20273	Turley TPM	10	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
75	TPM 20318	Brinker minor subdivision	8.87	LS	--	The entire site is mapped CDC Farmland of Local Importance.
76	TPM 20598	Dahl residential subdivision	12.53	LS	---	The property had been dry farmed (oat hay) within the last five years, but currently encompasses NNG.
77	TPM 20769	Thompson TPM	12	NS	--	Site under active cultivation for alfalfa hay.
78	TPM 20463	Herold TPM	4.4	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
79	TPM 20442	Rakos Lot-split	4.85	LS	--	Vegetation degraded due to previous livestock grazing. The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
80	TPM 20703	Herold TPM	2.5	NS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
81	TPM 20919	Herold TPM	0.76	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
82	TPM 20977	Arkegos TPM	NA	NA	3.2	No additional information available.
83	TPM 20940	Andersen TPM	18.9	NA	7.1	Agricultural preserve immediately north of site, no additional information available.
84	TPM 20656	Humphus TPM	2.53	NS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
85	TPM 20482	Lancione TPM	4.55	NS	2.3[3]	Entire site previously developed.
86	TPM 20437	Quisenberry TPM	5	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
87	TPM 20456	Wier TPM	14.1	LS	5.6[3]	The site encompasses CDC Prime Farmland, although no associated significant impacts would occur because all Prime Farmland areas are within the floodplain of Santa Maria Creek and are not subject to development.
88	TPM 20445	Powell minor subdivision	18.2	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
89	TPM 20926	Filippini minor subdivision	9.25	NS	9.25	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or agricultural operations.
90	TPM 20679	Herold TPM	4.7	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
91	TPM 20909	Matthew TPM	0.425	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
92	TPM 20961	Dye Road TPM/ Stratton	11	LS	--	No additional information available.
93	TPM 20826	Giffin minor subdivision	5.17	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
94	TPM 20983	Scherer lot split	2.36	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
95	TPM 20724	Quisenberry minor subdivision	1.26	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
96	TPM 20493	Gouviea TPM	9.51	LS	9.1	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or agricultural operations.
97	TM 5237	Kearney subdivision	52.49	NA	9.8	Preliminary checklist identifies an unspecified area of unnamed field crops, as well as unspecified areas of CDC Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance.
98	TPM 20496	Quisenberry TPM	17	LS	17.0[3]	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or agricultural operations.
99	TPM 20808	Young minor subdivision	1.77	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
100	TM 5483	Ramona Village Condominium	2.4	NA	--	No additional information available.
101	TPM 20650	Huber TPM	12.88	LS	--	The entire site is designated as CDC Grazing Land, but does not support any agricultural resources or operations.
102	TPM 20692	Means TPM	38.07	LS	--	Approximately 10.7 acres designated as CDC Prime Farmland and 5.7 acres designated as CDC Unique Farmland, with an unspecified area of active citrus orchards. Project would not significantly impact agriculture with existing orchards to remain.
103	TPM 20402	Lee TPM	8.23	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.

Table 4 (cont.)
MONTECITO RANCH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS LIST

Map Key	Identifying Project Number[1]	Project Name[1]	Acres[1]	Agricultural Impact Level[1]	NRCS Prime Farmland Soil Acreage[2]	Agricultural Notes[1]
104	TPM 20370	MBA Ltd. TPM	8.53	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
105	TPM 20665	Bush minor subdivision	1.0	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources/operations.
106	TPM 20466	Sgobassi TPM	19.82	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.
107	TPM 20616	Borysewicz TPM	19.82	LS	--	The project site does not include CDC Prime Farmland or other agricultural resources or operations.

[1] Data derived from County of San Diego project files.
[2] Data derived from SCS (1973), County of San Diego project files, and SANGIS (2006).
[3] Not included in the assessment of potential cumulative impacts to NRCS Prime Farmland Soils based on the fact that project approval is more than three years old and the site is assumed to be developed (with Prime Farmland Soils lost or substantially altered).

PS = Potentially Significant; LS = Less Than Significant; SM = Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated; NS = Not Significant; NA = Not Applicable or Not Available; ND = Negative Declaration; NNG = non-native grassland.

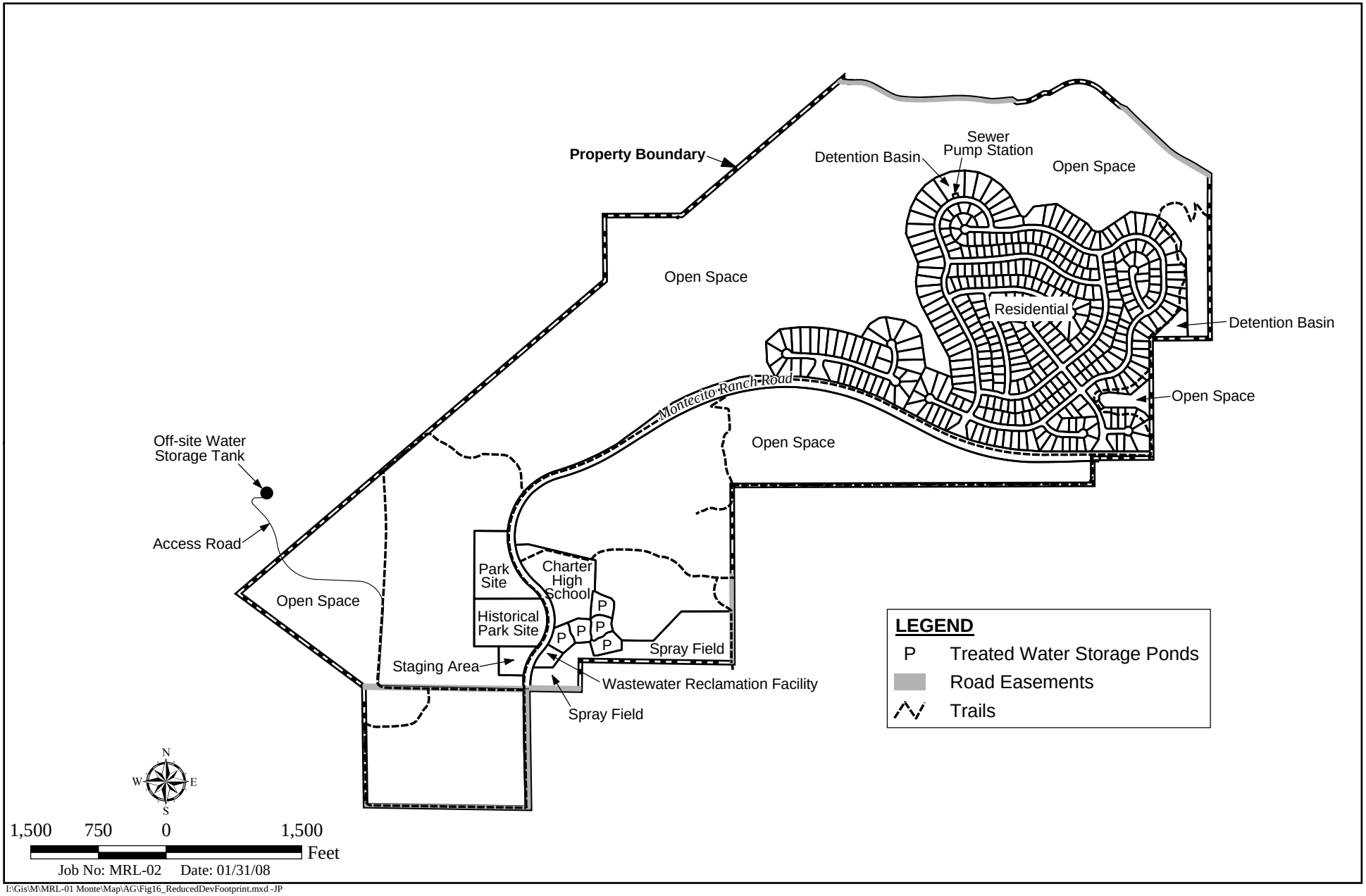
Potential on-site agricultural impacts for this alternative would be less overall than those described for the Proposed Project. Specifically, onsite impacts for this alternative would involve similar effects to potential (historical) agricultural uses including approximately 300 acres of dry-farmed oat hay cultivation, and grazing of up to 50 head of cattle on 600 acres. Because of the substantially larger lot sizes associated with this alternative, however, as well as the fact that domestic water would be available to residential lots, associated agricultural operations would be more likely to occur, and to involve both larger areas and more diverse activities (including animal-related operations) than under the Proposed Project. The increased potential for on-site agriculture under this alternative also would provide associated benefits to local agriculture and the preservation of existing rural character in the Project site vicinity. As described for the Proposed Project, however, all project level and cumulative impacts associated with on-site agricultural resources and potential operations were determined to be less than significant. These conclusions were based on considerations including: (1) the results of the Project LESA Model; (2) conformance with applicable planning and zoning requirements; (3) the potential occurrence of on-site agriculture such as small orchards on individual lots; (4) the absence of Williamson Act contract land/preserves; (5) the inclusion of buffer areas and conformance with applicable air/water quality requirements; (6) the incremental nature of impacts relative to Countywide totals; (7) the lack of impacts to crops such as orchards and vineyards that occur within cumulative project sites; (8) the lack of impacts to CDC Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance; and (9) the incremental nature of impacts to CDC Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance and Grazing Land, as well as NRCS Prime Farmland soils.

Because the No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative assumes subdivision to provide the described 196 lots, large-scale commercial agricultural operations were assumed to be infeasible based on lot sizes and associated potential effects related to issues such as noise, dust and odor generation. If larger parcels were retained within the project site, however, commercial agricultural operations could conceivably be implemented onsite without significant adverse agricultural interface impacts. The determination of feasibility for such operations would require site-specific analyses of land use compatibility and agricultural viability for proposed development, with such analyses beyond the scope of this investigation

Potential impacts from off-site facilities described for the Proposed Project would be avoided under this alternative, based on the elimination of the water pump station and the off-site improvements along Montecito Way and Montecito Road. Specifically, this alternative would avoid impacts to up to approximately 0.8 acre of oat hay cultivation and 0.66 acre of eucalyptus cultivation, . As described for the Proposed Project, however, these impacts were determined to be less than significant due to their small size and the location of portions of the oat hay and eucalyptus impacts at the boundary of the existing cultivated areas and adjacent roadways. Some additional agricultural impacts could potentially occur under this alternative if associated off-site road and utilities are ultimately developed. Such potential impacts would likely be lower than those described for the Proposed Project, however, due to the reduced number of units and associated roadway/utility requirements for this alternative.

5.3 REDUCED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Development Footprint Alternative would include 417 single-family residential units on minimum 10,000-square foot lots (Figure 16). In addition, this alternative would retain the same park sites, charter high school site, off-site water facilities, on- and off-site roadway improvements and wastewater management options as the Proposed Project. Because this alternative would have a smaller residential development footprint, more open space would occur than under the Proposed



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Reduced Development Footprint Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 16

Project. Open space easements would encompass areas such as steep slopes, sensitive biological habitats, important archaeological resources, buffers and other environmentally sensitive areas to create viable wildlife corridors and linkages, with no development permitted in the open space easements.

Potential on- and off-site agricultural impacts associated with this alternative would be essentially identical to those identified for the Proposed Project. This conclusion is based on the fact that the entire site would be unavailable for large-scale commercial agricultural operations, as well as the identical nature and location of proposed off-site facilities. With respect to on-site effects, potential impacts involve the loss of potential (historical) agricultural uses including approximately 300 acres of dry-farmed oat hay cultivation, and grazing of up to 50 head of cattle on 600 acres. As described for the Proposed Project, all project level and cumulative impacts associated with on-site agricultural resources and potential operations were determined to be less than significant. These conclusions were based on the same considerations as listed above in Section 5.2 for the No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative. It should also be noted that the described buffer sizes under this alternative would be generally greater than those identified for the Proposed Project. This conclusion is based on the location of the proposed lots relative to nearby agricultural uses north of the Project site. Accordingly, this alternative would reduce the potential for adverse agricultural interface impacts from site development, although such potential impacts were determined to be less than significant for the Proposed Project. The potential for on-site agricultural use under this alternative would be somewhat less than that described for the Proposed Project, due to the generally smaller lot sizes. A reduction of on-site agriculture would result in a corresponding reduction of associated benefits to local agriculture and rural character.

Off-site facilities under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Project, with associated impacts therefore also the same.

5.4 REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Density Alternative would develop 244 single-family residential units on minimum 1-acre lots (Figure 17). While the overall site density under this alternative would be lower than that identified for the Proposed Project, the development footprint and open space areas would be similar, except that the charter high school site would be preserved as additional open space. This alternative would also include the same historic park site (containing the Montecito Ranch House), local park site, and potential on-site wastewater reclamation facilities as noted for the Proposed Project. Open space easements would encompass areas such as steep slopes, sensitive biological habitats, important archaeological resources, buffers and other environmentally sensitive areas to create viable wildlife corridors and linkages, with no development permitted in the open space easements. Montecito Road would not be widened between Montecito Way and Main Street under this alternative, with all other off-site road and utility improvements (including wastewater management options) the same as those described for the Proposed Project.

Potential on-site impacts for this alternative would be similar to the Proposed Project, due to the fact that the entire site would be unavailable for large-scale commercial agricultural operations. Specifically, identified on-site impacts involve the loss of potential (historical) agricultural uses including approximately 300 acres of dry-farmed oat hay cultivation, and grazing of up to 50 head of cattle on 600 acres. As described for the Proposed Project, all project level and cumulative impacts associated with on-site agricultural resources and potential operations were determined to be less than

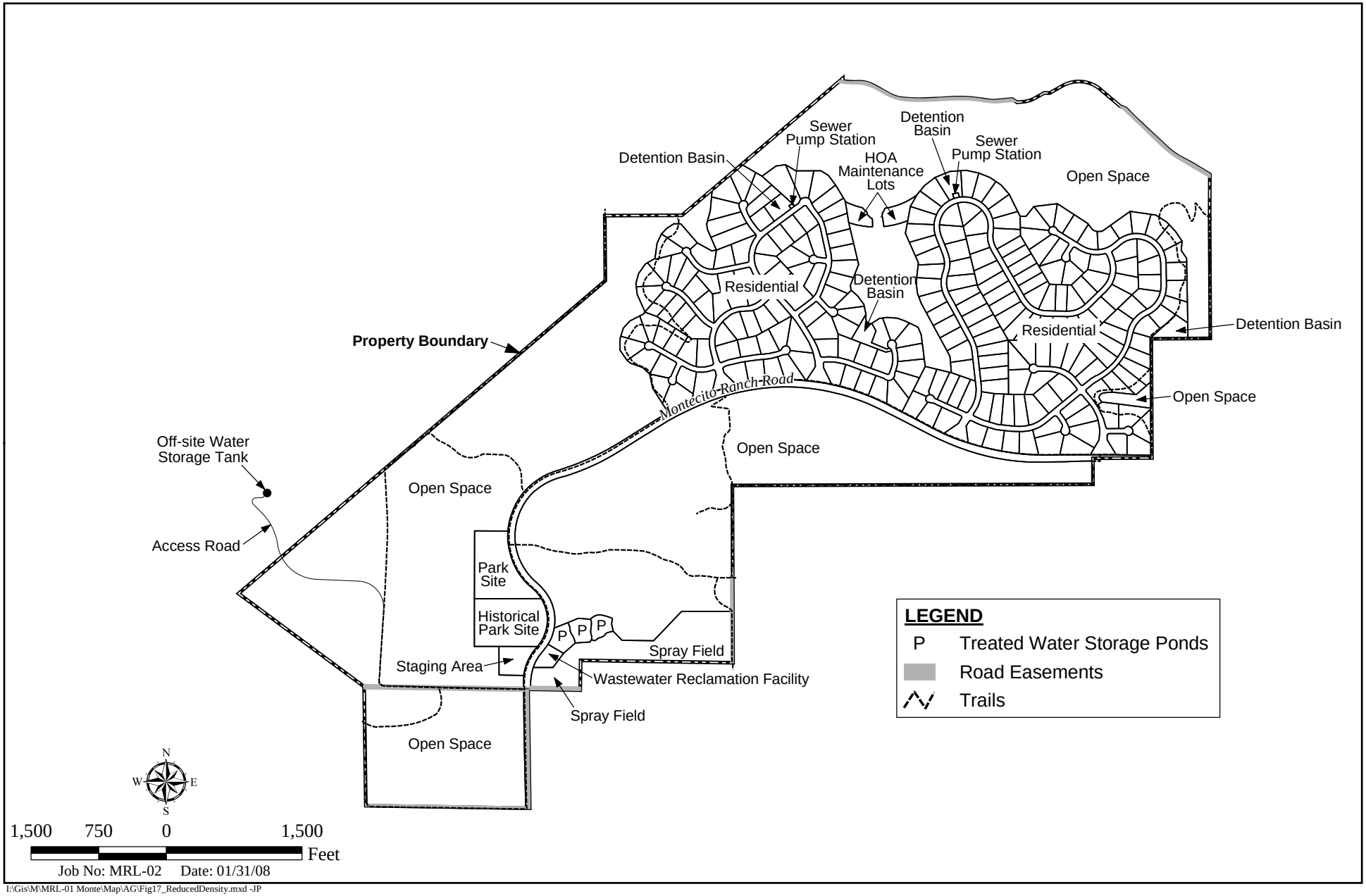
significant. These conclusions were based on the same considerations as listed above in Section 5.2 for the No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative. Buffer sizes and the potential for the occurrence of (and potential benefits from) on-site agricultural use under this alternative would be generally greater than those identified for the Proposed Project. This conclusion is based on the larger lot sizes associated with this alternative, as well as the fact that related agricultural operations would be both more likely to occur and more likely to involve larger areas than under the Proposed Project design. Accordingly, this alternative would reduce the potential for adverse agricultural interface impacts from site development, although such potential impacts were determined to be less than significant for the Proposed Project. The increased potential for on-site agriculture under this alternative (potentially including animal-related operations, depending on zoning and CC&R restrictions) would also increase associated benefits to local agriculture and the preservation of existing rural character in the Project site vicinity.

Potential impacts associated with off-site facilities under this alternative would be somewhat less than those described for the Proposed Project, based on the fact that Montecito Road would not be widened. Specifically, this alternative would avoid impacts to approximately 0.13 acre of oat hay and 0.66 acre of eucalyptus cultivation identified for Off-site Roadway Option 1 under the Proposed Project. As described for the Proposed Project, however, these impacts were determined to be less than significant due to their incremental nature and the location of the eucalyptus impacts at the boundary of the existing cultivated area and adjacent roadway. All other agricultural impacts related to potential off-site facilities would be the same as those described for the Proposed Project.

5.5 CLOSED WATER SYSTEM ALTERNATIVE

The Closed Water System Alternative design would be the same as the Proposed Project, except that the off-site water storage tank and the associated pipeline/access road would not be constructed. The water line connections to the Project site and the water booster pump station would still be required under this alternative, with the pump station to also include a holding/surge tank within the same 10,000 square foot area identified for the Proposed Project.

Potential on-site impacts for this alternative would be identical to the Proposed Project, due to the nature and location of proposed development, and the fact that the entire site would be unavailable for large-scale commercial agricultural operations. Specifically, identified on-site impacts involve the loss of potential (historical) agricultural uses including approximately 300 acres of dry-farmed oat hay cultivation, and grazing of up to 50 head of cattle on 600 acres. As described for the Proposed Project, all project level and cumulative impacts associated with on-site agricultural resources and potential operations were determined to be less than significant. These conclusions are based on the same considerations as listed above in Section 5.2 for the No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative.



Reduced Density Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL STUDY

HELIX

Figure 17

6.0 CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

This report was prepared by HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. and CIC Research, Inc., for Montecito Properties, LLC. The CEQA Project Manager is Tamara S. Ching, and the task manager for the Agricultural Technical Study is Dennis R. Marcin. Gordon Kubota of CIC Research, Inc. provided support in the analysis of agricultural viability.

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