

**O-3 SIERRA CLUB SAN DIEGO**

**O-3-1** The comment expresses general opposition to the Proposed Project, but does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-2** The comment expresses an opinion that there are numerous problems with the Proposed Project that will damage San Diego County, the sensitive environment along Proctor Valley Road, endangered plants and animals and disturb and diminish the community character of a rural community.

The comment addresses general subject areas — impacts to biological resources and community character—that are analyzed in Section 2.4, Biological Resources; Section 2.1, Aesthetics; and Section 3.1.3, Land Use and Planning of the Draft EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-3** The comment expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project will contribute to metropolitan sprawl and create traffic nightmares for Chula Vista and Jamul and most of southern east county San Diego.

The comment addresses general subject areas—land use (“sprawl”) and traffic—that are analyzed in the Draft EIR in Section 2.9, Transportation and Traffic, and Section 3.1.3, Land Use and Planning. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-4** The comment states that cumulative impacts are not adequately addressed in the Draft EIR.

The comment serves as an introduction to Comments O-3-5 through O-3-7. The County disagrees that cumulative impacts were not adequately addressed. Each section of the Draft EIR considers cumulative impacts. Specifically, Section 2.1.3, 2.2.3, 2.3.4, 2.4.4, 2.5.3, 2.6.3, 2.7.4, 2.8.4, 2.9.4, 2.10.4, 2.11.4, 3.1.1.3, 3.1.2.3, 3.1.3.3., 3.1.4.3, 3.1.5.3, 3.1.6.3, 3.1.7.3, 3.1.8.3, and 3.1.9.3 address cumulative impacts of the Proposed Project in combination with impacts of projects identified in Table 1-7 of the Draft EIR.

**O-3-5** The comment states that the Hollywood Casino has “already created terrible traffic congestion along two-lane California Highway 94, Lyons Valley Road, and Otay Lakes road.” The County acknowledges that the Hollywood Casino (“casino”) has resulted in additional traffic on State Route (SR) 94, Lyons Valley Road, and Otay

Lakes Road. The Draft EIR, Section 2.9 Transportation and Traffic, accounted for traffic impacts from the casino as part of the existing conditions analysis.

The Draft EIR analyzed the Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative traffic and determined that the Proposed Project would contribute to an impact at the SR-94/Lyons Valley Road intersection (Impacts TR-9, TR-11, TR-13, and TR-15). The Draft EIR recommended mitigation measure M-TR-1 to provide for installation of a traffic signal at this intersection to reduce the Proposed Project's impact to less than significant. The Draft EIR, Section 2.9 Transportation and Traffic, specifically Section 2.9.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis, describes

Cumulative impacts are those in which Proposed Project vehicle trips would contribute a "cumulatively considerable" amount to an unacceptable LOS, thus resulting in a significant cumulative impact and requiring the developer to contribute a fair share toward the improvements necessary to mitigate the impact. Since the Proposed Project land uses are less than those provided for in the County General Plan, the Proposed Project is necessarily consistent with the General Plan and no long-range General Plan consistency assessment is required for the Proposed Project. The analysis for the TIS (Appendix 2.9-1) was based on the City of Chula Vista 2025 traffic model for Year 2025 conditions. Therefore, the Year 2025 analysis is considered a cumulative impact analysis.

The subsequent impact analysis leading into mitigation measures M-TR-1 thru M-TR-15 directly address the Proposed Project's cumulative conditions for the years 2025 and 2030. The analysis was prepared in accordance with the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance. Please also refer to **Responses to Comments O-3-5** through **O-3-7**. Please refer to **Thematic Response – SR-94 Improvements**. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-6** The comment expresses an opinion that the potential for future projects is not adequately discussed and that the Draft EIR dismisses such impacts as insignificant.

The County does not agree. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 and the County's Format and Content Requirements, the Draft EIR must analyze cumulative traffic impacts, including those anticipated from future projects, within the cumulative impacts analysis. Specifically, the Draft EIR Section 2.9.4, Cumulative Impact Analysis, analyzed both the Proposed Project and cumulative conditions for years 2025 and 2030. This analysis also included a Cumulative and a 2030 Cumulative Plus

Hypothetical Development of State Preserve scenario. Both of these analytical scenarios assumed implementation of future projects based on the SANDAG Series 11 Regional Transportation Model. Thus, the Draft EIR did not dismiss traffic impacts from future projects as insignificant.

- O-3-7** The comment states the cumulative impact of Village 14 along with other projects, such as the Hollywood Casino, needs to be discussed with regard to scenic rural setting, community character, and cumulative impacts on highways.

The Draft EIR Section 2.1, Aesthetics; Section 2.9, Transportation and Traffic; and Section 3.1.3, Land Use and Planning, analyze cumulative impacts. The cumulative impacts are adequately analyzed in the Draft EIR. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-8** The comment expresses the opinion of the commenter that the traffic report is inadequate and unreasonable.

The comment serves as the introduction to Comments O-3-9 through O-3-11. The Draft EIR, Section 2.9 Transportation and Traffic and the Transportation Impact Study (Appendix 2.9-1 to the Draft EIR) provide detailed analyses in accordance with the County of San Diego Traffic Impact Guidelines, the CEQA project review process, the City of Chula Vista Traffic Impact Study Guidelines, and the San Diego Traffic Engineers' Council/Institute of Traffic Engineers (SANTEC/ITE) Guidelines for Traffic Impact Studies in San Diego. All applicable standards from the guidelines stated above were applied to the Proposed Project's Transportation Impact Study. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-9** The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR regarding traffic. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-10** The comment states that the report concludes that there would be no significant impact on traffic on these already almost gridlocked highways and the logic is that once a road or an intersection is gridlock additional traffic has no additional impact. The commenter notes a "bad situation can" be made worse and the residents of over a thousand new homes "will" have a significantly negative impact on traffic.

The Draft EIR, Section 2.9 Transportation and Traffic and Appendix 2.9-1, Transportation Impact Study (TIS) provide a detailed traffic analysis, including off-

site impacts. Furthermore, both the Draft EIR and the TIS, have been prepared and were conducted in accordance with applicable guidelines. Similarly, as stated in Section 2.9.2 of the Draft EIR, all impacts were determined based on the applicable threshold for each jurisdiction. As explained in both the Draft EIR and the TIA, the Proposed Project's contribution to the highway road segments mentioned in the comment would not meet the applicable significance thresholds.

Impacts to two-lane highway segments, such as segments along SR-94, were determined using the County of San Diego's "Measures of Significant Project Impacts to Congestion – Allowable Increases on Two-Lane Highways with Signalized Intersection Spacing Over One Mile" (per Table 2.9-6 of the Draft EIR). Impacts to freeway segments were determined based on the "SANTEC/ITE Measure of Significant Project Traffic Impacts" (per Table 2.9-27 of the Draft EIR). Since traffic from the Proposed Project would not cause an increase above the allowable thresholds for two-lane highway and freeway segments, the Proposed Project would not cause a significant impact to these two-lane highway and freeway segments.

**O-3-11** The comment expresses an opinion that the Draft EIR fails to account for residents north of Village 14 in Jamul, Dulzura, and Alpine and south of Village 14 in Eastlake and Chula Vista who will likely use the proposed two-lane Proctor Valley road as a through street north and south. The comment further states the traffic would substantially add to the traffic, yet nowhere in the Draft EIR is this additional traffic burden assessed nor is its impact on already heavily travelled roads.

The County disagrees with the comments that the Draft EIR fails to account for existing residents north and south of Village 14. The Draft EIR, Section 2.9, Transportation and Traffic, and Appendix 2.9-1, Transportation Impact Study, analyze trip distribution and assignments that were developed based on the SANDAG Series 11 Regional Transportation Model Select Zone analysis and was adjusted to reflect existing traffic patterns and anticipated future growth in the subregion.

Furthermore, the Draft EIR, page 2.9-4 describes the intent, use and function of Proctor Valley Road and states that Proctor Valley Road is classified as two-lane Light Collector (2.2E) in the County's currently adopted General Plan Mobility Element, and the Proposed Project would involve construction of this roadway to its ultimate classification. When this is done, Proctor Valley Road between the City of Chula Vista and the unincorporated community of Jamul is expected to carry up to 17,900 daily trips (see Figure 2.9-5 of the Draft EIR). Out of these trips, only 10,200 daily trips would be associated with the Proposed Project (see Figure 7-2 of the TIS), with the remaining 7,700 daily trips associated with regional growth and through-

traffic such as that described in the comment (i.e., traffic originating at sources north and south of the Proposed Project). The Draft EIR and TIS accurately accounted for local through-traffic associated with the Proctor Value Road connection.

**O-3-12** This comment restates the Draft EIR’s finding that the intersection of Lyons Valley Road and SR-94 already operates at LOS F. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-13** The comment expresses the opinion that the proposed traffic signal at the intersection of Lyon’s Valley Road and SR-94 would not mitigate congestion at this intersection and would lead to traffic backups on both SR-94 and Lyons Valley Road (such as SR-94 and Steel Canyon and Steel Canyon HS and Highway 54), which leads to lengthy and unacceptable rush hour backups.

The County does not agree with this comment. As discussed in the Draft EIR, Section 2.9, Transportation and Traffic, signalization of the intersection by the 741st equivalent dwelling unit would fully mitigate the intersection, if implemented. A traffic signal warrant was conducted, and this intersection would satisfy both the “Minimum Vehicular Traffic” and “Interruption of Continuous Traffic” warrants.

More specifically, Table 7.7 of the TIA, Appendix 2.9-1 to the Draft EIR, shows that, with installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of SR-94 and Lyons Valley Road, the intersection would operate at an acceptable LOS D. Please also refer to **Thematic Response – SR-94 Improvements**.

**O-3-14** The comment expresses an opinion that building of Otay Ranch were made in the early 1990s when the threat of greenhouse gases and climate change were just beginning to be understood.

The Draft EIR, Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, includes an analysis of the Proposed Project’s specific and cumulative impacts on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change and how the Proposed Project would mitigate those impacts to less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures M-GHG-1 through M-GHG-4 would reduce the Proposed Project’s greenhouse gas emissions to net zero through a combination of project design features, regulatory requirements, and the purchase of verified carbon offsets. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-15** The comment expresses an opinion that even with some of the mitigations, the impact of construction, housing and long commutes is substantial. The comment does not

raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-16** The County acknowledges that the comment expresses the opinion of the commenter and restates information contained in the Draft EIR related to impacts associated with climate change and the impacts of the Proposed Project on greenhouse gas emissions. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-17** The comment expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project would have significantly lesser impacts were it built in the already developed areas of Chula Vista or San Diego.

The County notes that the Project Area is within the Otay Ranch master planned community, established in 1993 by the approval of the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP. The Proposed Project is located approximately 0.25 miles east of the City of Chula Vista (see Draft EIR Section 1.3, Project Location, page 1-34). The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-18** The comment expresses the commenter's opinion that the Draft EIR fails to adequately consider alternatives to the Proposed Project. The comment also expresses an opinion that the alternatives are just modified versions of the same project without providing an alternative in an already developed area of the County.

The Draft EIR, per the CEQA guidelines, provides a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project. The Draft EIR considered five alternatives in Sections 4.4 through 4.8: the CEQA-required No Project (No Build) Alternative, the Low Density Alternative, the Alternate Site Location Alternative, the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP Four-Lane Proctor Valley Road Alternative, and the Land Exchange Alternative. Each of these alternatives was designed to reduce one or more significant impacts of the Proposed Project in compliance with CEQA. Of the five alternatives, the County notes that only the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP Four-Lane Proctor Valley Road Alternative maintains the same footprint as the Proposed Project. The Low Density Alternative eliminates development in Planning Area 19, the Alternate Site Location Alternative moves development to the south of the southern Development Area, and the Land Exchange Alternative consolidates development on a reduced footprint within the Project Area.

Further, Draft EIR Chapter 4 explains that the Proposed Project is part of the Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Otay Subregional Plan, Volume II (Otay Ranch GDP/SRP), which was approved in 1993 under the certified Otay Ranch Final Program EIR (Otay Ranch PEIR). The Otay Ranch PEIR considered seven alternatives, which are summarized in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR, and four alternative sites for the Otay Ranch community. The County of San Diego and City of Chula Vista ultimately selected the Proposed Project configuration as part of the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP.

- O-3-19** The commenter states that the Draft EIR “proposes to plant 600 trees as mitigation” but “fails to subtract the loss of carbon absorption from chaparral.” The comment further states an analysis would likely find that despite the carbon sequestration from planting trees, there is a significant loss in carbon absorption from the Proposed Project contributing to a major net increase in greenhouse gases and attendant climate change.

The comment is not accurate. The Proposed Project would plant 8,000 trees, not 600 as the commenter states. As presented in Section 2.7.3.1 (page 2.7-27) and Table 2.7-10 of the Draft EIR, this would result in a gain of sequestered carbon of 5,664 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e). Additionally, as detailed in Section 2.7.3.1 (page 2.7-23) and Table 2.7-7 of the Draft EIR, the Proposed Project would result in a loss of 810 acres of vegetation with varying carbon content values. This would include impacts to 699.9 acres of scrub land, 0.2 acres of trees, and 85.5 acres of grasslands.<sup>3</sup> Chaparral is categorized as scrub land in the analysis. The carbon content values used are consistent with the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), which are based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (IPCC) 2006 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Volume 4. The total estimated sequestration loss would be 10,382 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e over 30 years. These emissions are included in the construction emissions estimates, and they would be completely offset by mitigation measure M-GHG-1.

- O-3-20** The comment expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project is located in one of the most environmentally sensitive areas of San Diego County. The comment serves as an introduction to Comments O-3-21 through O-3-26. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

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<sup>3</sup> The Proposed Project would also permanently impact 1.5 acres of wetlands and 27.05 acres of disturbed or developed land, which do not have carbon value per CalEEMod.

- O-3-21** The comment states that site of the proposed Village 14 is an important wildlife corridor and connector between major unspoiled, undeveloped tracts of land on Mount San Miguel, Otay Mountain, and Jamul Mountain. The comment further expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project would inhibit migration and cause species segmentation and extinctions.

As discussed in the Draft EIR, Section 2.4.3.4, Guideline 4.4: Wildlife Movement and Nursery Sites the Proposed Project would result in three potentially significant impacts to wildlife movement (Impacts BI-26, BI-27, and BI-28), which are more thoroughly described in **Response to Comment O-3-28**, below. Please also refer to **Responses to Comments A-3-185** through **A-3-206** (from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife) and **Responses to Comments O-5-48** through **O-5-51** (from the California Native Plant Society, San Diego). The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-22** The comment states the Proposed Project is being proposed for an area with numerous endangered plants, insects, reptiles, animals, and birds. The comment then states that “much of this damage is admitted in the DEIR.”

The Draft EIR, Section 2.4, Biological Resources, analyzes impacts to biological resources. Specifically, as disclosed in the Draft EIR, the Proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts to endangered species, including impacts to Otay tarplant (*Deinandra conjugens*) within the City of Chula Vista Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan (for off-site improvements to Proctor Valley Road, a Planned Facility), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) suitable habitat, and Hermes copper butterfly (*Lycaena hermes*) suitable habitat. Section 2.4.6, Mitigation Measures, recommends measures to reduce impacts to less than significant. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-23** The comment states that the Proposed Project “will be built within the existing boundaries on 200 acres of the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP land, an area that was set aside in perpetuity for preservation and conservation.”

The County does not agree with the comment. The Draft EIR, Sections 2.4.3.5 and 3.1.3.2.3, describe the Proposed Project as being consistent with the MSCP County Subarea Plan, County’s General Plan, and related policies. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.



- O-3-24** The comment states that the Land Exchange Alternative would take 468 MSCP acres.

The County disagrees with this comment. As described in Section 4.8.1 of the Draft EIR, the Land Exchange Alternative would consolidate all areas designated for development in Village 14 and Planning Areas 16/19 in the County General Plan and Otay Ranch GDP/SRP within the unincorporated County on approximately 600 acres. These 600 acres would include 43.6 acres currently designated as Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan (RMP)/MSCP Preserve. To compensate for this loss, the Land Exchange Alternative would set aside approximately 312.1 acres of land currently identified for development (169.8 acres in Planning Areas 16/19 and 142.3 acres in Village 14) and re-designate it as Open Space/Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve, resulting in a net gain of approximately 268.5 acres for the Otay Ranch RMP Preserve (see Draft EIR Appendix 4.1-4, Biological Resources Technical Report for the Land Exchange Alternative).

- O-3-25** The comment expresses an opinion that the land exchanges are unacceptable and dangerous. The County acknowledges the commenter's opposition to land exchanges. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-26** The comment expresses an opinion that the land exchange portion of this project sets a dangerous precedent by suggesting that developers can build in the MSCP. Regarding the Land Exchange Alternative, land exchanges allowing for development within the MSCP Preserve are not only allowed by the MSCP Plan, but "may be desirable under certain circumstances," as outlined in Section 5.4.2 of the MSCP Plan (MSCP 1998).

As stated in Section 5.4.2 of the MSCP Plan, Preserve boundary adjustments can be made to accommodate land exchanges, provided the boundary "adjustment will result in the same or higher biological value of the preserve." Section 5.4.2 requires that six biological factors be analyzed to determine the biological equivalency of the boundary adjustment. In conjunction with the Land Exchange Alternative, the biological equivalency analysis and findings required by MSCP Plan Section 5.4.2 are set forth in Appendix A to Appendix 4.1-4, Biological Resources Technical Report for the Otay Ranch Village 14 and Planning Areas 16/19 Land Exchange Alternative, of the Draft EIR. The analysis determined that the Land Exchange Alternative would result in a biologically superior MSCP Preserve. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-3-24** for further clarifications. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-27** The comment expresses an opinion that the land proposed for conservation in the Land Exchange Alternative in Planning Areas 16/19 is already sensitive and undeveloped habitat. Further, the comment notes that there is no net gain of open space in the project, and states that suggesting the creation of a “new” undeveloped area that is already undeveloped is disingenuous and contemptuous. The comment concludes that “taking of MSCP land in the land exchange is wholly inadequate and deceptive.”

The County disagrees with the comment. Although the lands are currently undeveloped, they are approved for development in the County General Plan, Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, Otay Ranch RMP, and MSCP County Subarea Plan. By proposing to place the lands in Planning Areas 16/19 into the Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve, the Land Exchange Alternative would ensure that those sensitive lands are conserved rather than developed. Please refer to **Responses to Comments O-3-24 and O-3-26**.

The comment indicates that “there is no net gain of open space in the project,” which, given the context of this paragraph in the commenter’s letter, is presumably referring to the Land Exchange Alternative rather than the Proposed Project. The County does not agree. The Land Exchange Alternative has two components: a land exchange with the State of California and a Preserve boundary adjustment. The land exchange would not result in any increase in the amount of Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve land, since it would be an acre-for-acre exchange of land, with each party giving the other 278 acres of land with similar underlying approved land uses as set forth in the County General Plan, Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, and MSCP County Subarea Plan. The boundary adjustment component of the Land Exchange Alternative, however, would result in a net increase in the amount of Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve land of 268.5 acres. Refer to Appendix A to Appendix 4.1-4 of the Draft EIR for a detailed analysis of the 268.5-acre increase in Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve land that would result from the proposed boundary adjustment.

Further, the “undeveloped area” referred to by the commenter is approved for development in the County General Plan, MSCP County Subarea Plan, Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, and Otay Ranch RMP. Thus, the Land Exchange Alternative would be creating a “new undeveloped area,” since it would be adding the designated Planning Areas 16/19 undeveloped areas to Otay Ranch RMP/MSCP Preserve instead of allowing these areas to be developed.

**O-3-28** The comment expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project admits to building road, fences and gated communities that inhibit species migration with no mitigation and the fencing the entire village is lauded as a mitigation measure.

The County does not agree. The Draft EIR, Section 2.4.3.4, Guideline 4.4: Wildlife Movement and Nursery Sites analyzed the Proposed Project and determined that it would result in potentially significant impacts, noted as Impact BI-26 (temporary direct impacts to foraging and breeding habitat), Impact BI-27, and Impact BI-28 (short- and long-term indirect impacts to habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors could result from increased human activity, including lighting and noise, during construction, and project occupancy). Mitigation for these impacts is provided in Section 2.4.6 of the Draft EIR, and includes mitigation measures M-BI-1 (biological monitoring), M-BI-2 (temporary construction fencing), M-BI-3 (habitat conveyance and preservation), M-BI-4 (biological open space easement), M-BI-5 (permanent fencing and signage), M-BI-12 (restoration of temporary impacts), M-BI-18 (noise), and M-BI-20 (lighting). As determined in Section 2.4.7, with implementation of these mitigation measure, the Proposed Project's impacts to wildlife movement and nursery sites would be reduced to less than significant.

Further, Draft EIR Section 2.4.3.4 concluded that impacts under the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements: Biological Resources, Guidelines 4B, 4C, 4E, and 4F would be less than significant because the Proposed Project would comply with the Otay Ranch RMP and MSCP County Subarea Plan, "and would therefore retain the functions and values of the corridors identified in wildlife corridor study (Ogden 1992a) and the BRCAs [Biological Resource Core Areas] identified in the MSCP Plan" (see Draft EIR page 2.4-108). The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-29** The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR. The comment states the proposed development may put the region at great fire risk from vehicles, backyard barbeques, landscaping equipment and a host of other potential sources of fire.

The Draft EIR Section 3.1.1, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Appendix 3.1.1-2, Fire Protection Plan (Section 2.1 through Section 2.2.6) analyzed the risk of fire and provided a detailed description of the fire protection measures that would be required of the Proposed Project and that are standard for building in fire hazard areas. Please refer to the responses to **Comment Letter O-6.4** (from Reax Engineering), and specifically **Responses to Comments O-6.4-8, O-6.4-12, O-6.4-14, and O-6.4-21**, which clarify that the Draft EIR and Appendix 3.1.1-2 accurately describe existing conditions and the fire history of the Project Area.

- O-3-30** The comment expresses the opinions that the two lane proposed Proctor Valley Road is inadequate for evacuation as are the heavily impacted roadways of Chula Vista and SR-94.

The Draft EIR Section 3.1.6; Appendix 3.1.1-2, Fire Protection Plan, and Appendix 3.1.1-3, Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan, provide a detailed analysis of fire resources and evacuation routes. The County also notes that fire codes require new projects to provide secondary access as an option in case one or the other is not accessible during an emergency. Proctor Valley Road would be improved by the Proposed Project to meet the applicable codes for width and to provide two, separated access points into the Project Area, one from the north and one from the south.

Intersections with competing traffic are a primary factor for slowing down evacuations. There are no intersections with Proctor Valley Road from the Project Area south until developed areas in Chula Vista, and a limited number of intersections to SR-125. Law enforcement and emergency responders would control intersections as part of a pre-planned protocol. Therefore, Proctor Valley Road is considered appropriate for evacuation in this area. However, emergency personnel may determine that a mass evacuation of the Proposed Project would result in vehicles on roadways that would be less safe than residents remaining on site in protected homes, the school, or other designated areas. This contingency plan to temporarily shelter people on site would alleviate the reliance on Proctor Valley Road to evacuate all residents when there may not be enough time to do so.

Please refer to **Thematic Response – Wildfire Protection and Evacuation and Responses to Comments O-6.5-8 and O-6.5-17.**

- O-3-31** The comment expresses the commenter’s opinion that the Proposed Project significantly increases the chance of a major fire disaster.

The County disagrees with this comment. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-6.4-32.** The Proposed Project is required to provide planning, access, water, fuel modification, and construction materials and methods that have been developed specifically to allow safe development within these areas. The Proposed Project meets and exceeds these requirements, and is consistent with General Plan Policy S-3.6, Fire Protection Measures. The San Diego County Fire Authority has thoroughly reviewed and provided input to the Proposed Project’s Fire Protection Plan, and, based on the fire protection designs and measures integrated into the Proposed Project, the County disagrees that the Proposed Project would present a fire risk to its residents or to residents in Chula Vista. The Proposed Project would provide additional buffer for the

existing community to the west/southwest. This type of dense development with an unbroken landscape (as opposed to low-density wildland/urban intermix projects) has been found to perform well against wildfires (IBHS 2008; USGS Research 2015; see Appendix 3.1.1-2). Accordingly, the Draft EIR determined that the Proposed Project would not significantly increase wildfire hazards.

- O-3-32** The comment expresses an opinion that visual impacts and light pollution would both be substantial.

The comment addresses general subjects, visual impacts and light pollution, which were analyzed in Section 2.1 of the Draft EIR. As determined therein, the Draft EIR determined the Proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to the visual character or quality of the Project Area due to “proposed development [that] would introduce features that would create contrast with existing features in the landscape.” This conclusion is consistent with the Otay Ranch PEIR as explained on pages 2.1-1, 2.1-2, and 2.1-31. Please refer to **Responses to Comments O-3-33** and **O-3-34**, for responses regarding the Proposed Project’s visual impacts related to light pollution. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-33** The comment expresses an opinion that the Proposed Project creates light pollution that impacts the dark skies of East County including the amateur stargazers.

The Draft EIR, Section 2.1.2.3, Aesthetics, analyzed the impacts related to light and glare. The impacts were found to be less than significant (see Draft EIR, pages 2.1-33 and 2.1-35). Specifically, as stated on page 2.1-33 of the Draft EIR:

During operation, the Proposed Project would conform to applicable local regulations (i.e., the County’s Light Pollution Code) related to dark skies. The Preserve Edge Plan further restricts lighting adjacent to the Preserve to reduce indirect lighting impacts and comply with the Dark Sky Ordinance.... Based on the foregoing analysis, and because the Proposed Project would conform to applicable local regulations related to dark skies during operation, long-term lighting impacts would be less than significant.

The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

- O-3-34** The comment expresses an opinion that there are no impaired scenic vistas along the entire stretch of Proctor Valley Road and the Proposed Project would urbanize the entire scenic area.

The Draft EIR, Section 2.1.2.1, analyzed the Proposed Project's visual impacts and determined that the impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant (see Draft EIR, pages 2.1-22 through 2.1-25).

With respect to public roads and scenic highways, the Draft EIR found "Because proposed roadway improvements would not entail construction of walls or other structures capable of obstructing, interrupting, or detracting from available views to San Miguel Mountain or the Otay Mountains along the southern segment of Proctor Valley Road, scenic vista impacts would be less than significant" (see Draft EIR, page 2.1-22). Further, as stated on page 2.1-23 of the Draft EIR, "due to the relatively short duration of obstruction and interruption of views, and the prevalence of these views in the visual environment, impacts to existing views along the central segment of Proctor Valley Road associated with the planting of street trees would not be substantial."

In addition, the Draft EIR found with respect to trails and recreation areas that (Draft EIR, page 2.1-25):

Because the majority of development would be effectively screened from view, and residential development within the westernmost portions of Otay Ranch Village 14 would be located more than 1 mile away and would not be visually prominent, the Proposed Project would not substantially interrupt, obstruct, or interrupt available views of San Miguel Mountain, the Jamul Mountains, or Upper or Lower Otay Reservoir.

Refer to **Response to Comment O-3-32** regarding the urbanization of a natural area. The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-35** The comment expresses the commenter's opinion that the Proposed Project would result in severe permanent and direct impacts to the area. The comment then restates information contained in the Draft EIR, specifically from Section 3.1.10 (see Draft EIR page 3.1.10-1). The comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required or provided.

**O-3-36** The comment expresses an opinion that it is virtually impossible for mitigation measures to compensate for permanent direct impacts. The comment further indicates that mitigation cannot recreate habitat, replace vegetation and land forms, or provide homes for animal species that are killed or removed. The comment also states that there is no comparable lands for mitigation.

The Draft EIR, Section 3.1.3 Land Use and Planning, describes that the Proposed Project is part of the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, which includes the Otay Ranch RMP

Preserve, a component of the MSCP County Subarea Plan Preserve system. The Otay Ranch GDP/SRP and Otay Ranch RMP, as well as the MSCP County Subarea Plan, identified locations for development and Preserve based on their relative biological resources. The Otay Ranch RMP Preserve system is based on permitting development in areas designated for such development and conserving areas designated as Otay Ranch RMP Preserve. The Development Footprint for the Proposed Project is shown as developable in the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, Otay Ranch RMP, and MSCP County Subarea Plan. The portions of the Project Area identified as 'Preserve' are consistent with the Otay Ranch RMP Preserve and MSCP County Subarea Plan and Implementing Agreement. Therefore, the Proposed Project complies with the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, Otay Ranch RMP, and MSCP County Subarea Plan and Implementing Agreement, and the areas of the highest biological value would be preserved as anticipated when these plans were created.

- O-3-37** The comment expresses an opinion that if similar land is found for mitigation it is already undeveloped; thus, the mitigation is imaginary and no further land is actually added.

The County disagrees with this comment. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-3-36**. The Proposed Project would dedicate approximately 778 acres to the Otay Ranch RMP Preserve (see Draft EIR page 2.4-108, mitigation measure M-BI-3) and provide for perpetual funding for management and maintenance through establishment of a Community Facilities District and payment of annual property taxes to the Otay Ranch Preserve Owner/Manager. Accordingly, conveyance of undeveloped land would mitigate for impacts caused by implementation of the Proposed Project because it would ensure the assembly of Otay Ranch RMP Preserve land and ongoing funding of management and monitoring in compliance with the Otay Ranch RMP and MSCP County Subarea Plan and Implementing Agreement. No further response is required or provided.

- O-3-38** The comment indicates that some of the lands used in the Proposed Project are not eligible for mitigation under the MSCP agreements.

The County disagrees with the comment. Preliminarily, it is unclear what lands the comment is referring to which are "not eligible for mitigation under the MSCP agreements." Regardless, the Proposed Project is consistent with the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP and Otay Ranch RMP, and, as required by **M-BI-3**, the Proposed Project is required to convey Otay Ranch RMP Preserve to the Otay Ranch Preserve Owner/Manager (POM) in accordance with the preserve conveyance obligation (i.e., 1.188 acres of conveyance land for every "developable acre" at Final Map). As stated in **M-BI-3**, it is anticipated this would include approximately 426.7 acres of on-site RMP Preserve, and approximately 350.1 acres of off-site Otay Ranch RMP Preserve

based on the Proposed Project's Development Footprint for a total of 776.8 acres of Otay Ranch RMP Preserve land mitigation. All of the Otay Ranch RMP Preserve lands have been determined to be eligible as mitigation unless already conveyed to the Otay Ranch Preserve Owner/Manager. No impacts would occur without the required conveyance being assured at Final Map. Please also refer to **Thematic Response – Baldwin Letter and PV1, PV2, and PV3**. No further response is required or provided.