

I-226 Dorothy Kennedy

I -226-1 The comment states that the property has been zoned for only 99 homes and that a General Plan Amendment would allow for 2,100 homes. The comment states that the area is rural and that huge developments of cluster housing and commercial business is not appropriate.

Please refer to **Topical Response LU-1**. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I -226-2 The comment states that the area is a natural habitat for wildlife and the Project would disrupt the natural migration of the animals. The comment states that setting aside land in Ramona to mitigate the loss of habitat is not a solution to the degradation of the species bloodlines. The comment states that the County, not the developer, should provide an environmental study that includes the number and species of animals. The comment states that it would not be long before a developer in Ramona would take that mitigation land.

As described in the Newland Sierra Off-Site Mitigation Memorandum (Appendix K to Appendix H of the Draft EIR), the mitigation site is comparable to or better than the habitat that is being impacted on the Newland Sierra site. The mitigation site includes a variety of topographic relief, a comparable suite of vegetation communities, and rock resources. Therefore, it contributes to the vegetation community mitigation requirements described in Table 2.4-27, pgs. 2.4-172 and 2.4-173 of the Draft EIR.

Additionally, as explained in the updated Specific Plan, Appendix C of the Draft EIR, Section 4.4.1.7:

“The project will include on-site native habitat preserve areas totaling 1,209 acres in size. The preserve areas will be protected with permanent conservation easements. The project’s preserve areas will be subject to an RMP²²⁵ that requires the preserve to be managed in perpetuity by a preserve manager. The RMPs contain detailed maintenance, monitoring, and species management requirements that will be funded by the project through either an endowment or a Maintenance Community Facilities District (CFD) to ensure

²²⁵ Reserve Management Plan

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sufficient funding persists in perpetuity to meet the preserve management requirements of the RMPs.”

The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

- I-226-3** The comment states that I-15 is already congested and that adding more than 20,900 vehicle trips per day would aggravate traffic, increasing air pollution, and increasing noise in the area. The comment states that morning commute traffic frequently begins stopping southbound just south of Deer Springs Road.

The comment addresses traffic, air quality, and noise issues, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR, specifically in Sections 2.13 Transportation and Traffic, 2.3 Air Quality, and 2.10 Noise. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-226-4** The comment states that the Project site is located on a mountain; therefore, the Project would involve significant grading, which would impact existing wildlife habitat.

Potential impacts to biological resources, including wildlife, received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR, specifically in Section 2.4 Biological Resources. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-226-5** The comment states that the amount of grading required for the Project would seriously affect the rainfall runoff, air quality, ocean breezes, and aesthetics of the area.

The comment addresses hydrology and water quality, air quality, and aesthetic issues, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR, specifically in Sections 3.2 Hydrology and Water Quality, 2.3 Air Quality, and 2.1 Aesthetics. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

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I-226-6 The comment states that infrastructure is not available to support the Project and the water supply for the area is already strained. The comment states that the Vallecitos Water District is already projecting a water supply deficit for the next 20 years. Refer to **Topical Response UTL-1 and UTL-2**.

As stated in Section 1.0 Project Description on page 1-20, build out of the Community is anticipated to occur in two phases over approximately 10 years in response to market demands and in accordance with a logical and orderly expansion of roadways, public utilities, and infrastructure. Figure 1-32, Phasing Plan, illustrates the anticipated sequence of planning area development, although sub-areas may not develop in that order. Backbone infrastructure and roadway improvements would be constructed in phases, as needed, to ensure that improvements are in place at the time of need.

Per VWD:

To continue to provide reliable water service to its customers, Vallecitos is guided by its Master Plan, which analyzes existing and future land uses, as well as current water demands and trends, to evaluate the existing and future water needs for District customers well into the future. Even with the 1,624 acre-feet* of annual water demand projected for the proposed Newland Sierra development, the District has already anticipated greater water use (1,825 acre-feet per year) identified for this property during the 2017 Master Plan process without the development. In other words, even if this development moves forward, the District will have sufficient water supplies for all new and existing customers.

“During the recent drought, the cutbacks to our customers were not due to a supply shortage, as Vallecitos had sufficient water supplies. The cutbacks were mandated by an Executive Order from Governor Brown. Even during the depth of the drought, Vallecitos’ water provider - the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), projected 85,196 acre-feet of water in storage after assuming an additional three consecutive years of drought. Since the drought has ended, SDCWA now has 171,000 acre-feet of water in storage, and no restrictions on deliveries to the Vallecitos Water District, or any agency. This is in addition to the drought-resilient water available from the Pacific Ocean from the District’s direct connection to the Claude “Bud” Lewis - Carlsbad Desalination Plant.”²²⁶

²²⁶ <http://www.vwd.org/Home/Components/News/News/2358/18?backlist=/>

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Regarding the proposed projects impacts to water supply, the Draft EIR analyzes water supply in Section 2.14.1, Water Supply and Service. The proposed project would increase overall demand for potable water; however, the Draft EIR compares the planned water usage for the project Site with the estimated water demand based on the proposed project land uses and water conservation measures and concludes the impacts to water supplies would be less than significant. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I-226-7 The comment states that fire and police protection services are already strained and would be inadequate to service the Project.

As stated on page 3.5-15, Section 3.5 Public Services, the proposed project would increase demand on fire and emergency medical services. The County Fire Mitigation Fee Program (see County Code of Regulatory Ordinances section 810.309 and Ord. No. 10429 (N.S.), June 21, 2016) ensures that development fees are paid at the time of issuance of building permits, and those fees are intended to closely reflect the actual or anticipated costs of additional fire protection facilities and equipment required to adequately serve new development. The DSFPD is a participant in the County's Fire Mitigation Fee Program.

The proposed project will pre-pay the County Fire Mitigation Fee pursuant to a Fire Fee Payment Agreement with the DSFPD which would also provide funding beyond the required County Fire Mitigation Fee to augment the DSFPD's capabilities for continued provision of timely service to its primary jurisdictional area, including the project Site. By pre-paying the County Fire Mitigation Fee, the proposed project ensures Fire Station 12 would continue to have the capacity and facilities to serve the project Site and satisfy the General Plan's 5-minute threshold (Appendix N). The final funding amount will be determined in the Fire Fee Payment Agreement, to be completed prior to map recordation per County conditions of approval.

As stated on page 3.5-16, Section 3.5 Public Services, the project and its increase in population will necessitate an increase in law enforcement to meet the additional demands for services that invariably accompany population growth. The project would result in the need for five additional sworn personnel. For purposes of this analysis, the estimated residential population for the proposed project is approximately 6,063 individuals, resulting in the need for five new sworn officers to meet desirable law enforcement service levels (See EIR, Appendix EE, Project Facility Availability Forms). The project would not require the expansion of existing police protection facilities or the construction of new facilities. As such, the project would not result in impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered facilities.

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The proposed project would be subject to payment of public facilities development impact fees at the rate in effect at the time building permits are issued. The amount is determined through evaluation of the need for new law enforcement facilities as it relates to the level of service demanded by new development, which varies in proportion to the equivalent dwelling unit generated by a specific land use. The development impact fees address the proposed project's proportional impact on capital facilities, such as structures and equipment, associated with police protection. It does not address the impact associated with operations and maintenance for those facilities. Public funds such as property taxes, sales taxes, and fees generated by the project would be used to cover the incremental costs associated with providing police services. Net revenues are used to finance costs associated with operations and maintenance associated with the public services required to serve the project. The project would be required to pay the development impacts fees, which would be used exclusively for future facility improvements necessary to ensure that the development contributes its fair share of the cost of law enforcement facilities and equipment determined to be necessary to adequately accommodate new development in the County.

- I-226-8** The comment states that while the developer claims that Caltrans will improve the Deer Springs Road/Hidden Meadows I-15 intersection, there has not been any documentation that Caltrans is in a position to improve the intersection or has an intention to do so.

The project has identified feasible mitigation in the form of building a new interchange and that mitigation measure is identified herein as M-TR-1. The process of implementing the mitigation for the interchange is subject to a three-phase process under the jurisdiction of Caltrans. The first phase involves the preparation of a Project Initiation Document (PID) consisting of a Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) document. The purpose of the PSR-PDS document is to define the purpose and need for any proposed improvements, identify a reasonable range of alternatives (i.e., interchange configurations), and develop an action plan for implementation of the improvements. In 2014, in response to the project's traffic impact analysis, which identified significant direct and cumulative impacts to the Interchange, the project applicant initiated the PID process with Caltrans to begin evaluating different configurations for mitigating impacts to the Interchange.

After completion of the PID phase and approval of the PSR-PDS document, the process advances to the second phase known as the Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) process. The PA&ED process includes an appropriate CEQA/NEPA environmental document for the proposed improvements, including consideration of alternative configurations and a Project Report (PR),

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which constitutes an engineering technical document that serves as the basis for detailed construction plans.

At the conclusion of the PA&ED process, Caltrans will select an Interchange configuration and the process enters the third phase, which involves the Plans Specification and Engineering Phase (PS&E), where detailed engineering documents and construction plans are prepared for the Interchange. Finally, the PS&E phase is followed by the acquisition, if any, of any required right-of-way and construction of the new Interchange.

All aspects included in the process of implementing the mitigation for the Interchange improvements are subject to Caltrans' review, oversight, and approval. As of this writing, Caltrans is within the first PID phase. Caltrans has not completed this phase nor initiated the PA&ED phase. To date, the PSR-PDS document includes preliminary interchange alternatives consisting of an expanded diamond interchange, a diverging diamond interchange, and a roundabout interchange.

The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-226-9** The comment states that widening Deer Springs Road would take several years to complete, but the Draft EIR does not indicate when this would occur. The comment states that travel to and from San Marcos via Twin Oaks Valley Road is already slow and allowing the Project to occur for improvements to a County maintained road is shortsighted.

The comment addresses traffic issues, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR, specifically in Sections 2.13 Transportation and Traffic. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-226-10** The comment states that Project developers claim that the Project is not the same as the Merriam Mountains project that was denied by the County seven years ago. The comment states that the Project is not an improvement on the Merriam Mountains project and the proposed Project should be denied.

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The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commenter, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. Please see **Response to Comment O-1-377**.

The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

- I-226-11** The comment states that the Project should be denied and the General Plan Amendment should not be approved.

The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commenter, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

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