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- I-66-1** The County acknowledges the comment as an introduction to comments that follow. This comment is included in 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-66-2** The comment states that when the General Plan was approved Supervisors agreed to protect this area from over-development and downsize the property to 99 units from 200. See **Topical Response LU-1**. 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-66-3** The comment states that if developed the project would sever critical north/south and east/west wildlife corridors. See **Topical Response BIO-2**. 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-66-4** The comment states that Newland Sierra has sought special treatment or a “carve out” of the regional biological mitigation plan before it has been adopted by wildlife agencies. See **Topical Response BIO-1**. 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-66-5** The comment states that the project would impact Native American human remains by expanding Deer Springs Road. Potential impacts to Native American human remains have been adequately disclosed and mitigated for in the Draft EIR. Please refer to **Mitigation Measures M-CR-1** through **M-CR-12** in Section 2.5 of the 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
- I-66-6** The comment states that the project would add 28,000 new trips per day to the local roads and would bring I-15 traffic to level “F”. Please see **Topical Responses TR-1 through TR-3**.
- I-66-7** The comment states that the project proposes to widen Deer Springs Road to six lanes and build a new I-15 interchange, drawing thousands of cut-through commuters. The project does not propose or require widening Deer Springs Road to six lanes. Please see **Topical Response TR-4**.

Regarding the comment that Newland plans to start building before Caltrans finishes its analysis and approval of a re-designed interchange at Deer Springs Road and I-15,

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the County does not agree with this comment. Please see **Topical Responses TR-1 and TR-2**.

I-66-8 The comment states that Vallecitos Water District projects a water supply deficit for the next 20 years and that the District's Water Supply Assessment requires a 36% water supply cut to existing customers in order to serve the Newland Sierra development. The following statement was published by VWD:

“The Vallecitos Water District is not in a drought emergency and therefore is not imposing any mandatory water-use cuts (reductions). In addition, the District would never impose water-use reductions to any customers to allow for any proposed development, including the Newland Sierra project.

To continue to provide reliable water service to our 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.”²¹³

Regarding the proposed projects impacts to water supply, the DEIR analyzes water supply in Section 2.14.1, Water Supply and Service. The proposed project would increase overall demand for potable water; however, the DEIR compares the planned

²¹³ <http://www.vwd.org/Home/Components/News/News/2358/18?backlist=/>

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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 significance. For additional detail refer to **Topical Response UTL-1** and **UTL-2**.

I-66-9 The comment states that the project is in a “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone” and that the project does not provide enough emergency access routes in the event of a fire which would cause gridlock during an evacuation. The Draft EIR addresses the project’s location in a VHFHSZ in Section 2.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials, specifically, page 2.8-17 states, “The proposed project is situated in an area that, due to its steep terrain, heavy fuels, adjacent ignition sources, and fire history, is subject to periodic wildfire. The project Site and the nearby communities of Castle Creek, Hidden Meadows, and Lawrence Welk Resort are all located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, as designated by CAL FIRE.”

Second, with respect to emergency access, please refer to **Topical Response HAZ-1**. Appendix N-2 is the Evacuation Plan for Newland Sierra, which was prepared in coordination with the Deer Springs Fire Protection District and County of San Diego, and does not conflict with existing evacuation and pre-plans. From Page 2.8-20 of the DEIR, “the intent of the evacuation plan is to guide implementation of an evacuation procedure such that the process of evacuating people from the Site is facilitated in an efficient manner and according to a pre-defined, practiced evacuation protocol.”).

I-66-10 The comment states that the County Board of Supervisors spent millions of dollars and 10 years developing a General Plan that protected and downzoned this area, and that a few years ago the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the plan and protect this area from development. The comment does not challenge the adequacy of the Draft EIR, nor does it does not raise an environmental issue within the meaning of CEQA. However, it should be noted the Draft EIR includes the Existing General Plan as an Alternative. Please refer to DEIR Section 4.5 for a comparison of the impacts of the proposed project and the Existing General Plan. In addition, the Draft EIR thus acknowledges the project would develop more residential than permitted by the existing General Plan land use designations, but would develop substantially less commercial space and retain more open space than existing General Plan designations. See Topical Response LU-1.

I-66-11 The comment states that the County should not approve the project until the Climate Action Plan (CAP) has been completed. The comment also states that the Golden Door and Sierra Club recently won a trial court decision invalidating the County’s threshold for measuring greenhouse gas impacts. The San Diego County Superior Court recently rejected arguments from the Sierra Club et al. to enjoin San Diego

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County from processing and approving projects (including the Newland Sierra project) prior to the adoption of a lawful CAP and corresponding CEQA significance thresholds. The Superior Court held that an injunction prohibiting the “County from undertaking its planning process is too broad.” (See *Sierra Club v. County of San Diego* (Case No. 2012-0101054) and *Golden Door Properties LLV v. County of San Diego* (Case No. 2016-0037402). See also the August 10, 2016 letter from the County of San Diego Office of County Counsel to Jan Chatten-Brown of Chatten-Brown & Carstens LLP regarding “Request to Postpone Projects.” Relevant documents from these judicial proceedings, as well as the referenced letter, are included in Appendix “JJ” of the Final EIR.) As such, there is no legal prohibition on the County’s planning and processing activities in the absence of an adopted CAP. Please refer to **Topical Response GHG-3**.