
From: KRISTINA BELL <k3m1c@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 3, 2023 8:10 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Subject: [External] Greenhills Ranch Phase II---Concerns

Hello

My family and I are residents on Micaela Court off of Cuesta Del Sol Street near the intended Greenhills Ranch Phase II project.

A1

We have lived in this area for the past 7 years. With working in construction, there are some concerns about this development.

1. Traffic concerns

Lake Jennings Road traffic and consistent accidents. This road everyday has issues with backed up traffic and fast drivers. It is already hard to turn left onto Jack Oak to access our home. The top summit of the road is unsafe. You cannot gage the on coming traffic at times. Many motorists drive extremely fast up the grade. There is always a line of cars backed up even to the Helix Water district location waiting to go through traffic lights, get to HWY 8, get home from this direction every evening. Some motorist cut through Jack Oak to Cuesta Del Sol to Adlai to E Lakeview Road, this happens everyday. This causes extra noise, motorist speeding in the residential area which makes this very unsafe for the people living in this area.

A2

By adding an additional 67 homes, that a minimum of 134-167.5 cars/motorist to the area. Increasing accidents, traffic and noise

2. Safety

Some areas on Jack Oak provide sidewalks, NO WHERE else on Cuesta Del Sol, Adlai or E Lakeview have sidewalks. We already have motorists driving on these streets speeding and cutting through without regard to the homes and people who live in the area. It is already a safety concern. There have been incidences already. Adding more homes to an area not designed for this population with increase accidents both for walkers and motorists. There is no safe area for children to walk to school, which is right down E Lakeview about a mile away. **AGAIN adding 67 more homes and people will increase the safety of the existing people there.**

A3

3. Blasting and possible damage to our home, pool and underground utilities and killing exiting wildlife

What are the in-place procedures for the Blasting in an area that is in such a close proximity to exiting property, homes, buildings and pools? The movement of Mountains/hillsides that were made there by nature what are the consequences? Blasting can also damage any potential exiting water/gas lines that are already in place for Helix water district and Lake Jennings water reserve in that area, or even homes.

A4

Is there a Blasting plan in place?

Who will be monitoring the operation? What are the methods for conducting a leakage survey?

Do we know what the radius is for the proposed blasting and the possible impacts caused by the seismic wave or vibration of the blasting operation? And what will be the mitigation actions to address issues?

This blasting is less than 5 miles away from all our homes.

Blasting is an inherently dangerous activity that can result in serious damage, accidents and injuries.

A4

Not only is there potential to damage our property but this will kill existing vegetation and wildlife. The wildlife will be greatly impacted by the blasting and development.

There are many species that call that location home and migrate through year in the area. This is an existing ecosystem (the proposed land of the project) There are many species of wildlife, plants and trees that help make the ecosystem thrive and grow.

There is already a growth of pollution from the many motorists up Lake Jennings.

When you add 67 homes and a new entry to those homes, you are breaking down the air, the surrounding ecosystem, and decreasing the quality of life for residents and the local wildlife. The rest of the area will be impacted by those homes, those extra cars, visitors, deliveries, the short cutters driving through..etc. More breathing issues with the dirt and dust, etc.. We need that ecosystem to continue to exist.

A5

4. Cuesta Del Sol Road --over usage

This road is already over used daily.. there are only 19 homes that are either on it or need it to access their homes. So average 38 cars would drive it per day but in reality it is probably 3-5x that a day. It is a short cut road all the people on Adlai use to access Lake Jennings road, it is used by all the from the Jack Oak (Lake Jennings Development) to access E Lakeview Road. Others use to cut through as a short cut or as a way to avoid the traffic to get to Old Highway 80.

It is full of potholes and broken edges. 19 home owners should not bare the burden of containing that road when so many more use it. And it shows. We all constantly fill the potholes as we can. Can you please make this a county road so it will be maintained properly?

A6

Thank you for your time and consideration

Damon and Kristina Luban (619)279-6607

From: Jan <btbw49@cox.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2023 6:30 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Subject: [External] concerns re :Green Hills ranch phase 2-Lakeside

I have a concern re the traffic that will increase through my neighborhood. I am having a hard time reading the map for where the roads that would go into/out of the project. One map looks like Phase 2 has an access to Lake Jennings Park Rd just before the crest of the hill. If they are able to turn left to go down the hill, all I see is many bad accidents. If they are able to turn right to go up the hill, I see a big issue with coming out of Lake Jennings Park Estates. The increasing traffic is already making it harder to get out of our development safely. With all the houses proposed, there will be more traffic. I am not sure if there will be access off of Adlai Rd. If there is, there will be a lot more traffic cutting thru of development than there already is. That means they would drive on Cuesta del Sol-which is a private road that is FULL of potholes and is not county maintained. Is the county taking it over and repaving it? There will be a lot of cutting through so more traffic thru our development. Already drivers don't stop-and often don't slow down even- at the intersection of Jack Oak Ln and Deanly St. on the way to Cuesta del Sol. There are so many near misses on that corner. It needs a stop sign. If I am incorrect on the traffic entrances and exits, please disregard this information. If I am correct, please take into consideration that there needs to be some upgrading of the traffic flow.

B1

Feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Janice Wirtz

619 443-5071

9481 Deanly St

Lakeside, CA 92040

From: Judy S. <judyscheuer@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 12:48 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Cc: dahvia.lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov
Subject: [External] Greenhills Ranch Phase II

To: Nicolas Gustafson
County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services

May 3, 2023

Subject: Greenhills Ranch Phase II, PDS2016-SPA-16-001;
PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-5611;
LOG NO. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B

Dear Sir:

I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Greenhills Ranch project. As you are aware, an MND is defined as follows:

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is a ND prepared for a project when the initial study has identified potentially significant effects on the environment, but (1) revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by, the applicant before the proposed MND and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur, and (2) there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole of the record before the Lead Agency that the project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment.

C1

That this project claims there will be no significant environmental effect is unacceptable and irresponsible. Clearly it is an attempt to avoid a proper EIR and the attendant investigation into the potentially significant environmental impacts. Using explosives to alter the entire landscape is far from insignificant for this quiet rural community and its environment! There are other concerns as well that should be addressed in a standard EIR.

C2

One such concern is the very significant effect of the increased traffic on the area. The initial traffic study was done during the lockdown when traveling was extremely limited. This painted a false picture of the existing traffic patterns. Now that normal activities have resumed, the traffic is significantly higher than it was then. More homes have been added on Adlai Rd since then as well, which has increased the burden. Adlai Rd and Cuesta del Sol are not county-maintained roads. They are narrow, have no sidewalks and are not well maintained. Pedestrians on these roads are at risk as they are forced to walk in the roadway. Adding over 120 trips a day on Adlai Rd will make it even more dangerous. And it is not just the residents' vehicles traveling here. There are at least three heavy waste disposal vehicles moving on Adlai Rd & Cuesta del Sol during the week (one for trash, one for green waste and one for recyclables). And that number does not take into consideration that more than one waste disposal company is servicing the area! Adding at least 2 vehicles per household, at 63 homes, plus the waste disposal vehicle traffic needed to service those new homes, is very significant, both for the environment and in overburdening the inadequate roadways. The outlet onto Lake Jennings Park Road will not adequately funnel traffic off Adlai Rd either. Once the new residents discover the daily traffic jam that awaits them on Lake Jennings Park Rd, they will surely opt to use Adlai Rd instead. Lake Jennings Park Road already can have traffic backed up for nearly a mile during peak times of the day.

C3

Due to the significant impacts on the environment, air quality, traffic and other concerns, this development should NOT be allowed to skirt around the full process of an EIR. A new complete traffic study should be conducted on Adlai Road, Cuesta del Sol and Lake Jennings Park Road. The environmental impact and danger of blasting away the mountain

C4

behind Adlai Road should be investigated. The need for more housing should not be used as an excuse to overlook safety and environmental responsibility.

} **C4**

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Scheuer, Resident
13643 Cuesta del Sol, Lakeside

From: Gustafson, Nicolas
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 4:05 PM
To: Ben
Cc: Williams, Clifton (SD); Chris Dahrling; Gustafson, Nicolas
Subject: PDS2016-SPA-16-001 Greenhills Ranch Phase II

Ben,
Thank you for your email. They will be responded to as part of the project's response to public comments package, which will be included in the Planning Commission Hearing report.

If you have additional comments following your review of the project documents, please send those to me as well.

Thank you,
Nick

From: Ben <ben.lundeen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 8:22 AM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas <Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: [External] Greenhills Ranch

Nick,

The cut through traffic analysis does not seem to consider the heavy congestion in the evening which frequently backs up and stops on Lake Jennings Park Rd East bound past Jack Oak rd. People already cut through for this reason.

Perhaps the new planned roads will be accessible and divert the new housing traffic, assuming it's two way?

Wondering about potential mitigation options in the Jack Oak neighborhood, gradual speed bumps etc?

Thx,
Ben Lundeen

} **D1**

On Wed, Mar 22, 2023 at 9:22 AM Gustafson, Nicolas <Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov> wrote:

Ben,

Public review starts March 23 through May 8. The weblink goes live tomorrow. The project will be listed at the top of the list. Let me know if you have issues accessing after noon tomorrow.

[California Environmental Quality Act Public Review \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](https://sandiegocounty.gov/publicreview)

Thanks!

Nick

Nicolas Gustafson

Land Use / Environmental Planner 3

Land Development

County of San Diego | Planning & Development Services

[5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego, CA 92123](#)

nicolas.gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

(619) 323-7314

For local information and daily updates on COVID-19, please visit www.coronavirus-sd.com. To receive updates via text, send **COSD COVID19** to **468-311**.

Coronavirus Disease 2019
COVID-19

From: Ben <ben.lundeen@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 8:40 AM

To: Gustafson, Nicolas <Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov>

Subject: [External] Greenhills Ranch

Hi Nicolas,

Can you please send me some of the recent documentation for this project?

I live on Deanly street and received the March notice however was unable to locate anything recent on the indicated website. Thank you.

From: Greg Lambert <greg@lambertphoto.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 4, 2023 12:21 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Cc: Lynch, Dahvia; Lawson-Remer, Terra; Anderson, Joel
Subject: [External] Opposition to the Greenhill's Ranch project

Greg Lambert

13641 Cuesta Del Sol Lakeside Ca 92040

(619) 743-8888

greg@lambertphoto.com

Email to Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

CC:

dahvia.lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov

Terra.Lawson-Remer@sdcounty.ca.gov

joel.anderson@sdcounty.ca.gov

May 3, 2023

Dear Mr. Gustafson

I am writing to express my opposition to the Greenhill's Ranch project Phase II, PDS2016-SPA-16-001; PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-561; LOG NO. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B.

As a resident of the area, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impact this project could have on our community.

Firstly, the project is located in a high-risk wildfire zone, with only two escape routes for over sixty homes, the escape routes are Lake Jennings Park Rd and the other is Adlai, a narrow unmaintained road. In the event of a major fire, evacuation would be extremely difficult and dangerous. This puts the lives of the residents at risk and is unacceptable.

In addition, the increased traffic to the area would have a significant impact on the quality of life and air quality of the community. The current traffic situation on Lake Jennings Park Rd is already backed up to the helix water company, and the addition of more vehicles from the Greenhill's Ranch project would only exacerbate the problem. This would lead to increased pollution and congestion, which would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the community.

} E1
}
} E2
} E3

Furthermore, the blasting several times per day with 20 tons of explosives, which is planned as part of the project, is a major concern. The explosives would be in close proximity to homes and across from a mobile home park. This would put the residents of these homes at risk of shattered windows and added air and noise pollution, and as someone who suffers from asthma, I am particularly worried about the impact this could have on my health and the health of other vulnerable members of the community.

E4

A full EIR is necessary to assess the potential environmental impacts of the Greenhill's Ranch project in Lakeside. The EIR should address issues such as wildfire risk, traffic and air quality impacts, biological resources, and community character, as well as evaluate the cumulative impacts of the proposed project in combination with other nearby developments.

E5

In conclusion, I strongly oppose the Greenhill's Ranch project and urge you to reconsider this development. It poses significant risks to the safety, health, and wellbeing of the community and must be carefully evaluated and modified to ensure the protection of residents and the environment.

E6

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely, Greg Lambert

From: Heather Molchanoff <heather.molchanoff@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 4, 2023 5:44 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Subject: [External] New development in Lakeside

Good afternoon,

I hope you take into consideration ALL of the emails and concerns regarding this new development.

As a mom of 4, business owner and I am extremely concerned about the roads that are not maintained on Adlai, Adlai terrace and Cuesta del sol.

We have BUSY lives and need to be able to get out of our community fast and effectively.
Adding in this new community without considering the commute seems preposterous.

Please consider the family's with lots of children, and the lack of safe roads to drive on.

Thank you
Heather Molchanoff

} **F1**

From: Gustafson, Nicolas
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 1:29 PM
To: Shawn Meyers; Chris Dahrting; Williams, Clifton (SD)
Subject: PDS2016-SPA-16-001 Greenhills Ranch Phase 2

Shawn,
Thanks for the call. To confirm, your comments are:

1. The project does not have easement rights across your property; and
2. The additional traffic trips would overburden any existing easement.

Thanks,
Nick

From: Shawn Meyers <shawn.meyers68@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 8:53 AM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas <Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] Re: PDS2016-SPA-16-001 Greenhills Ranch Phase 2

Nick,

No my title company does not want to get involved at this time.

The two main issues I have is

1. I do not believe they actually have easement rights across my property.
2. Even if they did have easement rights, the additional 400+ cars a day would overburden the easement.

Either way we have an issue that would force me to file a claim with my title company

Shawn

} G1
}
} G2
} G3

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 11
4050 TAYLOR STREET, MS-240
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110
(619) 709-5152 | FAX (619) 688-4299 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



May 8, 2023

11-SD -8
PM 21.82
Greenhills Ranch Phase II
MND/SCH#2023030619

Mr. Nicolas Gustafson
Land Use Environmental Planner III
County of San Diego
Planning and Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Greenhills Ranch Phase II located near Interstate 8 (I-8) and Lake Jennings Park Road in Lakeside. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

Caltrans is committed to prioritizing projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities, to ultimately improve transportation accessibility and quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

We look forward to working with the County of San Diego in areas where the County and Caltrans have joint jurisdiction to improve the transportation network and

connections between various modes of travel, with the goal of improving the experience of those who use the transportation system.

} H1

Caltrans has the following comments:

Traffic Impact Study

- A Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) based Traffic Impact Study (TIS) should be provided for this project. Please use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Guidance to identify VMT related impacts.¹
- The TIS may also need to identify the proposed project's near-term and long-term safety or operational issues, on or adjacent any existing or proposed State facilities.

} H2

} H3

Complete Streets and Mobility Network

Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation network. Caltrans supports improved transit accommodation through the provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements, signal prioritization for transit, bus on shoulders, ramp improvements, or other enhancements that promotes a complete and integrated transportation network. Early coordination with Caltrans, in locations that may affect both Caltrans and the County of San Diego, is encouraged.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve California's Climate Change target, Caltrans is implementing Complete Streets and Climate Change policies into State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects to meet multi-modal mobility needs. Caltrans looks forward to working with the County to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is important. Mitigation to maintain bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is in accordance with Caltrans' goals and policies.

H4

¹ California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) 2018. "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA." https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

Land Use and Smart Growth

Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable “smart growth” type land use planning and policies.

The County should continue to coordinate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges where the agencies have joint jurisdiction.

H5

Environmental

Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as we have some discretionary authority of a portion of the project that is in Caltrans' R/W through the form of an encroachment permit process. We look forward to the coordination of our efforts to ensure that Caltrans can adopt the alternative and/or mitigation measure for our R/W. We would appreciate meeting with you to discuss the elements of the MND that Caltrans will use for our subsequent environmental compliance.

An encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for this project, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Specifically, CEQA determination or exemption. The supporting documents must address all environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W and address any impacts from avoidance and/or mitigation measures.

We recommend that this project specifically identifies and assesses potential impacts caused by the project or impacts from mitigation efforts that occur within Caltrans' R/W that includes impacts to the natural environment, infrastructure including but not limited to highways, roadways, structures, intelligent transportation systems elements, on-ramps and off-ramps, and appurtenant features including but not limited to fencing, lighting, signage, drainage, guardrail, slopes and landscaping. Caltrans is interested in any additional mitigation measures identified for the project's draft Environmental Document.

H6

Broadband

Caltrans recognizes that teleworking and remote learning lessen the impacts of traffic on our roadways and surrounding communities. This reduces the amount of VMT and decreases the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollutants. The availability of affordable and reliable, high-speed broadband is a key component in supporting travel demand management and reaching the state's transportation and climate action goals.

H7

Right-of-Way

- Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.
- Any work performed within Caltrans' R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158 or emailing D11.Permits@dot.ca.gov or by visiting the website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

H8

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mark McCumsey, LDR Coordinator, at (619) 985-4957 or by e-mail sent to Mark.McCumsey@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Hanwen Yi PE

Signed on behalf of

MAURICE A. EATON
Branch Chief
Local Development Review

From: Betty Nash <bnash1968@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 6:45 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Subject: [External] Concerns about Greenhills Ranch Phase 2(log No.PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B)

I’ve lived in Lake Jennings Estates for 32 years.It’s a group of about 64 homes east of this proposed new project.These are my concerns: } I1

1)The traffic on Lake Jennings Park Road has increased dramatically since we have lived here.People use Lake Jennings Park Road to take 67 to 52 West and head to 8 east and west.It is an extremely busy road especially at pick times.It’s hard enough for us to get out through Jack Oak Road to Lake Jennings Park Road.One has to tun left extremely fast because of the visibility and speed of 55 mph the cars are going.Also turning right is a problem at peak times.They’re backed up to Jack Oak Road.You need to count cars again and physically be there during different times.Your new proposed Greenhills Way seems like increasing problems on busy Lake Jennings Park Road. } I2

2)I’m concerned 63 plus cars are going to be coming through my development and increase traffic and how we get out of our dangerous exit on Jack oak Road to lake Jennings Park Road. } I3

3)I’m concerned about this new development increasing traffic down the private Adlai Road.It’s extremely dark at night and some parts of this private road are in terrible condition. } I4

3)Also concerned about increased traffic on private road Cuesta Del Sol.This road is extremely poorly maintained with numerous dangerous pot holes.So if these new residents enter by Jack Oak Road or leaving their development it could be dangerous.Not lit up at night and very narrow. } I5

I know people want to make money but this proposed development is in a very unique area and needs to be looked at by how it will effect the safety of the people who have been living here for many years as well as the new residents.There will probably at least 124 more cars brought to this area with this development. } I6

Thank you
Betty and Leonard Nash
9466 Deanaly Street
Lakeside,Ca.92040

Sent from my iPhone

From: Dan Silver <dsilverla@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 4:27 PM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas
Cc: White, Kendalyn; Talleh, Rami; Slovick, Mark; Susan Wynn; Jonathan Snyder; David Mayer; Karen Drewe; Michael Beck
Subject: [External] MND for Greenhills Ranch Phase 2PDS2016-SPA-16-001; PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-5611; LOG NO. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B

April 5, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Nicolas Gustafson
DPDS
5510 Overland Ave
San Diego CA 92123

RE: MND for Greenhills Ranch Phase 2PDS2016-SPA-16-001; PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-5611; LOG NO. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B

Dear Mr Gustafson:

Endangered Habitats League (EHL) appreciates the opportunity to review this project from the biological and MSCP perspectives. We offer the following comments and would appreciate responses to our questions.

} J1

1) Regarding preserve design, the development footprint is generally sited in the least sensitive area and biological open space is properly configured adjacent to off-site habitat blocks. The off-site mitigation property is well chosen and would further consolidate preserve lands. Nevertheless, there is significant loss of coastal sage scrub habitat (over half is impacted). (California gnatcatchers and cactus wrens are not directly impacted.) There is also loss of 1/3 of the San Diego County Viguiera (*Viguiera laciniata*) on site. 100-ft limited building zones and fuel modification zones are large in size relative to the preserved areas and may not retain any substantial habitat value. This deserves additional attention.

} J2

What are the allowable uses within the limited building zone and fuel modification zone? How can residual habitat value be maximized? Can additional use restrictions and plant palette requirements be imposed? Can less aggressive thinning be employed consistent with CalFire recommendations?

2) From an MSCP compliance standpoint, we are concerned that substantial evidence is not provided for key findings.

} J3

a) "Clustering to the maximum extent permitted by County regulations shall be considered where necessary as a means of achieving avoidance."

} J4

Rather, lots are large, ranging from 1/4 to 1/2 acre. *Does the Specific Plan zoning process provide the ability to further reduce the lot sizes and avoid more coastal sage scrub?*

b) "Every effort has been made to avoid impacts to BRCAs, to sensitive resources, and to specific sensitive species as defined in the BMO."

} J5

The finding implies that *mitigation ratio compliance* is grounds for maximal avoidance of BRCA. This is not correct. Meeting the ratios is a step which *follows* using site design to maximally avoid resources, and is not relevant to this required finding. As it stands, the finding is circular and conclusory, rather than quantitative or providing factual analysis. To say that a project is “good enough” is not a basis for finding that “every effort” has been made. *Why exactly are the lot sizes not smaller to further avoid BRCA? Why has the number of units not been reduced to further avoid BRCA?* A smaller footprint would allow pull back of the limited building and fuel modification zones and additional preservation of coastal sage scrub habitat.

} J5

Thank you for considering our comments and for the County’s long-standing commitment to MSCP assembly.

Yours truly,

Dan Silver

Dan Silver, Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League
8424 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite A 592
Los Angeles, CA 90069-4267

213-804-2750
dsilverla@me.com
<https://ehleague.org>

From: Gustafson, Nicolas
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 11:43 AM
To: mary turano; Williams, Clifton (SD); Chris Dahrting
Subject: PDS2016-SPA-16-001 Greenhills Ranch Phase II

Mary Ann,

Thank you for your comments. They will be responded to as part of the project's response to public comments package, which will be included in the Planning Commission Hearing report, which will be available for review approximately 10 days prior to hearing.

Thank you,
Nick

Nicolas Gustafson

Land Use / Environmental Planner 3
Land Development
County of San Diego | Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego, CA 92123
nicolas.gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov
(619) 323-7314

For local information and daily updates on COVID-19, please visit www.coronavirus-sd.com. To receive updates via text, send **COSD COVID19** to **468-311**.



From: mary turano <maturano@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 8:40 AM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas <Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Cc: Lynch, Dahvia <Dahvia.Lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov>; Anderson, Joel <Joel.Anderson@sdcounty.ca.gov>
Subject: [External] Greenhills Ranch

We are very concerned about the effect on our environment if Greenhills Ranch proceeds. The traffic study they did was during the covid shutdown. The road they are proposing will go right past our driveway and will go to Lake Jennings Road. This turn onto Lake Jennings with no traffic signal will be very dangerous. We request that a more realistic traffic study be performed.

} K1

As the most affected by this new road, living on the north end of Audubon Road, we are strongly in favor of the gate which is planned so that we won't have all the traffic from Adlai going by our driveway as well

} K2

We are also concerned about having the new homes directly above us, looking onto our property which is zoned Agricultural.

} K3

The blasting could damage our home, create a lot of environmental dust and harmful materials in the air and of course, the noise would disturb and traumatize us and our animals. What would be done to mitigate damage to our homes and vehicles?

} K4

We would like to be assured that we will have substantial trees as buffers between our property and the new homes and would prefer that there would be open space around us, rather than the homes directly above our house.

} K5

We understand the state of CA wants to provide more housing but this development is not compatible with the surrounding area. Why not have more greenspace and build a smaller number of homes with larger lots?

} K6

We demand a full EIR. This project would have a huge impact on us both during construction and after completion. } **K7**

Your serious consideration is requested.

Mary Ann Turano and David Tychsen
9438 Audubon Road
Lakeside, CA 92040



Setting Standards of
Excellence in Public Service

Administration Office
7811 University Avenue
La Mesa, California 91942-0427

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May 8, 2023

Nicolas Gustafson, Project Manager
County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Subject: **Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan Phase II; PDS2016-SPA-16-001; PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-5611; PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B**

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

The Helix Water District ("HWD") has reviewed the above Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, dated March 23, 2023, and provides the following comments:

Section XIII. NOISE

a) Generation of substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise:

The project site is located immediately adjacent to the HWD R.M. Levy Water Treatment Plant ("Plant"), which treats imported and locally sourced water, and results in potable water deliveries throughout east San Diego County. As part of this operation, the District has employees at the Plant monitoring and operating the system 24-hours a day, seven days a week. HWD will rely on the full compliance with MM NOI-1a to avoid interference with the critical operations of the Plant.

This comment should be applied in every instance throughout the Draft MND where reference is made to mitigation of temporary construction impacts, including but not limited to **MM NOI-1a; NOI-1b; MM NOI-2; MM NOI-3; and MM NOI-4.**

L1

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels:

The description of potential impacts and suggested mitigation measures fail to specifically contemplate the impacts of ground shaking activities on the Plant and the highly sensitive equipment and instrumentation utilized in the treatment process. The Helix Water District requests that blasting be prohibited unless the applicant can demonstrate that mitigation measures can be implemented to eliminate the risk to District facilities.

L2

Board of Directors
Kathleen Coates Hedberg, President
Daniel H. McMillan, Vice President
Andrea Beth Damsky, Division 2
Mark Gracyk, Division 3
Joel A. Scalzitti, Division 5

This comment should be applied in every instance throughout the Draft MND where reference is made to mitigation of temporary construction impacts, including but not limited to **MM NOI-2; MM NOI-3; and MM NOI-4.**

} **L2**

Sincerely,



Debbie Lundy

Senior Right of Way Agent/Environmental Analyst

cc: Luis Valdez, Director of Water Quality/System Operations; Tim Ross, Director of Engineering- HWD



San Diego County Archaeological Society, Inc.

Environmental Review Committee

12 April 2023

To: Mr. Nicolas Gustafson
Department of Planning and Development Services
County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, California 92123

Subject: Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration
Greenhills Ranch Phase II
PDS2016-SPA-16-001, PDS2016-REZ-16-002, PDS2016-TM-5611,
Log No. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

I have reviewed the subject DMND on behalf of this committee of the San Diego County Archaeological Society.

Based on the information contained in the DMND, initial study, and the cultural resources survey report provided via the department's website, we agree with the recommended mitigation program as defined in the DMND.

We appreciate participating in the environmental review process for this project.

Sincerely,

James W. Royle, Jr., Chairperson
Environmental Review Committee

cc: Laguna Mountain Environmental
SDCAS President
File

} M1

**Law Office of Abigail Smith
A Professional Corporation**

2305 Historic Decatur Road, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92106

ABIGAIL A. SMITH, ESQ.
EMAIL: ABBY@SOCALCEQA.COM
TELEPHONE: (951) 808-8595

VIA E-MAIL ONLY

May 8, 2023

County of San Diego
Attn: Nicolas Gustafson, Planner
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

**Re: Greenhills Ranch Phase II Project including Specific Plan
Amendment (PDS2016-SPA-16-001), Zone
Reclassification/Rezone (PDS2-16-REZ-002), Tentative Tract
Map (PDS2016-TM-5611), Mitigated Declaration – Public
Comments**

Dear City of San Diego Planning and Development Services Department:

Please accept this letter on behalf of local residents and the Lakeside Homeowners for Responsible Development regarding the Greenhills Ranch Phase II development project (“the Project”). The Project is an application by Atlas Investments to amend the Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan (“GRSP”) to subdivide a 36.03-acre mostly vacant and natural site into 76 lots including 63 single-family lots.¹ The Project site is located north of the intersection of Adlai Road and Audubon Road in the Lakeside Community Plan Area, in unincorporated San Diego County.

The Project involves the development of a suburban “tract-style” development with lots ranging from 5,119 square feet to 11,5768 square feet in size. Due to the topography and natural features of the site, a massive amount of earthwork is required for the proposed development plan, including grading, excavating, and filling as well as “blasting” of hard rock at high elevations. The site’s sensitive topography consists of large hills and slopes. Slopes on and adjacent to the site range between nearly sea level to 70% and on-site elevations range between 575 to 780 feet. The Project includes off-site improvements to provide vehicle ingress/egress for residents. Access to the site will be provided via Adlai Road, a private road, as well as a new private road connecting to Lake Jennings Park Road to the east. Surrounding uses include existing residences on all sides of the Project site including some immediately adjacent to proposed lots on the south side. Four existing residences that are not part of the GRSP will be surrounded by the Project development. The site is maximized with development excluding those portions that cannot be developed per

N1

¹ Because the Project removes two existing homes, the “net gain” is 61 residential lots.

the County’s Resource Protection Ordinance (“RPO”) because of very steep slopes. } **N1**

Based on our review of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, we urge the County to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) for the Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) (Public Resources Code, section 21000 *et seq.*). As discussed below, further analysis and mitigation of the Project’s potentially significant environmental impacts is necessary before the Project can be legally approved. } **N2**

Reliance on a Mitigated Negative Declaration is Improper Where The Project Presents Significant and Unmitigated Environmental Impacts and There Is The Need for Additional Environmental Analysis and Mitigation

The record indicates that the Mitigated Negative Declaration (“MND”) and supporting Initial Study are legally inadequate and an EIR is required for the Project. CEQA requires the preparation of an EIR for any project that *may* have significant adverse effects on the environment. (Cal. Public Resources Code § 21151.) “Said another way, if a lead agency is presented with a fair argument that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, the lead agency shall prepare an EIR even though it may also be presented with other substantial evidence that the project will not have a significant effect.” (State CEQA Guidelines, §15064 (f)(1).) The Project meets these standards as discussed herein. } **N3**

Additionally, an MND is only appropriate when revisions in the proposed project “would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where *clearly* no significant effects would occur, and [t]here is *no* substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised *may* have a significant effect on the environment.” (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15070 (b) [emphasis added].) The Project’s MND and supporting Initial Study do not demonstrate that significant impacts are mitigated to a point where “clearly no significant effects would occur.” And, in many important respects, the MND and Initial Study do not provide sufficient information by which the County can make an informed decision about the environmental consequences of the Project. The initial study must disclose the *factual basis* for the County’s finding that an EIR is not required. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15063 (c)(5); *see, Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue v. City of Santa Cruz* (2005) 131 Cal.App.4th 1170, 1200.).

A. Aesthetic and Visual Resources

The record supports a “fair argument” of significant Project impacts to visual resources including sensitive and protected landforms. The Project will entail massive grading, blasting, and alterations to existing landforms to allow for the housing tract. The visual environment will be dramatically and irreversibly altered with urban uses compared to its current natural state of steep hills and valleys. The Project consequently represents an “adverse change” to the existing environment within the meaning of CEQA. The proposed landscaping “mitigation” is woefully inadequate because it does not offset the permanent loss of these sensitive resources. } **N4**

The Initial Study’s visual simulations depict mature landscaping when there is no assurance that such landscaping will be present in the foreseeable future. For instance, the planting of 24-inch box trees will not shield new homes from views in the shorter term. There is also no assurance that } **N5**

individual homeowners will maintain existing landscaping as depicted on the landscape plan. In other words, the landscaping will be installed on individual lots in many cases, meaning that the effectiveness of the “mitigation” depends on individual homeowners or perhaps the homeowner’s association, which cannot be assured.

N5

Visual simulations are inadequate where they do not include simulations from existing homes including those that will be surrounded by the Project site (located approximately between proposed Lots 63-57 and 34-38) or those immediately south of proposed Lots 6-15. Visual simulations with respect to areas to the south of the Project site, and those surrounded by the Project site, are provided from a very far distance, not from the locations that will be most affected by the Project. Simulations must be provided from existing homes including those immediately adjacent to the Project’s new two-story homes which are at higher elevations than the existing homes. The Initial Study acknowledges that “proposed homes would be visible from lower elevation residential areas south of the site.” (IS p. 7.) Yet there are no visual simulations (“before and after”) to show how the Project will impact (*i.e.*, “change”) viewsheds from the existing homes. Further mitigation for significant visual impacts could include modifying current plans to build only one-story homes on lots adjacent to existing homes. This would increase the effectiveness of the landscaping “mitigation” and reduce visual impacts overall. The Initial Study states,

N6

Item 6 requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. These lots comprise 10 of the 15 lots that face the residential areas to the south along Adlai Road. (IS p. 7)

Feasible and appropriate mitigation must include restricting *all* the lots facing Adlai Road to one-story.

The record lacks specific information about the Project’s impacts to existing landforms and rock outcroppings. There are no photographs of the Project site in its natural state other than from the far distances provided from the three vantage points. The site has steep slopes, mountain peaks, valleys, rugged terrain, unique rock outcroppings and other landforms that are not shown. Further analysis of impacts to visual resources is necessary including but not limited to simulations that adequately show “before and after” images of the areas where removal of the existing landforms will occur, including the peaks up to 800 feet. Also, there is no mitigation for the permanent removal of rock outcroppings or existing landforms. The removal of these visual resources must be considered a significant impact of the Project.

N7

This approach is consistent with County of San Diego General Plan Policy COS-9.2 which states that development shall be required to minimize impacts to unique geological features. The Initial Study does not reference this policy. The Initial Study does not mention or evaluate the Project pursuant to General Policies pertaining to preservation of visual resources, *e.g.*, COS-11.1, COS-11.3, or COS-12.1, COS 12.2 or COS-13.1. COS-11.3 for instance states that development shall be required to “minimize visual impacts” through “creative site planning, integration of natural features into the project, appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape, minimal disturbance of topography.” The Project does not propose to preserve existing natural features such as rock outcroppings and it does not propose avoidance of natural areas except

N8

where required by County regulation. } **N8**

Further analysis is needed with respect to viewsheds from “scenic highways” near the Project site. According to the General Plan², a “scenic highway can pertain to any freeway, highway, road, or other vehicular right-of-way along a corridor with considerable natural or otherwise scenic landscape.” Here there are no visual representations from roadways to the east of the Project site, for instance, from Old Highway 80, which may be required by the General Plan. *See*, General Plan Table COS-1. } **N9**

The Initial Study also does not disclose that the Project is located in a Resource Conservation Area under the Lakeside Community Plan³. This area is described under that plan as containing unique and important visual resources. } **N10**

Finally, while the Initial Study states that the Project relies on “mitigation” for significant impacts to visual resources, namely the landscaping plan, there does not appear to be any mitigation proposed (no mitigation measures are listed in the Initial Study). CEQA requires that all mitigation measures be adopted and be made enforceable through a mitigation program to ensure they are actually implemented. } **N11**

B. Land Use Impacts

The Initial Study selectively and loosely discusses some the County’s development code provisions relevant to the Project, such as the hillside grading ordinance, but the Initial Study simply states, without accompanying analysis, that no impacts will occur because these regulations will be complied with. In accordance with CEQA, the agency must perform *analysis* or provide factual documentation to support the ultimate conclusions of the Initial Study. Moreover, the Initial Study ignores relevant General Plan policies⁴ applicable to the Project that serve environmental purposes. Relevant General Plan land use policies include those mentioned in this letter pertaining to land use, greenhouse gas emissions (“GHGs”), noise, traffic and others. The lack of analysis regarding relevant and applicable land use policies renders the Initial Study inadequate on an informational basis. Further analysis through an EIR is needed. } **N12**

The Project’s avoidance of development in certain “steep slope” areas in compliance with the County’s Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) does not negate the potential for impacts with respect to other areas of the Project site which are *also* sensitive in nature in terms of having diverse and unique landforms. CEQA requires analysis of a Project’s environmental impacts regardless of compliance with existing regulations that may or may not be a complete plan of “mitigation” for the particular project at issue. } **N13**

The Initial Study does not discuss the zoning changes presented by the Project. Ostensibly the Project is proposing smaller setbacks relative to some lots, thus creating potential } **N14**

² <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/gpupdate/docs/GP/ConservationandOpenSpace.pdf>

This hyperlink, and its contents, are fully incorporated herein by reference, and the contents of the hyperlink are summarized in this letter.

³ https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/docs/CP/Lakeside_CP.pdf

conflict with the zoning code. Yet there is no disclosure or analysis of this land use issue. } **N14**

Finally, it is not clear that the Project is conformance with the Lakeside Community Plan in terms of preservation of open space⁵. It is unclear whether the 2 HOA lots are included within the 3 open space lots for purposes of satisfying “open space” requirements. Moreover, it is unclear if the “open space” is for the public’s benefit or if some of it is for private use. Also, Initial Study does not discuss the policies of the Lakeside Community Plan that are applicable to the Project, including, for instance, Circulation Policy 4 regarding public transportation. There is no indication that the Project will provide access to public transportation thus helping to decrease the Project’s vehicle miles traveled (“VMT”), contrary to County policies aimed at reducing VMT. } **N15**

C. Air Quality and Energy

The Project’s air quality analysis is based on implementation of several “design features.” These design features must be adopted through the CEQA mitigation program to ensure they are enforceable. For instance, the construction air quality analysis assumes that “Tier 4 equipment” will be used but there is no guarantee that only Tier 4 will be used as this regulation applies to purchase of new equipment. The same is true of “energy” measures which are framed in terms of “design features” rather than mandatory and enforceable requirements per CEQA. } **N16**

D. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As with air quality and energy measures, all GHG measures must be adopted through the CEQA mitigation program including measures restricting the use of natural gas and requiring the installation of solar energy panels. Some of the GHG measures are also impermissibly written so that they are not enforceable such as the Initial Study’s statement that the Project “will also look to get power from the community choice power program, that consists of 50 percent renewable power.” Most notably the Project does not take steps to reduce VMT, which is significant because mobile emissions are the most significant contributor to GHGs. The MND asserts the Project has a less than significant impact from VMT, though it fails to incorporate any measures that reduce VMT in practice. } **N17**

The conclusions with respect to air quality and GHG impacts are based on the claim that impacts are less than what would be allowed under the General Plan buildout scenario. In other words, the claim is that the applicant is permitted 148 units based on the size of the property under current General Plan designations and development regulations. However, the Project is not } **N18**

⁵ SPECIFIC PLAN AREA (SPA) 6 - AKSYN

The Aksyn SPA consists of approximately 100 acres located west of Lake Jennings Park Road and east of Lakeview Road. The project shall be developed according to the following criteria.

1. Overall density shall not exceed 1.6 dwelling units per acre.
2. At least 60% of the site shall be preserved in open space.
3. The developed portions of the site shall not exceed an overall gross density of 4.3 dwelling units per acre.

permitted to build over a portion of the site pursuant to the RPO which prohibits development in these areas because of very steep slopes. The Project builds over all areas which *are* developable. Thus the Initial Study presents a distorted view of the Project's impact to the environment as the Project's impacts should be assessed in view of the Project being a new source of GHG emissions. The Project should not be compared to an imaginary development scenario.

N18

Statements in the Initial Study with respect to Project consistency with the County's General Plan as well as State and regional plans with respect to the reduction of GHGs are conclusory. Alleged compliance with one or two selected policies does not eliminate the need to evaluate consistency with applicable plans in their totality. For instance, the Project does not evaluate conformance with the County of San Diego's Climate Action, including the "26 strategies" to reduce GHGs. *See id.* The County states on its website that pending the adoption of the new CAP that it will continue to implement these 26 strategies.⁶ As mobile sources are the greatest source of GHG emissions in the County⁷, the Project must implement measures to reduce VMT in particular. VMT strategies include measures to reduce reliance on passenger vehicles such as creating public transit opportunities.

N19

E. Noise Impacts

Noise mitigation measures including MM NOI-1a, MM NOI-2, MM NOI-3 and MM NOI-4 are uncertain, deferred, and unenforceable within the meaning of CEQA.

N20

The conclusions that the Project will result in less than significant construction noise impacts, particularly with respect to rock crushing and blasting, is based on the development of future noise mitigation plans. This constitutes improper deferral of mitigation under CEQA. For instance, the noise study states that if the "rock drill" is located within 200 feet of any noise receptor that a "specific mitigation plan" should be developed. It is unclear why a mitigation plan cannot be developed presently, prior to project approval. After Project approval, it will be too late for the public or anyone to comment on the adequacy of the mitigation plan. Under CEQA there must be a valid reason why a mitigation measure is "deferred." According to the Initial Study it is "likely" a noise barrier will be needed, so it is appropriate to develop the mitigation plan now. Other mitigation is uncertain and unenforceable. For instance, the "temporary noise barrier" referenced in NOI-1b *may* be installed if a complicated set of conditions is met, with decisions being made in real time in the field, outside the public review process; alternatively, it may be disregarded entirely "to the satisfaction of the Director of PDS." This does not amount to an enforceable mitigation program. It is clear from the available information that noise impacts are likely to be significant and very disruptive during construction periods including the "blasting" that must occur. A complete and enforceable plan for mitigation must be proposed presently.

N21

The noise study does not determine that construction noise impacts will be less than significant even with utilization of mitigation measures including a temporary noise barrier. Rather, the noise analysis states that construction noise is "anticipated" to be less than 75 decibels with the

N22

⁶ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan.html>

⁷

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/advance/cap/publicreviewdocuments/PostBOSDocs/San%20Diego%20County%20Final%20CAP.pdf>

incorporation of an 8-foot barrier. There is an overall lack of project-specific analysis to support the conclusions of the Initial Study as to construction noise. Moreover, there are numerous assumptions in the noise study about the locations of equipment, the timing of equipment operation, etc., that make it difficult if not impossible to determine that impacts are less than significant. As such the record indicates at least a “fair argument” of significant construction noise impacts absent more analysis and information. The Initial Study confirms that grading equipment will be located adjacent to occupied properties. Hence it is imperative that all noise producing activities be fully evaluated and mitigated pursuant to CEQA at the time of Project approval, not later when the public will be foreclosed from commenting on the information. } **N22**

There is no analysis of Project construction or operational noise impacts on existing or future open space/conservation areas. *See* General Plan Noise Element.⁸ As the General Plan notes, noise can be damaging and disruptive to wildlife that live and breed in open space conservation areas. } **N23**

F. Wildland Fire/Evacuation Safety Risk

The Project’s “fire protection plan” (FPP, Appendix I) is dated July 2009 with updates in 2016 and 2018. This plan is outdated and must be revised pursuant to current information and industry standards regarding the evaluation of wildland fire risk and evacuation issues. The Project site is “located along a ridge in a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.” Notwithstanding, the Project fails to evaluate fire evacuation issues and fails propose to any wildfire mitigation. The Initial Study’s conclusory statement that the Project will not impede goals or policies of a regional evacuation plan says nothing of the Project’s impacts to local roadways and how the Project with its added density and population creates additional risk to existing residents in terms of evacuation times during a major fire event. } **N24**

The FPP discusses fire safety risk with respect to Project residents. The FPP does not address the issue of evacuation of Project residents combined with the evacuation of homeowners in the vicinity of the Project site. As wildfires are unpredictable in nature, the County must prepare a project-specific traffic evacuation analysis that provides detailed information, to include, for instance, how many vehicles can be expected to evacuate under existing conditions assuming a mass evacuation (the Initial Study does not disclose how many residents are anticipated to occupy the Project); how many vehicles the Project will add to evacuation scenarios; how much additional time this will add to anticipated evacuation times per any existing plans; the expected path(s) of evacuation vehicles; and how much time can be expected to be needed to evacuate along existing routes considering roadway capacity during a mass evacuation. Also, it must be assumed for purposes of the analysis that one or more roadways may not be available during a wildfire event, meaning that the analysis must be assume all vehicles will utilize one roadway at a time. The evacuation analysis must be include suggestions for contingency options for Project residents. In short, an evacuation model must be performed. And there must be a community evacuation plan for Project residents that adequately addresses evacuation safety impacts to the *community at large*. } **N25**

⁸ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/gpupdate/docs/GP/NoiseElement.pdf>

The Initial Study fails to disclose or evaluate Project consistency with numerous General Plan policies regarding fire risk impacts.⁹ The Project adopts not a single specific mitigation measure for fire safety risk (*see*, General Plan Policy S-4.6), although the FPP contains specific recommendations for mitigation measures. (FPP p. 20-25). These measures must be adopted for *fire safety* impacts not under a separate heading that ostensibly avoids a finding of significance in another impact area. } **N27**

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, we urge the County to require preparation of an EIR for the Project. } **N28**

Sincerely,



Abigail Smith
Attorney

⁹ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/gpupdate/SafetyElement-Aug2021.pdf>



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250
Carlsbad, California 92008



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, California 92123

In Reply Refer to:
FWS/CDFW-23-0078309-HCP_SD

May 8, 2023
Sent Electronically

Nicolas Gustafson
County of San Diego
Planning and Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, California 92123
Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Subject: Joint Response to the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Greenhills Ranch
Phase II Project, County of San Diego (SCH# 2023030619)

Dear Nicolas Gustafson:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department), jointly the Wildlife Agencies, have reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Greenhills Ranch Phase II Project (Project). The comments provided in this letter are based on information provided in the Initial Study and MND; meetings and discussions with San Diego County (County) staff and representatives of Atlas Investments, LLC and Vance & Associates (Applicant), including a site visit on April 20, 2023; our knowledge of sensitive and declining species and their habitats in the region; and our participation in regional conservation planning efforts, including the County of San Diego's Subregional Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). We have identified potential effects of this Project on wildlife, sensitive habitats, and regional planning efforts.

The primary concern and mandate of the Service is the protection of fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. The Service has the legal responsibility for the welfare of migratory birds, anadromous fish, and threatened and endangered animals and plants occurring in the United States. The Service also is responsible for administering the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), including habitat conservation plans developed under section 10(a)(2)(A) of the Act.

The Department is a Trustee Agency and a Responsible Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; §§ 15386 and 15381, respectively) and is responsible for ensuring appropriate conservation of the State's biological resources, including rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code § 2050 *et seq.*) and other sections of the Fish and Game Code. The Department also administers the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. The County participates in the NCCP program through implementation of their MSCP Subarea

Nicolas Gustafson (23-0040670-HCP_SD)

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Plan (SAP), also referred to as the South County MSCP (SC MSCP), and development of its draft North and East County Subarea Plans.

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Location and Description

The proposed Project consists of a Specific Plan Amendment to amend the Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan (GRSP) to include development specifications and regulations for phase II of the GRSP, a rezone to add the “D” Special Area Regulation to require a Site Plan, and a tentative map to subdivide the 36.06-acre site into 76 lots. These lots include 63 clustered, single-family residential parcels. The subdivision includes brush management, a private street system, horse/hiking trail, and dedication of 18.64 acres of biological open space. Access to the site would be provided by Audubon Road and from a new road off Lake Jennings Park Road.

The proposed Project occurs within the plan boundary of the SC MSCP. The Project site is located north of the intersection of Adlai Road and Audubon Road in the Lakeside Community Plan area, within the unincorporated County of San Diego. Open space and residential uses developed as a part of Greenhills Ranch Phase I occur northwest of the Project site. Residential development is located directly to the south and east and open space also occurs west of the site. A water filtration plant operated by the Helix Water District is located just northeast of the site.

The Project site is predominantly comprised of Diegan coastal sage scrub (25.76 acres) and Riversidian upland sage scrub (0.98 acre) habitat with an additional 9.88 acres of disturbed or developed land. The site is within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon Core Area, an existing regional core within the County’s SC MSCP and is within an area designated as Pre-approved Mitigation Area per the SC MSCP. Sensitive species detected within the site and surrounding area include coastal California gnatcatcher [*Polioptila californica californica*; gnatcatcher; federally listed threatened, Department Species of Special Concern (SSC)] and coastal cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis*, SSC).

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Based on the jurisdictional delineation, approximately 0.04 acre (942 linear feet) of non-wetland waters (ephemeral stream channels) under the Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdiction are found within the study area.

We offer the following comments and recommendations to assist the County in avoiding, minimizing, and adequately mitigating project-related impacts to biological resources and to ensure that the Project is consistent with the SC MSCP, federal and state endangered species laws/regulations, and ongoing regional habitat conservation planning efforts:

1. **Analysis of Permanent Impacts.** Figure 4 of the Biological Resources Addendum for the Project depicts several areas on site as “Impact Neutral Open Space” consisting of coastal sage scrub and Riversidian sage scrub habitat. After Project construction, these neutral open space areas—both within and outside of the San Diego Gas and Electric easements—will not retain their original biological value due to edge effects from adjacent development and increased recreation resulting from proposed hiking and riding trails; therefore, the Wildlife Agencies recommend that these areas be treated as permanent impacts and mitigated in accordance with the SC MSCP. Priority for

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mitigating impacts in these areas should be given to lands contiguous with the proposed on-site and off-site biological open space.

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2. **Impacts to Biological Resource Core Area (BRCA) and Lakeside Linkage.** The Project is within Biological Resource Core Area 9 (Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon) at the boundary of the Biological Linkage H (Lakeside Linkage) as described in the MSCP. As such, the proposed development has the potential to impede a valuable wildlife corridor. The County of San Diego Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO) Section 86.508 defines a linkage as an area of land which supports or contributes to the long-term movement of wildlife and genetic material. The focus of the core area and linkage are to support connectivity and breeding for gnatcatcher and coastal cactus wren, both of which were observed in the project site.

} 04

Given the importance of the project site for the SC MSCP preserve design, the Wildlife Agencies recommend the project strive for a minimum of 75 percent conservation to adequately retain the function of the linkage as it connects to the core area by providing adequate live-in breeding and foraging habitat for resident species, particularly gnatcatcher. The 75 percent conservation target is consistent with guidance for important linkage areas in the MSCP (gnatcatcher in Table 3-5). Greater conservation will appropriately conserve vegetation that contributes to a key linkage/core area in the greater San Diego region.

} 05

3. **Management of Biological Open Space.** The on-site and off-site biological open space areas are located within the BRCA. As previously stated, this area is vitally important to the continued ecological function of the MSCP Preserve. Additionally, suitable cactus wren habitat exists on site and adjacent to the Project area. The biological open space areas should be managed and monitored for the protection of gnatcatcher and cactus wren and the habitats they occupy. We request that Mitigation Measure Biology 1 (MM BIO-1) be conditioned such that the Wildlife Agencies have the opportunity to review and approve the Resource Management Plan to support the County's efforts in providing high-quality, "live-in" habitat for these species.

} 06

4. **Nesting Bird Avoidance.** MM BIO-2 and MM BIO-7 do not appropriately address avoidance or minimized impact to nesting migratory birds. The Wildlife Agencies recommend combining MM BIO-2 and MM BIO-7 and including specified avoidance buffer distances.

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MM BIO-2 and MM BIO-7 indicate avoidance shall be implemented during the nesting/breeding season by not clearing any habitat that supports active nests between February 15 through August 31, but do not specifically indicate appropriate nesting buffers or surveys. Additionally, MM BIO-2 indicates that clearing may occur during nesting season if a monitoring biologist surveys within 72 hours of scheduled clearing, and, if nesting is observed, avoidance will be implemented until the nesting is completed.

} 08

Nicolas Gustafson (23-0040670-HCP_SD)

4

If avian avoidance occurs as currently described, impacts to avian species may be in violation of California Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 by causing the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or activities that lead to nest abandonment. The Wildlife Agencies suggest that the MND be amended to include the following language:

“To avoid any direct impacts to migratory birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, removal of habitat that supports active nests in the limits of grading or fuel modification zones should occur outside of the breeding season for these species (February 15 through August 31). In lieu of avoidance of the breeding season, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted 72 hours prior to impact completed by the monitoring biologist. If an active nest is discovered, it shall be avoided until nesting is confirmed completed by implementing the following avoidance buffers: 100 feet for passerines; 300 feet for listed bird species; and 500 feet for raptors.

Additionally, if an active nest is discovered, the monitoring biologist shall continue to monitor and conduct survey “sweeps” daily, flagging or staking the appropriate buffer, until the nest is deemed no longer active by the biologist.”

08

The following comment is specific to the Department:

1. According to Figure 6 of the MND, approximately 942 linear feet of jurisdictional non-wetland ephemeral waters are located within the Project area’s impact neutral open space.

The Department has regulatory authority over activities in streams and/or lakes that will divert or obstruct the natural flow, or change the bed, channel, or bank (which may include associated riparian resources) of any river, stream, or lake or use material from a river, stream, or lake. For any such activities, the Project applicant (or “entity”) must provide written notification to the Department pursuant to section 1600 *et seq.* of the Fish and Game Code. Based on this notification and other information, the Department determines whether a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) with the applicant is required prior to conducting the proposed activities. The Department’s issuance of a LSAA for a project that is subject to CEQA will require CEQA compliance actions by the Department as a Responsible Agency. Whether an LSAA is required to satisfy the requirements of Fish and Game Code section 1600 *et seq.* can only be determined at the time a formal notification package is submitted to the Department.

If Project activities may affect the hydrological features of such drainages, an LSAA notification may be appropriate. We encourage the County to consult further with the Department regarding the possible submittal of an LSAA Notification package.

09

Nicolas Gustafson (23-0040670-HCP_SD)

5

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the MND. We are available to meet with the County and the project proponent if you have any questions regarding this letter or would like to discuss potential approaches to addressing our comments. To coordinate with the Wildlife Agencies on this project, please contact [Eric Porter](#)¹ of the Service, or [Alex Troeller](#)² of the Department over electronic mail.

} 010

Sincerely,

SUSAN
WYNN

Digitally signed by
SUSAN WYNN
Date: 2023.05.08
11:13:39 -07'00'

For: Jonathan D. Snyder
Assistant Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

DocuSigned by:

David Mayer
D700B4520375406...

David A. Mayer
Environmental Program Manager
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

¹ Eric_Porter@fws.gov

² Alexandra.Troeller@Wildlife.ca.gov

From: Peter Andersen <westone47@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 30, 2023 11:36 AM
To: Gustafson, Nicolas; Lynch, Dahvia; Lawson-Remer, Terra; Anderson, Joel
Subject: [External] Request for full EIR on Greenhill Ranch Project
Attachments: Sierra Club Greenhills Ranch letter.docx

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

Please find attached the Sierra Club request for full EIR on Greenhills Ranch Project. We think this is important to examine the full environmental impact of this development.

Cheers

Dr. Peter Andersen, Vice Chairperson
Conservation Committee
Sierra Club San Diego

} **P1**



SIERRA CLUB

SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

8304 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ste 101 • San Diego, CA. 92111

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<http://sandiego.sierraclub.org>

via email to:

Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

CC:

dahvia.lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov

Terra.Lawson-Remer@sdcounty.ca.gov

joel.anderson@sdcounty.ca.gov

April 28, 2023

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

Sierra Club San Diego has reviewed the environmental documents for the Greenhill's Ranch, phase 2 Project (hereafter "Project") and strongly requests that a full EIR be conducted instead of a mitigated negative declaration.

There are numerous concerns regarding this project that can only be thoughtfully addressed and discussed with a full EIR.

Climate Change. The proposed project will produce huge amounts of Greenhouse Gas (GHG). Building another sprawl project violates the county's climate goals and violates SB 743 which the county has agreed to implement. The county is committed to adding units in infill areas not in a greenfield like the Greenhills Ranch Project. Building in this area will result in vehicle miles travelled and the corresponding GHG that will damage the climate reduction goals of the County of San Diego. The current environmental review clearly states that the county shall: "Achieve a reduction in project-generated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan (currently 15 percent)". No such analysis is shown in the

P2

P3

current Environmental Review for this Project. As an EIR would clearly show this Project greatly exceeds that average VMT of San Diego County. } **P3**

Wildfire: The project is located in a VERY HIGH wildfire zone. The county has pledged to restrict new construction to infill areas that are the not in high or very high fires zones. According to the cursory environmental documents the project would be built on “Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub and Non-native grasslands” and is surrounded on several sides by equally flammable. As stated in the environmental documents: “The south and west facing slopes in the southern portion of the project are dominated by Diego Coastal Sage Scrub species.” Since ignitions typically start from the local residents of a development, this risk should be assessed in a full EIR. This is acknowledged in the environmental documents which states: “The most notable wildland fire threat to this proposed development is from firebrands/burning embers from both off-site and on-site highly flammable native and non-native vegetation, particularly from the northern and eastern boundary areas as embers from these areas are likely during strong winds to travel over a mile.” The environmental analysis concludes that fire risk is not significant for the Project despite concluding that “In summary, any wind or topography driven wildfire burning under a northeast (Santa Ana) wind pattern creates a very high wildland fire hazard, especially for wildland fires starting northeast of the development.’ The sparse analysis of the clear wildfire risk requires an EIR with more in depth analysis and alternatives to the Project that would not result in the current Projects level of wildfire risk. } **P4**

Evacuation. A full EIR is needed to adequately assess evacuation from the area. The current environmental documents address evacuation with a single inadequate sentence: “Would the project result in inadequate emergency access? The addition of a secondary access road and roads throughout the project built to upgraded county standards will provide improved emergency access.” This sentence does not address if the evacuation would be adequate. Nor does it discuss the cumulative impact of evacuating both existing residents and the residents of the new Greenhills Ranch project collectively. } **P5**

Protected Lands and Wildlife. The Greenhills project will be built on sensitive and protected land. The environmental documents discloses that it is in an MSCP area in which development should not be permitted. } **P6**

Perhaps, most disturbingly, the environmental documents also reveal that the Project is in Biological Core areas (BRCA) that is vital for many species as it has been designated as essential to their continued existence. Finally, this Project is a Preapproved Mitigation Area (PAMA) that is essential to conserve for use as a mitigation area for other projects. A full EIR is needed to examine alternatives to this Project that would not infringe on a MSCA, BRCA, and PAMA project.

P6

The biological assessments were conducted during 2015 and 2016 during a historic drought in San Diego County. A new EIR is required to assess the biological impacts of the substantial rains that occurred during late 2022 and early 2023 which certainly had a huge impact on both plant and animal species on the project site.

Community Character. Despite a thorough search, I can find nothing in the environmental review that discusses possible impacts to community character or the existing residents of the area. The environmental review reports that homes would be located on “a higher elevation than the surrounding area” resulting in a visual intrusion into existing homes. Moreover, blasting would occur near existing residences. “The Project would also involve blasting and rock drilling and crushing activities onsite. In the event that the rock drilling occurs within 200 feet of any occupied noise sensitive land use, impulsive noise may exceed the County Noise Ordinance Section 36.410 standard of 82 dBA resulting in a potentially significant impact.” Worse, the applicant has not yet formulated a blasting plan: “The applicant shall submit a vibration analysis the proposed blasting and material handling associated with the project.” This project should never be approved until an adequate blasting plan has been formulated. This is best accomplished in the body of a full EIR.

P7

Cumulative Impacts. The current environmental review fails to mention cumulative impact of the Project as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. A full EIR could assess the cumulative impacts of this and other projects on biological resources, noise, traffic, vehicle miles travelled, greenhouse gas, air quality, community character and numerous other environmental impacts. In particular, the EIR should review the cumulative impacts of other developments that are proposed or under construction such as the large mobile home development at nearby Flynn Springs.

P8

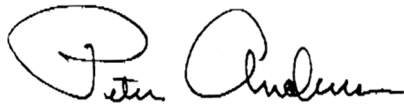
Elimination of Natural Gas. At one point the Environmental Analysis states: “The project will not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing (in both residential and nonresidential development).” However, on page 29 they state: “The project would result in the use of electricity, natural gas, petroleum, and other consumption of energy resources during both the construction and operation phases of the project.” This is an obvious contradiction. A full EIR could ascertain whether natural gas will or will not be used in the Project.

P9

In conclusion, for copious reasons the Sierra Club requests a full EIR instead of the current inadequate environmental review.

P10

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Andersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" and last name "Andersen" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Peter Andersen, Vice-Chairperson
Conservation Committee
Sierra Club San Diego

BROOKE & ROBERT FAIGIN

9342 Audubon Road • Lakeside, CA 92040 • (619) 324-3249
faiginwells98@hotmail.com

May 7, 2023

via email to: Nicolas.Gustafson@sdcounty.ca.gov

CC:

dahvia.lynch@sdcounty.ca.gov

nora.vargas@sdcounty.ca.gov

joel.anderson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Terra.Lawson-Remer@sdcounty.ca.gov

jim.desmond@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: **OPPOSITION** TO NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW OF A SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT FOR GREENHILLS RANCH PHASE II, PDS2016-SPA-16-001; PDS2016-REZ-16-002; PDS2016-TM-5611; LOG NO. PDS2016-ER-98-14-020B.

We are writing to express our opposition to the CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Greenhills Ranch Phase II project. The project includes a Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) to amend the Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan (GRSP) to include development specifications and regulations for Phase II of the GRSP; a Rezone will add the “D” Special Area Regulation to require a Site Plan; and the tentative map (TM) will subdivide the 36.03-acre site into 76 lots including 63 single family residential lots. Residential lots will range in size from 5,119 square feet to 11,578 square feet. Approximately 18.64 acres will be dedicated as open space on the TM. The project is located approximately 300 feet north of the intersection of Adlai Road and Audubon Road in the Lakeside Community Plan Area, in unincorporated San Diego County.

Q1

We believe that the project may have significant environmental impacts that have not been adequately analyzed or mitigated in the initial study and the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration. According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a mitigated negative declaration can only be adopted if there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. However, we contend that there is substantial evidence that the project may have significant effects on the following environmental issues:

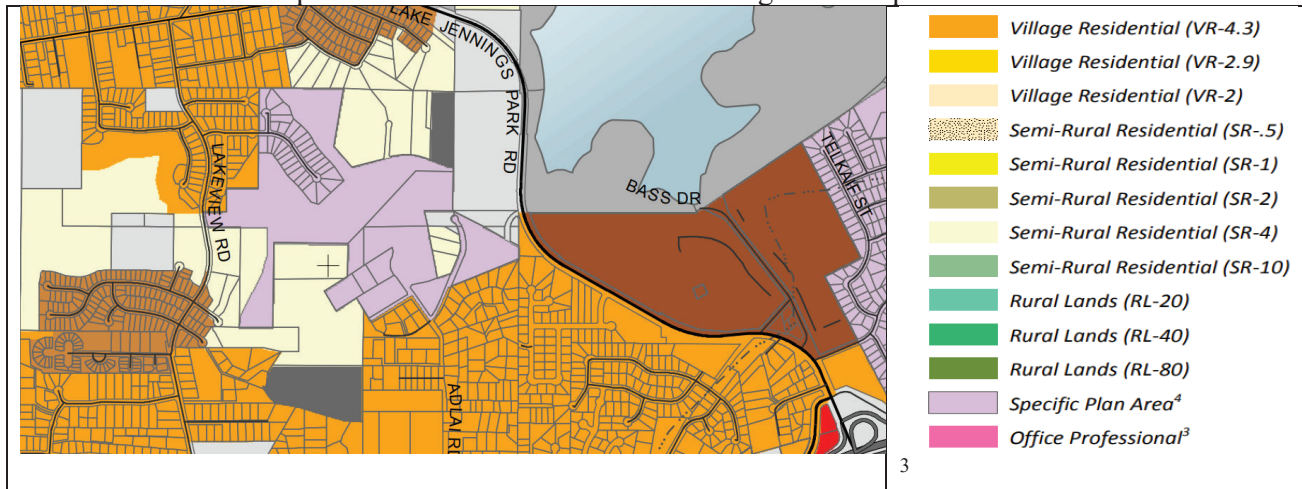
Q2

1. **Aesthetics**

This project clearly has the potential to damage or degrade scenic resources and the visual character and quality of the properties adjacent to the proposed project.

Q3

The Community of Lakeside is in the western foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains on the San Diego River about 21 miles east of downtown San Diego.¹ The desire to maintain a rural type of lifestyle has affected the way in which Lakeside has developed. A considerable amount of small-scale farming still exists in the community and many homes in the residential areas of Lakeside have small horse corrals evidencing a relatively high degree of horse ownership. “Maintaining and enhancing the rural imagery of the area would be an important consideration for those wishing to develop in Lakeside.”²



According to the San Diego County General Plan which incorporates the Lakeside Community Plan, “Lakeside is determined to remain a rural residential community. Despite tremendous pressure toward urbanization, the citizens of Lakeside have held the line in an effort to provide a buffer against sprawl.”⁴ The residential goal of Lakeside is to “PROVIDE FOR GRADUAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH, WHILE RETAINING THE RURAL ATMOSPHERE OF LAKESIDE.”⁵ Specifically, the Lakeside plan calls to provide for the preservation of open space areas, such as steep slopes and canyons, floodplains, agricultural lands, and unique scenic views and vistas, which serve to reinforce Lakeside's rural identity by locating residential development away from such areas.⁶

The proposed development is located within SPECIFIC PLAN AREA (SPA) 4 - LAKE JENNINGS RANCH. Lake Jennings Ranch is a Specific Plan Area which consists of approximately 308 acres located at the western end of Blossom Valley. The Project would modify the landform onsite through anticipated blasting and grading. Overall density shall not exceed 113 dwelling units (0.37 du/ac).

¹ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/gpupdate/comm/lakeside.html>

² <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/gpupdate/comm/lakeside.html>

³ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/docs/GP/18-Lakeside.pdf>

⁴ https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/docs/CP/Lakeside_CP.pdf

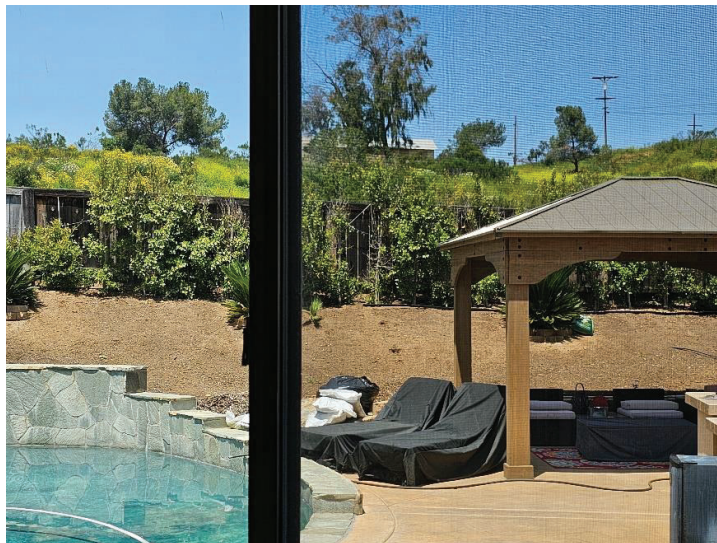
⁵ https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/docs/CP/Lakeside_CP.pdf

⁶ https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/docs/CP/Lakeside_CP.pdf



It is uncontested that “the proposed homes would be visible from lower elevation residential areas south of the site.”⁷ The MND attempts to mitigate this by requiring some, *but not all*, of the homes abutting the existing residences to “be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. These lots comprise 10 of the 15 lots that face the residential areas to the south along Adlai Road.”⁸ However, the plan proposes to place two-story residences on lots 7, 10, 12, and 15 which are directly behind each of the only four existing residences located on Audubon Road abutting the project. The placement of these two-story residences will be at an elevation higher than the existing residences and cause a substantial change to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area as well as a significant impact on the personal privacy of the current residents. Given the higher elevation, people located in these proposed two-story homes will have a direct view to the interior of these existing residences, as well as a view of their backyards where children and adults are often swimming and playing. At a minimum, the MND should require that all lots abutting existing residences (6-15) be one story residences.

The photos below show the downstairs and upstairs views from inside the homes directly behind lots 7-11.



⁷ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>



Q4

The Mitigated Negative Declaration also identifies mitigation measures to address the potential aesthetic impacts of the project. These measures involve requiring landscaping on the fill slopes between the proposed homes and residential areas south of the site. “The CLP also requires trees on the building pads along the Project boundaries and throughout the development including along the proposed interior streets to further screen the homes.”⁹ However, these measures are insufficient to address the significant and irreversible visual impacts of the project, which will significantly alter the character of the surrounding rural landscape. Trees along the proposed interior streets will not further screen the homes.

Additionally, while the Mitigated Negative Declaration suggests that the project's impacts on aesthetics

⁹ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

will be mitigated through the incorporation of design features, the document fails to provide any specific details or analysis of the proposed design standards other than photo simulations. Further, the CLP is deficient as it fails to acknowledge that the project site can readily see and be seen from Interstate 8:



The project site, which currently consists of a residence located approximately where lots 23 and 24 will be located can also be seen as far back as the beginning of Adlai Rd. off East Lakeview Road, before Old Farmhouse Road.

Q4



Q5

The addition of 63 homes that can be seen from the Interstate 8, East Lakeview Road, and the inside of existing residences would “detract from the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area.” This impact is not mitigable, and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to adequately address this issue. Case law supports this conclusion. For example, in *Save Our Neighborhood v. Lishman* (2006), the court found that visual impacts could not be adequately mitigated and that an EIR was required.¹⁰

The construction of 63 new one- and two-story structures on 18 acres will inevitably lead to a significant increase in artificial lighting in the area. Specifically, these homes will result in the installation of numerous lighting fixtures, both for safety and aesthetic purposes, that will clearly generate new sources of light and glare that will adversely affect the visual quality of the area, especially at nighttime. The project also proposes to install 630 solar panels that would also reflect light.

Q6

The project area is a low-light area with few or no streetlights, which allows existing residents to see the stars at nighttime. The use of bright or reflective materials, the installation of lighting fixtures that are excessively bright or improperly shielded, and the location of the project in an area with particularly sensitive view corridors all contribute to this potentially significant impact. The use of light shields or

Q7

¹⁰ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

directional lighting fixtures may not be sufficient to prevent light from spilling over into sensitive view corridors. The use of low-wattage lighting fixtures in the project area may also not be effective in reducing light or glare pollution.

} **Q7**

Given the potential for significant adverse visual impacts, the proposed mitigation measures identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration are insufficient under the law.

2. Air Quality

The project site is located within the San Diego Air Basin, which is in nonattainment for ozone and particulate matter standards. The project will generate significant emissions of criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHGs) during construction and operation phases, due to increased vehicle trips, energy use, and landscape maintenance. The proposed development would certainly generate significant amounts of dust and air pollution during the construction phase, which would impact the air quality in the area. The Mitigated Negative Declaration does not provide adequate measures to reduce these emissions to a less than significant level, as they do not quantify the expected emission reductions or provide enforceable mechanisms for monitoring and reporting.

} **Q8**

The proposed development would also require the removal of natural vegetation and habitats, leading to increased air pollution from construction equipment and increased vehicle traffic, which could cause a decline in air quality. The Mitigated Negative Declaration only provides vague mitigation measures. This mitigation measure is insufficient as it does not provide any specific details on how the air quality will be monitored or how emissions will be reduced.

} **Q9**

It is undisputed that “[t]he Project would generate construction emissions in the vicinity of sensitive receptors.”¹¹ These impacts will be significant and will result in adverse health impacts to nearby residents. The Mitigated Negative Declaration does not identify implementing construction dust control measures. Simply complying with air quality regulations alone may not be sufficient to avoid significant environmental impacts. An EIR is required to adequately address this issue.

} **Q10**

The Mitigated Negative Declaration suggests that construction equipment and vehicles will be required to comply with applicable state and local emission standards. However, it does not provide any specific measures to ensure compliance or to monitor the effectiveness of the measure. The absence of such measures is insufficient to address the potential for significant air quality impacts resulting from the construction of the project, particularly given the project's location near sensitive receptors such as Lakeview Elementary School and residential areas. Several of the residents abutting the proposed development have medically documented respiratory issues and would be significantly affected by the change in air quality.

} **Q11**

The project will also generate significant additional traffic and will likely result in increased vehicle miles traveled, which will lead to increased emissions of air pollutants. This issue requires an Environmental Impact Report to be ordered for this project. Moreover, the project will increase traffic on Adlai Road, Cuesta Del Sol, and Lake Jennings Park Road, which are already congested during peak hours. The increased traffic will result in additional emissions from vehicles, including greenhouse gases, which contribute to climate change.

} **Q12**

¹¹ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

Additionally, the Mitigated Negative Declaration air quality analysis fails to adequately consider the cumulative impacts of the project related to the addition of the Lake Jennings Park Road project site (APN 395-220-11-00), an 18 home development on 5.16 acres currently under construction and located less than a mile from the proposed project site.

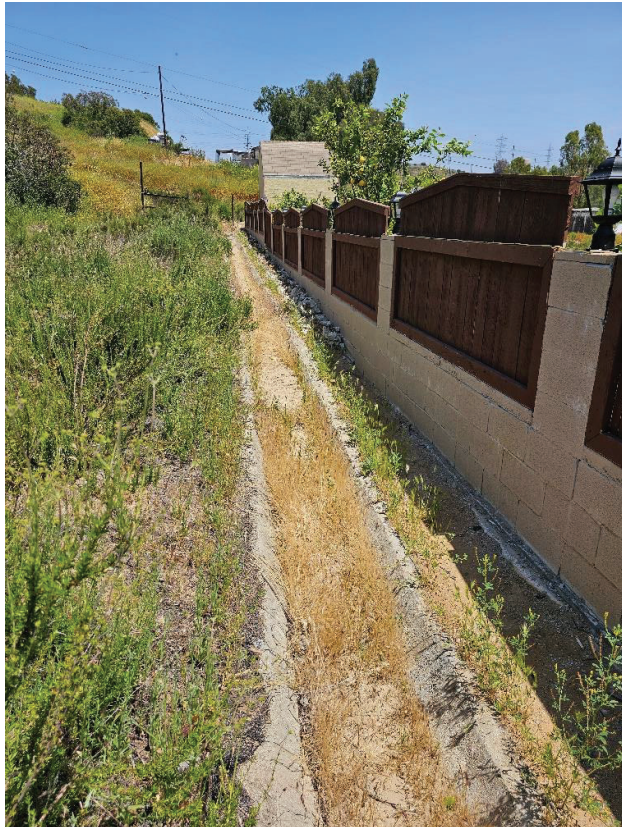
Q13

The Mitigated Negative Declaration air quality analysis also fails to adequately consider the cumulative impacts of the project related to the addition of the Adlai subdivision on Adlai Road less than a quarter of a mile from the proposed project. The Adlai subdivision is currently under construction and will consist of 11 homes alongside the 20 home Riker Ranch development that was completed in February of 2020.

Q14

3. Hydrology and Water Quality

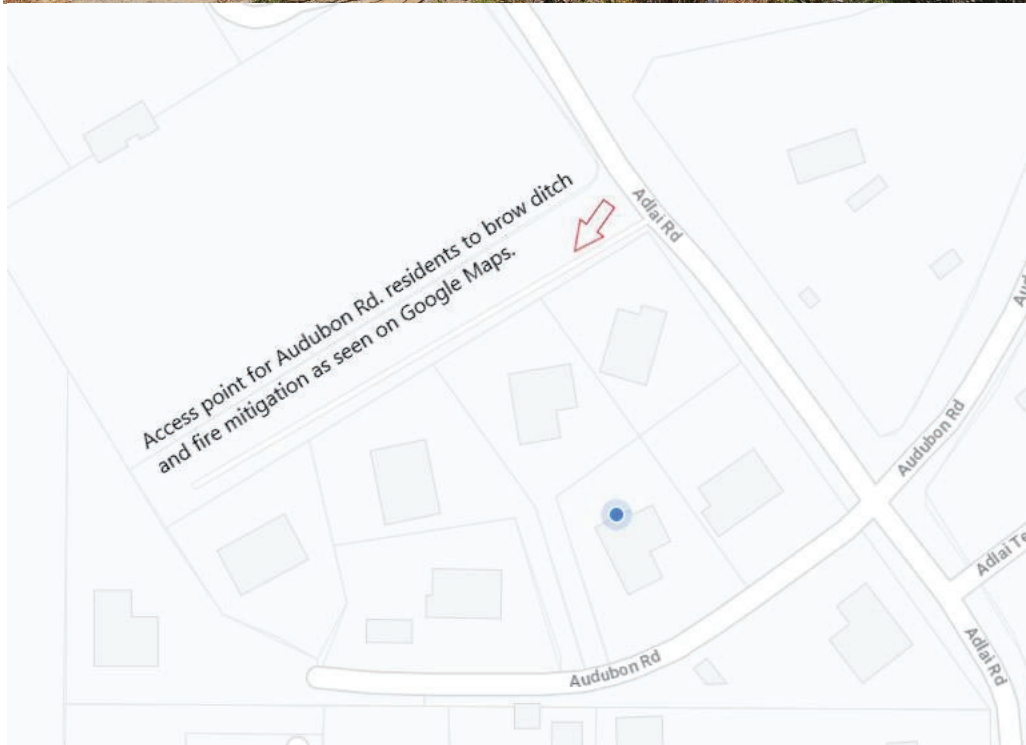
The project may result in increased runoff, erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant loading to downstream water bodies during construction and operation phases. Additionally, the Mitigated Negative Declaration is silent on the fact that there is a drainage brow ditch that prevents runoff from the project site from entering the properties behind the proposed 7-15 project lots. This brow ditch is maintained by the existing residents on Audubon Road.



Q15

More importantly, the Mitigated Negative Declaration fails to analyze the effect that the change of topography will have on the capacity of the brow ditch. There is also no mention of mitigation efforts to keep the brow ditch clear during construction, and how to prevent debris and runoff from entering the drainage system.

Since the project began moving forward in earnest in 2019, the developer has consistently attempted to block ingress to the property so that the brow ditch and fire hazards cannot be maintained.



Q16

4. Land Use and Planning

Although the Mitigated Negative Declaration claims that the project's overall density is 1.03 dwelling units per acre, that calculation relies on other open space and already designated areas to make it appear that there will only be 1.03 houses per acre.

Area (acres)	Reason for Dedication
23.88	Onsite area already dedicated under Habitat Loss Permit 94-007 (HLP) issued by the County of San Diego
0.94	Offsite area already dedicated under Habitat Loss Permit 94-007
5.24	Mitigation for Phase 1 impacts
0.04	Open space on Lots 17 and 18
10.41	Planned Open Space 1, Phase 1

HILLS RANCH - SPECIFIC PLAN

3-7

Volume 1

CONSULTANTS

Area (acres)	Reason for Dedication
30.85	Planned and Offsite Open Space 2-3, preserved in the Phase 2

All impacts in Phase 2 will be mitigated onsite. While specific designs have not been proposed for this area, it is expected the maximum development area will be 17.18 acres. There is adequate area within Planned Open Spaces 1, 2 and 3 to allow mitigation at a 2:1 ratio. Any open space acreage not dedicated as mitigation for future development of the GRSP could be used to mitigate the impacts of other projects in the immediate area, or for a mitigation bank. The timing of dedication will be linked to the projects for which mitigation is provided.

However, if one looks at the portion of the 36 acres where the houses will actually be built, you will see that the total acreage of the proposed 63 lots is only 10.24 acres. This gives a density of approximately 6.14 dwelling units per acre. Even if you use the maximum development area of 17.18 acres, as set forth when Greenhills Phase I was approved, the density would still be 3.66 dwelling units per acre which clearly exceeds what was planned for in Lakeside.

There is no way to look at this project and not see that this developer is attempting to build a high-density

Q17

Q18

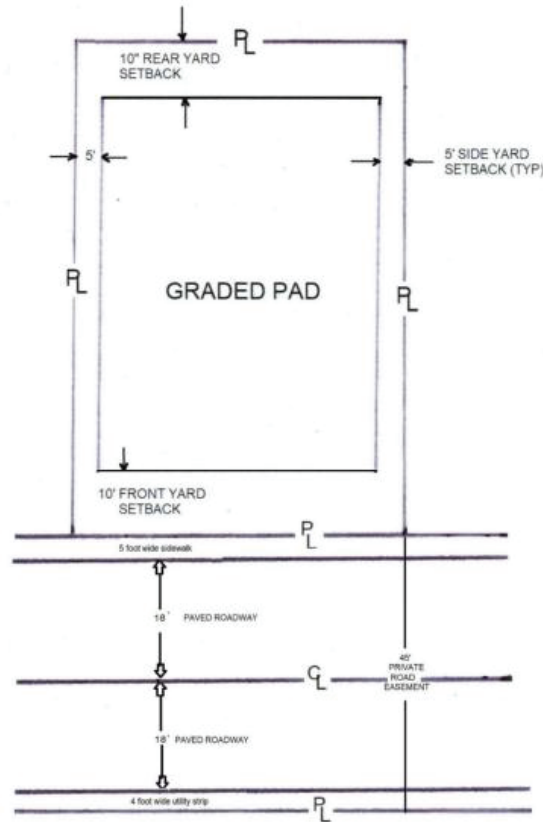
community. One can simply look at the request to change the development regulations for all parcels with S88 zoning from a minimum of 6000 sq. ft. lots by 15 percent to a minimum of 5100 sq. ft. This will allow more houses per acre on the same plot of land. The argument that you can have more lots with no change in density as depicted in Table 4-1 doesn't correspond to what the existing residents will actually see when they look out their windows and have to view this development.

Table 4-1
Zone Box

		Existing	Proposed
Use Regulation		S88	S88
Development Regulations	Density	1.6	1.6
	Lot Size	6,000	5,100
	Building Type	C	C
	Maximum Floor Area	-	-
	Floor Area Ratio	-	-
	Height	G	G
	Setback	H	V
	Lot Coverage	-	-
Open Space		-	-
Special Area Regulations		-	D

But that is not all, the Mitigated Negative Declaration says nothing about the impacts of changing the setbacks, which this project is also seeking to do.

Q18



TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL SETBACKS

NO SCALE

The setbacks for an S88 development currently zoned H is 10 yards for the side yard and 25 for the rear yard. However, the project as proposed will cut the setback by 50 percent, from 10 to 5, for side yards and by 60 percent, from 25 to 10, for rear yards.

Setback Schedule

Part of Section 4810

DESIGNATOR	Front Yard (a)				Side Yard		Rear Yard
	Abutting public street or private thoroughfare except those subject to Note (d). (Measured from Centerline)				Interior Setback measured from lot line	Exterior (s) Setback measured from centerline	Setback measured from lot line (e)
	Standard Setback	Setbacks for certain Major Subdivisions recorded after January 1, 1966 (c.)					
		Street Width in Feet:					
		50	52	56			
A	100	100	100	100	15	35	50
B	60	60	60	60	15	35	50
C	60	60	60	60	15	35	25
D	60 (f)	60 (f)	60 (f)	60 (f)	15 (g)	35	25
E	60	60	60	60	0 (h)	35 (i)	15
F	60	60	60	60	(j)	35	25
G	50	45	46	48	10	35	40
H	50	45	46	48	10	35	25
I	50	45	46	48	7 ½	35	25
J	50	45	46	48	5	35	25
K	50	45	46	48	5 (k)	35	25
L	50	45	46	48	5 (l)	35	25
M	50	50	50	50	5 (l)	35	25
N	50 (t)	45	46	48	5	35	25
O	50	50	50	50	0 (h)	35	25 (m)
P	50	50	50	50	0 (n)	35	15 (o)
Q	50	50	50	50	0 (h)	35	15
R	(p)	(p)	(p)	(p)	0 (h)	35	15
S	30 (q)	25	26	28	(j)	35	15
T	30 (q)	25	26	28	0	35	15
U	30 (q)	25	26	28	0 (r)	35	0 (r)
V	Setbacks to be established during planned development, use permit or site plan review						
W(v)	60	60	60	60	25 (v)	35	25

Notes: (b) not used * Fire Code Setbacks may be more restrictive, Check with local Fire Marshal.

Q18

This will allow the developer to place more houses in a smaller area and place them closer to each other and the existing residences. This in its simplest form creates high density housing that will impact both new and existing residences. The Mitigated Negative Declaration failed to address these impacts, and therefore an environmental impact report should be done.

5. Noise

The project will result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above existing levels. As mentioned above, with the reduced setbacks, the houses for both new and existing residents will be closer together than most, if not all, homes in Lakeside. The increased density of homes will disturb the peace and quiet of the surrounding area. The project proposes constructing 63 residential units in an area that is currently relatively quiet. The Mitigated Negative Declaration proposes the use of standard noise mitigation measures such as building orientation, setbacks, and acoustic treatments. However, these measures are insufficient given the scale of the project. More specifically, the Mitigated Negative Declaration fails to provide any analysis on the impact that 63 new homes on approximately 10 acres less than 75 feet from existing residences will have, or what mitigation measures will be taken to reduce the potential noise. At a minimum, the Mitigated Negative Declaration should have contained a noise contour map that showed the impact of the project on existing residences.

Q19

The Mitigated Negative Declaration acknowledges the potential for noise impacts from construction and operation of the project and proposes several mitigation measures, including implementing the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance and requiring construction equipment to meet certain noise standards. However, these measures are insufficient to fully address the potential impacts of the project. For example, the Mitigated Negative Declaration does not adequately analyze the potential for cumulative noise impacts from the project in combination with other existing and planned projects in the area including the addition of the Adlai subdivision on Adlai Road less than a quarter of a mile from the proposed project. The Adlai subdivision is currently under construction and will consist of 11 homes alongside the 20 home Riker Ranch development that was completed in February of 2020. Additionally, the noise ordinance referenced in the Mitigated Negative Declaration does not account for the potential for noise impacts on sensitive receptors, such as residences or Lakeview Elementary School which is less than a mile away.

Q20

The project will also generate significant amounts of noise during construction which would impact the local residents' health and well-being. Most significantly, Lakeside is a quiet rural neighborhood. The project plan calls for the possibility of blasting up to three blasts times a day using six tons of ammonium nitrate and 20,000 square feet per day. However, the Mitigated Negative Declaration is silent as to what days, and how many days that this would be allowed to occur. The only actual mitigation identified for reducing the noise made from this blasting in the Mitigated Negative Declaration is the use of "temporary noise barriers 8 to 12 feet in height,,"¹² There is no analysis in the Mitigated Negative Declaration that the use of these temporary 8 to 12 feet barriers would be sufficient to mitigate the noise impacts of the blasting.

Q21

"The Project would also involve rock drilling and crushing activities onsite. In the event that the rock drilling occurs within 200 feet of any occupied noise sensitive land use, impulsive noise may exceed the County Noise Ordinance Section 36.410 standard of 82 dBA resulting in a potentially significant impact. The Noise Assessment indicated if these activities occur within 225 feet of any occupied noise sensitive land use, a blasting and monitoring plan would be required..."¹³ However, the document fails to provide any specific details or analysis as to what the monitoring plan is, or how it would be enforced.

Q21

In the end, the noise will be disruptive to the residents living adjacent to the project site and will also impact wildlife habitats in the area. The failure to fully analyze and mitigate noise impacts violates CEQA.

6. Recreation

"The Project involves a residential subdivision that would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities."¹⁴ The community plan calls for a park if there are 50 residences or more but that is not included in the plans or Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Q22

More importantly, the project calls for the use of lock boxes to prevent access to existing residences on

¹² <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

¹⁴ ¹⁴ <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/GreenhillsRanch/PDS2016-SPA-16-001%20Initial%20Study%20and%20Mitigated%20Negative%20Declaration.pdf>

Audubon Road. This will severely limit access to existing trails for current residents. The Mitigated Negative Declaration fails to address this impact.

} **Q22**

7. **Traffic**

The traffic study is outdated. The traffic counts were conducted over seven years ago on Wednesday, December 2, 2015. The study indicates that validation counts were conducted on multiple segments near the study area on Tuesday, October 1, 2019. However, it doesn't indicate which segments were not included in the validation counts and why. Importantly though, in the four years since the initial counts were conducted, "[t]he results indicated growth in background traffic." Since that time, traffic on Lake Jennings Park Road has increased immensely. More importantly, the study wasn't done on a Friday afternoon during "desert season" when traffic can back up for more than a mile heading southeast on Lake Jennings Park Road to Interstate 8.

These photos were taken on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 4:28 p.m.



} **Q23**

As you can see, traffic backs up and blocks the ingress and egress from Jack Oak Lane making it difficult for those trying to exit to head northwest towards highway 67, as well as those heading southwest towards interstate 8.



Q23

8. Wildfire

The Mitigated Negative Declaration fails to provide adequate escape routes for existing residents in case of a wildfire. The project proposes to create an access road only for the 63 new residents to Lake Jennings Park Road. This ingress and egress route will be guarded by a lock on each side of the project entry way and will not allow existing traffic to utilize it in case of a fire. The proposed Audubon to Lake Jennings Park Road connection will increase the number of cars already on Lake Jennings Park Road during an evacuation. More concerning is the fact that since existing residents will not have access to the same evacuation route, but instead have to take a longer more congested route to Lake Jennings Park Road, by the time they arrive, they will encounter the additional traffic from the Greenhills Ranch Project when they arrive on Lake Jennings Park Road.

Q24

In the event that evacuation is necessary via Adlai Road, the Mitigated Negative Declaration is silent as to the impacts of adding 63 new residences evacuating on a private non-county-maintained road.

Q25

Additionally, the Mitigated Negative Declaration does not take into consideration the cumulative effects of the Adlai subdivision, which is currently under construction and will consist of 11 additional homes.

} **Q26**

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Greenhills Ranch Phase II project should be opposed due to its potential negative impact on the environment and local community. The CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration is inadequate in addressing the potential impacts, and the proposed mitigation measures are insufficient. The project should be revised or canceled to ensure that it minimally harms the natural environment and the quality of life of local residents.

} **Q27**

Respectfully submitted,

Brooke and Robert Faigin

I. RESPONSE TO COMMENT MATRIX – GREENHILLS RANCH II

The Goodman Family representatives met with the Lakeside Community Planning Group on five (5) occasions and conducted one (1) smaller meeting with important neighbors prior to the Public Notice being posted. Four (4) of those meetings were held in 2021 to discuss all the pertinent issues with the proposed Project.

A. Master Response – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) consideration is a three-tiered process: (1) deciding whether CEQA applies; (2) undertaking an initial study (IS) “to inform the choice between a negative declaration and an environmental impact report (EIR)”; and (3) if the IS uncovers “substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may cause a significant effect on the environment” the agency prepares a full EIR. (See *Save Our Big Trees v. City of Santa Cruz* (2015) 241 Cal.App.4th 694, 704–05.) A main purpose of the IS is “to eliminate unnecessary EIRs.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15063, subd. (c)(6); San Lorenzo Valley Community Advocates for Responsible Education (2006) 139 Cal.App.4th 1356, 1373.) If the IS finds that there is “no substantial evidence that the project may significantly affect the environment, the agency prepares a negative declaration and environmental review ends.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15070; *Dunning v. Clews* (2021) 64 Cal.App.5th 156, 169.) Similarly, “[i]f potentially significant effects are discovered, but the project applicant agrees to changes that would avoid or mitigate them, the agency prepares a mitigated negative declaration [citations], which also ends CEQA review.” (Ibid.)

In challenging an agency’s decision to adopt a mitigated negative declaration (MND), the party opposing the project bears the burden “to demonstrate by citation to the record the existence of substantial evidence supporting a fair argument of significant environmental impact.” (*Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors* (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337, 1349.) “[I]n the absence of any evidence to show that the impact on the environment will not be mitigated, or any evidence to show that the effects remaining after such mitigation will have a substantial adverse impact on the environment, the conclusion of the local agency that the project as permitted will have no substantial adverse impact on the environment is unassailable.” (*Running Fence Corp. v. Superior Court* (1975) 51 Cal.App.3d 400, 423.) “[T]he existence of factual controversy, uncertainty, conflicting assertions, argument, or public controversy can[not] of themselves nullify the adoption of a negative declaration and require the preparation of an EIR when there is no substantial evidence in the record that the project as designed and approved will fall within the requirements of the act.” (Id., at p. 424.)

“Argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, evidence which is clearly erroneous or inaccurate, or evidence of social or economic impacts which do not contribute to or are not caused by physical impacts on the environment does not constitute substantial evidence.” (CEQA Guidelines § 15384, subd. (a); *Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors*, supra, at p. 1352 [“Unsubstantiated opinions, concerns, and suspicions about a project, though sincere and deeply felt, do not rise to the level of substantial evidence supporting a fair argument of significant environmental effect. Environmental decisions should be based on facts, not feelings.”])

“Neither is the mere possibility of adverse impact on a few people, as opposed to the environment in general” substantial evidence supporting a fair argument that the Project may have a significant effect the environment. (Dunning v. Clews, *supra*, at p. 170.) For technical topics, an agency may rely on the expertise of its planning staff and may properly disregard conclusions from non-experts that lack qualified expertise in a highly technical area. (See *Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville* (2007) 157 Cal.App.4th 885, 908; *Bowman v. City of Berkeley* (2004) 122 Cal.App.4th 572, 583 [“[A] complex scientific issue such as the migration of chemicals through land calls for expert evaluation, and the Neighbors do not profess any expertise that would qualify them to opine on that subject.”]; *Gentry v. City of Murietta* (1995) 36 Cal.App.4th 1359, 1418 [“[I]n the absence of a specific factual foundation in the record, dire predictions by nonexperts regarding the consequences of a project do not constitute substantial evidence.”].) Further, where a project opponent fails to provide any specific evidence demonstrating that a project may result in an environmentally significant impact, a comment’s claim that there is an absence of evidence in the record on a particular issue does not invalidate an MND. (*Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors*, *supra*, at pp. 1354, 1358; *Gentry v. City of Murietta*, *supra*, at pp. 1379, 1382 [“The lack of study is hardly evidence that there will be a significant impact.”].)

A MND is the appropriate CEQA document for the Project. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15070, subd. (b).) The Project is a small, low density residential project with a minimal potential environmental footprint. The Project proposes future development of 63 single-family residential lots, ranging in size from 5,119 square feet to 11,578 square feet, with approximately 18.64 acres dedicated as open space. The Project’s Draft IS is comprehensive and thoroughly evaluates all environmental topics potentially affected by the Project, including: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation/Traffic; Tribal Cultural Resources; Utilities and Service Systems; and Mandatory Findings of Significance. The Draft IS embodies the purposes of CEQA, giving thorough consideration to all possible environmental effects and addressing them accordingly. The Draft IS span 77 pages of analysis, cites numerous resources and studies, includes several comprehensive technical appendices for key environmental resources, and concludes there are no significant impacts with mitigation. (See *Greenhills Ranch Phase II IS/MND*, pp. 5, 73-77.) For the potentially significant impacts, the Project proposes robust, enforceable Mitigation Measures and includes a number of standard conditions designed to avoid environmental impact. (*Id.*, pp. 7-8, 17-29, 35-36, 52-56, 63, 66, 70-73.) Based on this thorough analysis and its accompanying mitigation measures, the Draft IS finds that all impacts will be reduced to below a level of significance. (*Id.*, p. 5.)

The size of this Project, with such a minimal, potential environmental footprint, coupled with such highly technical examinations of all potential significant effects, falls squarely within what courts dictate to be a project appropriately evaluated by a MND. Numerous cases have upheld similar project MNDs or NDs in the face of formal challenge. Illustrative examples are as follows:

Friends of Riverside’s Hills v. City of Riverside (2018) 26 Cal.App.5th 1137 (upholding a negative declaration for a project to build six single-family homes on an eleven-acre parcel of undeveloped land within Riverside’s “Residential Conservation Zone,” because there was no substantial evidence of the alleged land use violations).

Covina Residents for Responsible Development v. City of Covina (2018) 21 Cal.App.5th 712 (upholding a MND on a 68-unit-mixed-use infill project, finding the project’s significant parking impacts were addressed by the properly tiered MND, and did not require a new EIR to be evaluated).

Jensen v. City of Santa Rosa (2018) 23 Cal.App.5th 877 (upholding a negative declaration without mitigation for a hospital turned youth center that would house up to 63 young adults, finding opposition from neighbors unpersuasive, and instead relying on an expert’s use of particular methodology to evaluate potential environmental effects).

Comment #	Response
A1	The statement is an introduction to the commenter’s relationship to the Project, and does not represent a comment on the Draft IS/MND or an environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
A2	<p>A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). The TIA was conducted in accordance with the latest County of San Diego (County) Transportation Study Guidelines (TSG), including an analysis of the Project’s effect on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Project area in accordance with the policy goals of Senate Bill (SB) 743. Existing traffic volumes were counted under typical weekday conditions during AM and PM peak periods (7AM – 9AM and 4PM – 6PM) consistent with the TSG. The TIA identified that the proposed Project is located within an Infill Area identified by the TSG as an area considered to have a less than significant impact for transportation because it meets the qualitative and quantitative criteria in the TSG for a VMT-efficient area. Development within Infill Areas meets the legislative intent of SB 743 because promoting development within the County’s denser village areas create a greater diversity of land uses that would encourage transit and lower average VMT over time. Due to the Project’s location within an Infill Area, the TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.</p> <p>Access to the Project site is proposed via two access points: a private road connecting to Lake Jennings Park Road (to be named “Greenhills Way”) and another private road connecting to Adlai Road. The Project proposes to develop Greenhills Way as the primary Project access off of Lake Jennings Park Road. The TIA included a preliminary sight</p>

	<p>distance evaluation conducted at the Lake Jennings Park Road / Greenhills Way (Project driveway) intersection. The TIA concluded that based on the County's Public Road Standards, there is 550 feet of unobstructed sight distance looking northbound and 550 feet of unobstructed sight distance looking southbound from Greenhills Way onto Lake Jennings Park Road. Per the County's thresholds, the TIA determined that the Project driveway would provide a safe and adequate sight distance, and no improvements are necessary to increase sight distance.</p> <p>The TIA finds that the proposed Project would not significantly alter roadway geometry on Lake Jennings Park Road or Adlai Road. All road improvements would be constructed according to the County's Public and Private Road Standards and to the satisfaction of the Director of the Department of Public Works. In addition, the proposed Project would not place incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) on existing roadways. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant impacts related to hazards due to a geometric design feature, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.</p>
A3	<p>The TIA concluded that the proposed Project would not increase cut-through traffic through the Project area. Access to the Project site would be via two access points: proposed Greenhills Way connecting to Lake Jennings Park Road and another private road connecting to Adlai Road. Greenhills Way would be the Project's primary access point and therefore, Project residents would not use Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. Additionally, the proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic in this neighborhood. The TIA also concluded that there was no measurable savings in travel time when using Jack Oak Road to Cuesta Del Sol to Adlai Road that would cause traffic to divert through the neighborhood due to the proposed Greenhills Way connection. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in an increase in cut-through traffic in the Project area.</p> <p>All road improvements would be constructed according to the County's Public and Private Road Standards and to the satisfaction of the Director of the Department of Public Works. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant impacts related to safety hazards, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.</p>
A4	<p>The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. The Project would require preparation and implementation of a blasting and monitoring plan, which would require approval by the County Sheriff and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS). Specifically, Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS checklist provides that, "The Project would be conditioned so that prior to approval of the grading plan and commencement of any blasting events, the applicant must provide a copy of the Sheriff-approved blasting and monitoring plan to the County Department of PDS and must demonstrate that the activity would not exceed 0.1 inch per second PPV. The blasting and monitoring plan shall include any necessary mitigation measures</p>

	to effectively reduce noise and vibration levels (e.g., altering orientation of blast progression, increased delay between charge detonations, presplitting) to comply with the noise level limits of the County's Noise standards. With implementation of MM NOI-2 through MM NOI-4, Project impacts related to groundbourne vibration or groundbourne noise levels would be less than significant." MM NOI-2 would require several noise attenuation measures during all rock crushing and drilling activities required for Project construction. MM NOI-3 requires using a blast contactor and blasting personnel licensed to operate in the County, limiting blasting operations specific days and times, and providing notice in writing to all residences, including mobile homes, and businesses within 600 feet of any potential major blast location or 300 feet from any potential minor blast location, among other measures. Additionally, MM NOI-3 requires monitoring and recording of each blast with an air-blast overpressure monitor and groundbourne vibration accelerometer that is located outside the closest residence to the blast and shall not exceed 0.1 inch per second peak particle velocity at the nearest occupied residence, in accordance with County of San Diego's Noise Guidelines, Section 4.3. MM NOI-4 includes noise attenuation measures to comply with the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance 36.409 and vibratory requirements within the County Noise Guidelines. The analysis in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS found that mitigation measures MM NOI-2, MM NOI-3, and MM NOI-4 would fully mitigate for noise and groundbourne vibration from blasting operations of the proposed Project. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the noise and vibration analysis.
A5	The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. Refer to response to comment A4.
A6	Refer to response to comment A3. As currently designed, the proposed Project would not increase use of and motorists on Cuesta del Sol. The proposed Greenhills Way would provide Project residents direct access to Lake Jennings Park Road negating the need to utilize Cuesta del Sol. Therefore, the Project would not result impact Cuesta Del Sol, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.
B1	Please refer to response to comment A3. Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.
C1	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.

C2	The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. Refer to response to comment A4.
C3	<p>Refer to response to comments and A2 and A3. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). As described in the TIA, the weekday AM/PM peak hour intersection turning movement traffic counts were conducted at the study area intersections on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, when schools were in session. The peak hour counts were conducted during the commuter peak hours of 7:00-9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM. Validation counts were conducted on multiple segments near the study area on October 1, 2019. The results indicated growth in background traffic; therefore, the 2019 counts were used for the analysis. All turning movement volumes were increased according to the growth factor calculated from 2019 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes and 2015 ADT volumes, where applicable. Therefore, the traffic counts included in the TIA represent pre-lockdown (normal) travel behavior during peak travel periods. The TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed Project was determined to not result in an increase in cut-through traffic in the Project area. Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.</p>
C4	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project. The TIA included a comprehensive study of roadways in the Project area, including Adlai Road, Cuesta Del Sol, and Lake Jennings Park Road. As described in response to comment C2, the environmental impact of Project-related blasting is evaluated and discussed in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS.
D1	<p>See response to comment A2.</p> <p>Greenhills Way is being proposed as a dedicated access point for project residents such that there will be no need for project residents to access Greenhills Ranch II via existing local roads; such as, Jack Oak Road and Cuesta del Sol.</p>

	<p>The original project design did not propose a gated community. Following discussions with the CPG and surrounding community, the project was revised to Greenhills Ranch II to be a gated community restrict cut-through traffic along the surrounding private roads.</p>
E1	<p>The statement is an introduction to the commenter's relationship to the Project, and does not represent a comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.</p>
E2	<p>The Project applicant and the Fire Consultant for the Project (Firewise 2000) have worked closely with the County Fire Marshal to mitigate any fire concerns with the project. A Conceptual Fire Protection Plan (FPP) dated November 21, 2022 was prepared by Firewise 2000, Inc. for the proposed Project (Appendix I of the Draft IS/MND). The FPP addresses water supply, access (including secondary/emergency access where applicable), structural ignitability and fire resistive building features, fire protection systems and equipment, impacts to existing emergency services, defensible space, and vegetation management. A project of medium size, such as the proposed Project, must provide two avenues of ingress and egress which is precisely what has been proposed. The FPP concluded that the development would have adequate emergency access in terms of access and construction standards for roadways and streets. As described in Section XX, Wildfire, of the Draft IS, the Project would have adequate water supply and facilities for fire protection, adequate emergency access (to and from Lake Jennings Road and Adlai Street), would maintain required fuel modification zones, and would implement ignition resistant construction measures including automatic fire sprinkler systems in each residence. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District, the fire district that serves the Project area.</p> <p>Additionally, in response to comments regarding evacuation of the Project and surrounding residences, a Wildfire Evacuation Plan was prepared by Dudek dated December 2023. The Wildfire Evacuation Plan was prepared based on guidance from the County of San Diego Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) including Annex Q- Evacuation (County of San Diego 2022) and outlines strategies, procedures, recommendations, and organizational structures that can be used to implement a coordinated evacuation effort in the case of a wildfire emergency affecting the Project. According to the Wildfire Evacuation Plan, "the Project would not be expected to significantly impact evacuation of existing land uses based on the typical road capacity like those found in and around the Project area that can support between 1,500 and 1,900 vehicles per hour (Federal Highway Administration Highway Safety Manual 2023) during an evacuation event. The addition of 126 vehicles to an evacuation could increase times between 5 and 8 minutes if all traffic was utilizing the same evacuation routes. However, the Project would have two potential evacuation routes, one of which avoids use of Adlai Road, resulting in no measurable impact on existing residential area evacuation times. Further, evacuations are typically managed in a sequential or phased manner to avoid large area notices that result in congested roadways. Under this approach, traffic movement is prioritized through targeted evacuation notices and intersection</p>

	control to move populations at higher risk as the priority. Therefore, if the project site and the neighboring residential areas were considered priority areas, they would be evacuated via all available evacuation routes with support from technological tools and in-the-field officers. The inclusion of the new road providing connection with Jennings Lake Park Road not only provides additional evacuation capacity for the Project, but would also be available to existing area residents during an evacuation.” Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.
E3	Refer to response to comment A2. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). Due to the Project’s location within an Infill Area, the TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.
E4	<p>Refer to response to comment A4. As described in the Draft IS/MND, Project grading activities would require a total of three blasts limited to 6 tons of ammonium nitrate and 20,000 square feet per day. Prior to procuring a Grading Permit for the proposed Project, the Project would require preparation and implementation of a blasting and monitoring plan, which would require approval by the County Sheriff and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS). The blasting and monitoring plan would ensure that there would be no damage to adjacent houses or other structures, including the Helix Water District facility and the Lake Jennings facility. The plan would be prepared by blasting experts in conjunction with the soils engineer and in accordance with all applicable County protocols.</p> <p>The effects of Project-related blasting on air quality and health were evaluated and discussed in Section III, Air Quality, of the Draft IS. As described therein, the Project’s estimated emissions of criteria air pollutants, specifically particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns (PM₁₀), were estimated by the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) to be as high as 40 pounds per day during blasting, which is below the County’s screening-level threshold of 100 pounds per day during construction activities. In addition, due to the highly dispersive nature of particulate matter (PM), a cumulative air quality impact during construction activities would only occur if a project adjacent to the proposed Project undergoes simultaneous grading/earthwork activities and emits significantly greater PM₁₀ emissions than the Project. Given that no other cumulative projects are planned to occur in the Project area with the same construction timing as the proposed Project, the Project would not contribute to a cumulative air quality impact during construction activities. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of noise or air quality related to blasting activities.</p>

E5	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). Given that all potentially significant impacts of the Project would be mitigated to levels below applicable significant thresholds with the mitigation measures outlined in the Draft IS/MND, the Draft IS/MND is the appropriate environmental review document, and no additional evaluation is required for the proposed Project.
E6	The statement is conclusion to the commenter’s thoughts on the Project, and does not represent a specific comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
F1	<p>Refer to response to comments and A2 and A3. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). The TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed Project was determined to not result in an increase in cut-through traffic in the Project area. Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.</p> <p>The Project applicant has made it clear to the County of San Diego that they want to participate in a Road Maintenance Agreement with the other residents in the area that the County would administer to maintain the local private roads such as Adlai Road, Audubon Road, Cuesta del Sol, and Lone Jack Road.</p>
G1	Please see the attached letter from Raab Rydeen of REC Consulting outlining the Project’s easement rights (First American Title Report) across the area in question.
G2	<p>The project traffic analysis was conducted in accordance with the latest County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines. Existing traffic volumes were counted under typical weekday conditions during AM and PM peak periods (7AM – 9AM and 4PM – 6PM) again consistent with County guidelines.</p> <p>The traffic study determined that the project would result in a total of 640 new Average Daily Trips. Twenty percent of the project residents will access the site via Adlai Road, and eighty percent of project traffic will utilize the proposed Greenhills Way/Lake Jennings Parkway. During AM peak, 11 trips will utilize Adlai Road and 42 trips will access</p>

	Lake Jennings Road vis Greenhills Way. During PM peak, 13 trips will be along Adlai Road and 52 trips along Lake Jennings Road/Greenhills Way.
G3	REC has provided existence of the Project's easement rights (First American Title Report), which is attached to their letter.
H1	The comment is an introductory comment indicating that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has reviewed the Draft IS/MND. The comment also summarizes the mission and goals of Caltrans and the role of the Local Development Review (LDR) Program. This comment does not raise an issue regarding the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND; therefore, no further response is required or provided.
H2	<p>The proposed project is located within a County Board adopted Infill Area within the Village of Lakeside. The County's adopted 2022 Transportation Study Guide (TSG) states that projects located within these areas would have a less than significant impact for CEQA/Transportation and no further VMT analysis is required.</p> <p>County staff responded directly to Caltrans and they have no further comment.</p>
H3	<p>A Local Mobility Analysis (LMA) was prepared for the project and analyzed roadway and intersection operations in the vicinity of the proposed project. County staff did not require LOS or queueing analyses to be conducted as part of the LMA for the Lake Jennings Park Road/I-8 ramp intersection because based on the trip generation/distribution tables in the LMA, only 15 AM and PM peak hour trips were identified at the ramp intersection.</p> <p>County staff responded directly to Caltrans and have no further comment.</p>
H4	Comment noted. No response required.
H5	Comment noted. No response required.
H6	Comment noted. No response required.
H7	Comment noted. No response required.
H8	Comment noted. No response required.

I1	The statement is an introduction to the commenter's relationship to the Project, and does not represent a comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
I2	<p>A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). As described in the TIA, the weekday AM/PM peak hour intersection turning movement traffic counts were conducted at the study area intersections on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, when schools were in session. The peak hour counts were conducted during the commuter peak hours of 7:00-9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM. Validation counts were conducted on multiple segments near the study area on October 1, 2019. The results indicated growth in background traffic; therefore, the 2019 counts were used for the analysis. All turning movement volumes were increased according to the growth factor calculated from 2019 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes and 2015 ADT volumes, where applicable. Therefore, no traffic studies were generated during the COVID protocol timeframe of 2020-2021, and the traffic counts included in the TIA represent travel behavior during peak travel periods. The TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions. Refer to response to comment A2.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed Project was determined to not result in an increase in cut-through traffic in the Project area. Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis. Refer to response to comment A3.</p>
I3	Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis. Refer to response to comment A3.
I4	The Project applicant has made it clear to the County of San Diego that they want to participate in a Road Maintenance Agreement with the other residents in the area that the County would administer to maintain the private roads such as Adlai Road, Audubon Road, Cuesta del Sol, and Jack Oak Road.

I5	Refer to responses to comments I3 and I4.
I6	The statement does not represent a comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
J1	The statement does not represent a comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
J2	<p>Regarding preserve design, the development footprint is generally sited in the least sensitive area and biological open space is properly configured adjacent to off-site habitat blocks. The off-site mitigation property was selected to further consolidate preserve lands. Nevertheless, there is significant loss of coastal sage scrub habitat (over half is impacted). (California gnatcatchers and cactus wrens are not directly impacted.) There is also loss of 1/3 of the San Diego County Viguiera (<i>Viguiera laciniata</i>) on site. 100-ft limited building zones and fuel modification zones are large in size relative to the preserved areas and may not retain any substantial habitat value. This deserves additional attention.</p> <p>As noted by the commentor, the proposed project ensures that conservation of appropriate habitat values is accomplished by properly adhering to the project design criteria and applicable specific habitat and species mitigation requirements identified in the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO).</p> <p>General uses and requirements within the limited building zone and fuel modification zone are described in Section 4907 and related sections of the County's 2020 Consolidated Fire Code (Fire Code). While limited native vegetation is permitted to remain within the fuel modification zone, the vegetation must be modified so that combustible vegetation does not occupy more than 50 percent of the square footage of this area. While retaining native vegetation as permitted in Section 4907 of the Fire Code could provide limited residual habitat value, habitat values within the fuel modification zone are assumed to be 100 percent lost for the purposes of analyzing impacts and conservation under the proposed project and are mitigated accordingly to ensure appropriate conservation of biological resources consistent with the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance and the SC Subarea Plan.</p> <p>The approval of the project will be conditioned to include a Limited Building Zone easement that limits uses to sheds, gazebos, and detached garages, less than 250 square feet in total floor area, that are designed, constructed and placed so that they do not require clearing or fuel modification within the biological open space easement, beyond the clearing/fuel modification required for the primary structures on the property.</p>

	<p>Landscaping palettes used on the proposed project will be required to comply with MM BIO-9 and approval of the project will be conditioned accordingly to allow review of all landscape plans associated with the proposed project by the Project Biologist to minimize the effects that proposed landscape plants could have on biological resources outside of the impact footprint due to potential naturalization of landscape plants in the open space. Landscape plants will not include invasive plant species on the most recent version of the Cal-IPC California Invasive Plant Inventory for the project region. Landscape plans will include a plant palette composed of native or non-native, non-invasive species that do not require high irrigation rates. Sections of Fuel Mod Zone 2 adjacent to Preserve Open Space will include only fire-safe native plants, such as those described in page 4 of County form PDS 199 and Appendix H (Low Water Use and Ignition Resistive Plants) of the Water Efficient Landscape Design Manual.</p>
J3	<p>Substantial evidence for findings related to MSCP compliance has been provided in the Draft IS/MND and technical appendices and is addressed in responses J4 and J5 below.</p>
J4	<p>The original Specific Plan and the development of Phase 1 included minimum lots of 6,000 sf. The lot sizes under the proposed project average 6,000 square feet and range from 5,119 square feet to 11,578 square feet. This is equivalent to an average lot size of 0.14 acres, and a range of 0.12 to 0.27 acres. The Project will subdivide the 36.03-acre site into 76 lots including 63 single-family residential lots. Approximately 18.64 acres would be dedicated as open space on the TM. The Specific Plan amendment could allow for a further reduction in lot sizes, however, the housing required for smaller lots would be inconsistent with the development patterns and typology found in the surrounding neighborhoods.</p>
J5	<p>Section 86.505 Project Design Criteria in the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance references clustering as a means of configuring developed land uses together in a manner that supports the goals of avoiding impacts to sensitive biological resources to be protected under the SC Subarea Plan. The proposed project meets this design criteria by consolidating the proposed development footprint adjacent to existing developed areas to the south and east and minimizing development along the northern portion of the project site. This configuration allows the development footprint to occupy a single, contiguous area adjacent to existing developed areas and ensures that proposed open space along the northern portion of the site continues to provide east-west connectivity between existing open space lands in the project area.</p> <p>In addition to configuring the proposed development in accordance with the clustering criteria in Section 86.505 of the BMO, avoidance of sensitive biological resources on site has been accomplished by significantly reducing the total</p>

	number of residential units proposed under the Project during the design review process with the applicant relative to the number of residential allowed under General Plan.
K1	<p>A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). As described in the TIA, the weekday AM/PM peak hour intersection turning movement traffic counts were conducted at the study area intersections on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, when schools were in session. The peak hour counts were conducted during the commuter peak hours of 7:00-9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM. Validation counts were conducted on multiple segments near the study area on October 1, 2019. The results indicated growth in background traffic; therefore, the 2019 counts were used for the analysis. All turning movement volumes were increased according to the growth factor calculated from 2019 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes and 2015 ADT volumes, where applicable. Therefore, no traffic studies were generated during the COVID protocol timeframe of 2020-2021, and the traffic counts included in the TIA represent travel behavior during peak travel periods. The TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions. Refer to response to comment A2.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed Project was determined to not result in an increase in cut-through traffic in the Project area. Refer to response to comment A3. Greenhills Way is proposed as a dedicated access point for Project residents such that there would be no need for Project residents to access the Project site via existing local roads such as Jack Oak Road or Cuesta Del Sol. The proposed Project would be a gated community, which would restrict the use of Greenhills Way to Project residents only and not permit cut-through traffic. Therefore, no cut-through traffic would travel past the residence on Audubon Road. The only traffic that will pass by the residence would be the new Project residents entering along Greenhills Way. The comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.</p>
K2	The commenter is in favor of the proposed gate in the Project, which would prohibit cut-through traffic through the Project site. The proposed Project would be a gated community and would not allow neighboring residents to use roads within the Project site to access Lake Jennings Park Road. The Project was designed as a gated community in accordance with requests from the existing residents' neighboring the Project site, since they want to minimize cut-through traffic in the Project area.
K3	The Project applicant agreed to use extensive landscaping to screen the proposed residential lots from the adjacent residence at 9438 Audubon Road during the Lakeside Community Planning Group meeting with neighborhood residents in October 2021. The use of extensive landscaping as part of the Project is discussed in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS. As described therein, the proposed homes would be located on a higher elevation than the surrounding

	<p>area and would be visible from lower elevation residential areas south of the site. Section 4.4.2.2 of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) describes general standards for future development of the residential lots through Site Plan application(s). Item 3 of this section limits maximum coverage of residential lots to be 60 percent with structures of any type. Item 6 requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. These lots comprise 10 of the 15 lots that face the residential areas to the south along Adlai Road. These standards, or project design features, would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area.</p> <p>A Conceptual Landscape Plan (CLP) was prepared for the Project by Martin Schmidt of Environs dated February 16, 2016 and updated May 25, 2021 (see Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND). The CLP requires the Project to include landscaping throughout the Project development to screen views of the development from surrounding areas. For example, the CLP requires landscaping on the fill slopes between the proposed homes and residential areas south of the site. The CLP also requires trees on the building pads along the Project boundaries and throughout the development including along the proposed interior streets to further screen the homes. The Project would be conditioned to obtain County approval of a Landscape Plan in conformance with the CLP.</p> <p>The CLP shows how the proposed Project would be screened by this required landscaping, using existing vegetation and incorporating the landscaping requirements and limitations regarding coverage and one-story homes to accurately depict photo simulations. The photo simulations depict what the Project site would look like when viewed from immediately south of the site (north end of Adlai Road) and from further south (Vecinio Del Este Place and Adlai Road). As demonstrated by the photo simulations, the Project development would be well screened with required landscaping.</p>
K4	<p>The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. Refer to response to comment A4. As described in the Draft IS/MND, Project grading activities would require a total of three blasts limited to 6 tons of ammonium nitrate and 20,000 square feet per day. Prior to procuring a Grading Permit for the proposed Project, the Project would require preparation and implementation of a blasting and monitoring plan, which would require approval by the County Sheriff and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS). The blasting and monitoring plan would ensure that there would be no damage to adjacent houses or other structures, including the Helix Water District facility and the Lake Jennings facility. The plan would be prepared by blasting experts in conjunction with the soils engineer and in accordance with all applicable County protocols.</p>

	The effects of Project-related blasting on air quality and health were evaluated and discussed in Section III, Air Quality, of the Draft IS. Refer to the response to comment E4. The comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of noise or air quality related to blasting activities.
K5	Refer to the response to comment K3.
K6	Refer to the response to comment J4.
K7	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.
L1	The Project applicant and the County will work hand in hand with the Helix Water District to be in full compliance in mitigating the temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise especially during the site development work.
L2	The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. Refer to response to comment A4. As described in the Draft IS/MND, Project grading activities would require a total of three blasts limited to 6 tons of ammonium nitrate and 20,000 square feet per day. Prior to procuring a Grading Permit for the proposed Project, the Project would require preparation and implementation of a blasting and monitoring plan, which would require approval by the County Sheriff and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS). MM NOI-3 requires using a blast contactor and blasting personnel licensed to operate in the County, limiting blasting operations specific days and times, and providing notice in writing to all residences, including mobile homes, and businesses within 600 feet of any potential major blast location or 300 feet from any potential minor blast location, among other measures. Additionally, MM NOI-3 requires monitoring and recording of each blast with an air-blast overpressure monitor and groundbourne vibration accelerometer that is located outside the closest residence to the blast and shall not exceed 0.1 inch per second peak particle velocity at the nearest occupied residence, in accordance with County of San Diego's Noise Guidelines, Section 4.3. The blasting and monitoring plan would ensure that there would be no damage to adjacent houses or other structures, including the Helix Water District facility and the Lake Jennings facility. The plan would be prepared by blasting experts in conjunction with the soils engineer and in accordance with all applicable County protocols.
M1	The San Diego County Archaeological Society is in agreement with the cultural resources information presented in the Draft IS/MND. No further response is required.

N1	The comment presents the commenter’s summary of the Project and does not address an environmental impact. No response is required.
N2	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.
N3	<p>Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.</p> <p>Further, there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant impact on the environment with incorporated mitigation. The comment letter contains no substantial evidence demonstrating that the Project will have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. Tellingly, the letter does not cite any specific facts supporting its claim that the Project may result in significant environmental impacts once the standard conditions and mitigation measures specified in the MND are incorporated into the Project, and it does cite any legal authorities supporting its claims that the Project’s analyses, standard conditions, and mitigation measures are inadequate under CEQA. Failing to identify any factual or legal evidence supporting its claims, the letter falls back on mere argument, speculation, and unsubstantiated opinion, none of which constitutes substantial evidence under CEQA. (Guidelines § 15384.)</p> <p>For instance, with respect to the Project’s aesthetic and visual resources, the letter asserts that the Project’s proposed mitigation may not be effective because the Project’s landscaping might include trees that are too small to shield views of the Project from surrounding homes and surrounding homeowners may not choose landscaping for their individual lots to effectively screen out the Project. Such comments are mere speculation and suspicion and therefore do not constitute substantial evidence under CEQA. (Guidelines § 15384(a); <i>Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors</i>, supra, at p. 1352; <i>Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino</i> (2016) 1 Cal.App.5th 677, 690 [“Complaints, fears, and suspicions about a project’s potential environmental impact likewise do not constitute substantial evidence.”].) Further, “the mere possibility of adverse impact on a few people, as opposed to the environment in general” does not constitute substantial evidence and thus the comment letter’s unsubstantiated concerns about the Project’s potential impacts to the views of a few individual landowners does not support a fair argument that the Project will have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. (<i>Dunning v. Clews</i>, supra, at p. 170; see also <i>Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville</i>, supra, at p. 891 [“The vague concerns about the housing project expressed by a few members of the public during the two public hearings do not constitute substantial evidence supporting a fair argument, even when doubts are resolved in favor of EIR</p>

preparation.”]; *Bowman v. City of Berkeley*, supra, at p. 586 “[O]bstruction of a few private views in a project’s immediate vicinity is not generally regarded as a significant environmental impact.”)

Similarly, Opponent argues that the Project’s avoidance of development in steep slope areas in compliance with the County’s Resources Protection Ordinance is insufficient to negate the Project’s potential land use impacts in other areas of the Project site that are also sensitive in terms of having diverse and unique landforms. However, Opponent fails to identify any specific unique and diverse landforms within or surrounding the Project’s footprint and fails to provide any factual evidence that the Project will adversely affect such resources. The Comment’s vague and unsubstantiated opinions do not amount to substantial evidence supporting a fair argument that the Project may result in substantial adverse effects to the environment. (Guidelines § 15384(a); *Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors*, supra, at p. 1352; *Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino*, supra, at p. 690.)

The comment’s conclusions regarding the Project’s affects on air quality and energy, greenhouse gas emissions, noise impacts, and wildland fire/evacuation safety risks also fail to meet the fair argument standard. The comment letter fails to state whether she has any expertise in these subjects that would qualify her to opine on these highly technical topics and dispute the sufficiency of the Project’s proposed mitigation. Therefore, the contentions lack foundation and credibility and do not amount to substantial evidence under CEQA. (*Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville*, supra, at p. 908; *Newtown Preservation Society v. County of El Dorado* (2021) 65 Cal.App.5th 771, 789; *Gentry v. City of Murietta*, supra, at p. 118; *Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino*, supra, at pp. 690-92.) Further, even if opponent was a qualified expert on these topics, to meet the fair argument standard, the letter must cite to specific factual evidence in the record to support the letter’s claims that the Project may have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. (*Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors*, supra, 1349.) But once again, Opponent fails to cite any facts demonstrating that there would be any remaining effect on the environment after the Project’s air quality and energy, greenhouse as emissions, noise impacts, and wildland fire/evacuation safety impacts are avoided or mitigated through the standards and conditions described in the MND, let alone that such affects would be substantial. The comment’s unsubstantiated claims do not provide any evidence that the Project may have a substantial adverse effect on the environment and therefore fail to justify the preparation of a full EIR for the Project. (Guidelines § 15384(a); *Gentry v. City of Murietta*, supra, at p. 118; *Running Fence Corp. v. Superior Court*, supra, at pp. 423-24.)

Upon failing to produce any factual evidence in the record demonstrating that Project may adversely affect the environment after its impacts have been mitigated or avoided under the conditions and measures imposed in the MND, the Comment letter resorts to arguing that the County’s IS and MND fail to include adequate information and analyses

	<p>on the Project’s potential impacts related to aesthetics and visual resources, land use, air quality and energy, greenhouse gas emissions, noise impacts, and wildland fire/evacuation safety risk. But “a lack of study is hardly evidence that there will be a significant impact.” (<i>Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors</i>, supra, at p. 1358). Courts have repeatedly held that a “lack of study, standing alone, does not give rise to a fair argument that the Project will in fact have significant [effects].” (<i>Gentry v. City of Murietta</i>, supra, at pp. 1379, 1382). “[I]n the absence of any evidence to show that the impact on the environment will not be mitigated, or any evidence to show that the effects remaining after such mitigation will have a substantial adverse impact on the environment, the conclusion of the local agency that the project as permitted will have no substantial adverse impact on the environment is unassailable.” (<i>Running Fence Corp. v. Superior Court</i>, supra, at p. 423.) Because the commenter fails to point to any factual evidence demonstrating that the Project will have significant adverse effects on the environment, its position that the County should have provided more analysis and discussion on particular topics does not justify invalidating the County’s MND and preparation of full EIR. Further, the County thoroughly analyzed each of these topics and its conclusion that the Project will not result in any significant environmental impacts is supported by substantial evidence in the record.</p>
N4	<p>The areas surrounding the Project site are described on page 3 of the Draft IS, as “surrounded by residential neighborhoods, open space, and public facilities. Open space and residential uses developed as a part of Phase I of the GRSP [Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan] occur northwest of the Project site. Residential development is located directly to the south and east. Additional residential is located further to the north and west. Open space also occurs west of the site boundary. A water filtration plant operated by the Helix Water District is located just northeast of the site. Four residential lots that are not a part of the GRSP occur within, and are mostly surrounded by, the Project site.” As noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, “The Project site and much of the immediately surrounding area of Lakeside is classified as urbanized.”</p> <p>Refer to response to comment K3. To evaluate the potential impacts of the Project on a scenic vista, a Conceptual Landscape Plan (CLP) was prepared for the Project by Martin Schmidt of Environs dated February 16, 2016 and updated May 25, 2021 (see Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND). The standards, or project design features, established therein would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area.</p> <p>The CLP shows how the proposed Project would be screened by this required landscaping, using existing vegetation and incorporating the landscaping requirements and limitations regarding coverage and one-story homes to accurately depict photo simulations. The photo simulations depict what the Project site would look like when viewed from immediately south of the site (north end of Adlai Road) and from further south (Vecinio Del Este Place and Adlai Road). As demonstrated by the photo simulations, the Project development would be well screened with required</p>

	<p>landscaping and would not detract from the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area. Therefore, through implementation of project design features (i.e., development limitations) and mitigation (i.e., landscaping), the Project would result in less than significant impacts to the scenic vista of and from the Project site. The comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis.</p>
N5	<p>The comment asserts that the Project’s proposed mitigation may not be effective because the Project’s landscaping might include trees that are too small to shield views of the Project from surrounding homes and surrounding homeowners may not choose landscaping for their individual lots to effectively screen out the Project. The comment inaccurately asserts that the majority of landscape screening would occur on individual residential lots, “meaning that the effectiveness of the “mitigation” depends on individual homeowners or perhaps the homeowner’s association, which cannot be assured.” Firstly, as shown in the CLP, the majority of landscape screening would occur within fuel treatment areas that surround and provide a buffer around the Project site. These fuel treatment areas would be temporarily or permanently irrigated in accordance with the Conceptual Fuel Treatment Map and FPP. The CLP states that all landscape areas are to be irrigated by a completely automated, weather-based irrigation system - utilizing an automatic controller, remote control valves, low precipitation heads and underground piping. The domestic system will be protected by a reduced pressure backflow preventer. The CLP also provides that the homeowners association (HOA) will be responsible for the maintenance of the Project landscape and irrigation system(s) per the Fire Protection Plan, except individual lot landscapes which shall be maintained by the homeowner. Homeowners will also be required to maintain the two trees planted by the developer or homebuilder as required by Measure A-2.1. The HOA will be tasked with ensuring that all future landscape plans for single family lots adhere to the requirements of the prescriptive compliance option. The proposed Project has been conditioned to provide landscaping consistent with the CLP and FPP and therefore, installation of the landscape and maturity are assured through Project condition.</p> <p>Further, the comment is mere speculation and suspicion and therefore, does not constitute substantial evidence under CEQA. (Guidelines § 15384(a); Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors, supra, at p. 1352; Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino (2016) 1 Cal.App.5th 677, 690 [“Complaints, fears, and suspicions about a project’s potential environmental impact likewise do not constitute substantial evidence.”].) Further, “the mere possibility of adverse impact on a few people, as opposed to the environment in general” does not constitute substantial evidence and thus the comment letter’s unsubstantiated concerns about the Project’s potential impacts to the views of a few individual landowners does not support a fair argument that the Project will have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. (Dunning v. Clews, supra, at p. 170; see also Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville, supra, at p. 891 [“The vague concerns about the housing project expressed by a few members of the public during the two public hearings do not constitute substantial evidence supporting a fair argument, even when doubts are resolved in favor of EIR preparation.”]; Bowman v. City of Berkeley,</p>

	supra, at p. 586 “[O]bstruction of a few private views in a project’s immediate vicinity is not generally regarded as a significant environmental impact.”)
N6	<p>The comment suggests that visual simulations are inadequate because they do not include simulations from existing homes including those that will be surrounded by the Project site. However, visual simulations for the Project were created using standards for such simulations from the County of San Diego. CEQA case law has established that only public views, not private views, need be analyzed under CEQA. For example, in <i>Association for Protection etc. Values v. City of Ukiah</i> (1991) 2 Cal. App⁴ 720, the court determined that “we must differentiate between adverse impacts upon particular persons and adverse impacts upon the environment of persons in general. As recognized by the court in <i>Topanga Beach Renters Assn. v. Department of General Services</i> (1976) 58 Cal.App.3d 188, “[all] government activity has some direct or indirect adverse effect on some persons. The issue is not whether [the project] will adversely affect particular persons but whether [the project] will adversely affect the environment of persons in general.” Similarly, in <i>Mira Mar Mobile Community v. City of Oceanside</i> (2004) 119 Cal. App⁴ 477, the court upheld an EIR’s determination that impacts on public views would be significant, but impacts on private were not significant. Additionally, in 2018, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines was updated to clarify that impacts to public (not private) views may be significant under CEQA. As such, effects on private views are not considered under CEQA (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21082.2).</p> <p>Therefore, the CEQA significance threshold is to determine if the homes will have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, not whether the homes can be seen from other homes in the area. As noted in response to comment N5 and in the Draft IS, the Project is located in an urban setting and will be seen from other homes in the area. The Draft IS acknowledges that “the proposed homes would be visible from lower elevation residential areas south of the site,” but finds that, “through implementation of project design features (i.e., development limitations) and mitigation (i.e., landscaping), the Project would result in less than significant impacts to the scenic vista of and from the Project site.” In addition, the Draft IS finds that, “The proposed development would have limited visibility from the north, east, and west due to dedication of open space and agricultural areas to the west and north, the Helix Water District water filtration plant to the northeast, and Lake Jennings Road to the east.” Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis.</p>
N7	The comment misstates the CEQA significance criteria. The threshold of significance as noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS is, “b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?” As noted in the Draft IS, there is no impact, as “There are no State scenic highways within the Project viewshed.” Therefore, the Project would not result in impacts

	to scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis.
N8	Refer to response to comment N7. In addition, the Draft IS/MND notes that SPA standards have taken into account the aesthetic standards and have been included in the SPA. For example, Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS states that, “Section 4.4.2.2 of the proposed SPA describes general standards for future development of the residential lots through Site Plan application(s). Item 3 of this section limits maximum coverage of residential lots to be 60 percent with structures of any type. Item 6 requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. These lots comprise 10 of the 15 lots that face the residential areas to the south along Adlai Road. These standards, or project design features, would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area.” Refer to response to comment N5 for discussion of the Project’s design features (i.e., development limitations) and mitigation (i.e., landscaping) that would reduce the Project’s potential impacts to a scenic vista below a level of significance. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis.
N9	The comment misstates the CEQA significance criteria. The threshold of significance as noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS is, “b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?” The County’s Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan states that “State Scenic Highways are those highways that are either officially designated by Caltrans or are eligible for designation. This statewide system of scenic highways is part of the Master Plan of State Highways Eligible for Official State Designation as Scenic Highways. A highway may be designated as “scenic” depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the aesthetic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view. A highway’s status changes from “eligible” to “officially designated” when the local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and receives notification from Caltrans that the highway has been designated as an official State Scenic Highway.” As noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, there is no impact, as “There are no State scenic highways within the Project viewshed.” No additional analysis is required; however, the Draft IS further evaluates the Project’s potential to impact views along roads in the County Scenic Highway System. As described in the Draft IS, “The nearest route in the County Scenic Highway System is El Monte Road located approximately 0.66 mile north of the site (Table COS-1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan). The Project site is not in line with road users’ line of site of the roadway and the Project site is not visible due to intervening vegetation, topography, and structures.” Therefore, the Project would not result in impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis.

N10	A portion of the Project site is within the El Cajon Mountain – El Capitan Reservoir Resource Conservation Area of the Lakeside Community Plan. The Draft IS and Specific Plan Amendment contain information indicating how the project is consistent with the Lakeside Community Plan. The Draft IS has conservatively evaluated the potential impacts of the Project on scenic vistas of and from the project site, scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and consistency with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, as required by CEQA.
N11	As noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, “The CLP [conceptual landscape plan] is an integral component of the Project design, and the Project would be conditioned to obtain approval of a Landscape Plan in conformance with the CLP.” Therefore, the landscape plan is not a typical mitigation; it is a feature of the Project design and has been properly integrated and will be conditioned with the Project.
N12	The comment claims that the Draft IS/MND does not provide an analysis of the Project’s consistency with relevant General Plan policies. The Project is located in the GRSP area and is Phase II of the GRSP, which has regulatory authority over the Project. The Project is required to be designed and implemented consistent with the regulations of the County General Plan and the Specific Plan. As noted in Section XI(b) of the Draft IS, “The Project has been reviewed for consistency with the General Plan and the Lakeside Community Plan. A full conformance analysis is included as an appendix to the SPA.” Therefore, the Draft IS provides an analysis of consistency with relevant General Plan policies as they pertain to the CEQA thresholds throughout the Draft IS and references a full discussion of policy consistency in an appendix to the SPA.
N13	Pursuant to Section XI, Land Use and Planning, of the Draft IS, “The Project locates development in areas which have already been disturbed and away from areas which are biologically sensitive, specifically areas subject to the County RPO for steep slopes. Areas subject to the County RPO for significant steep slopes have been placed in a biological open space easement and are not subject to grading or development.” Biological open space easements are more restrictive than steep slope easements and will provide additional protection of the resources. The County RPO for steep slopes is the regulatory program applied to all development in areas with steep slopes and is consistent with the General Plan policies for land use development in conformance with topography (policy 6.9). As the Project will comply with this regulatory program, a less than significant impact will occur. CEQA does not provide a threshold of significance related to diverse and unique landforms. The Draft IS adequately evaluates all of the Project’s potential impacts relative to the CEQA significance thresholds.
N14	The Project is within the Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan area and is therefore subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan and not the County zoning code. Section 4010 of the San Diego County Zoning Ordinance states that if a Specific Plan has been adopted and not expired for the property, and the property is subject to either the Specific Plan Area

	General Plan Designation or the S88 Specific Plan Use Regulations, any provision of the Specific Plan relating to development regulations shall prevail over the Zoning Ordinance regulations to the extent of any conflict between them. The Project is consistent with the development regulations of the Specific Plan.
N15	The comment claims that the Draft IS/MND does not provide an analysis of the Project's consistency with relevant Lakeside Community Plan policies. As noted in Section XI(b) of the Draft IS, "The Project has been reviewed for consistency with the General Plan and the Lakeside Community Plan. A full conformance analysis is included as an appendix to the SPA." Therefore, the Draft IS provides an analysis of consistency with relevant Lakeside Community Plan policies as they pertain to the CEQA thresholds throughout the Draft IS and references a full discussion of policy consistency in an appendix to the SPA.
N16	Design features have been conditioned as part of the Project approval and are therefore enforceable requirements. These measures are listed in the MND as conditions of Project approval by the County.
N17	<p>As noted in response to comment N16, design features have been conditioned in the Project permit approvals and are therefore enforceable requirements. The Project is not required to implement mitigation measures to avoid or lessen impacts related to greenhouse gases (GHGs). Therefore, this measure is not required to be adopted through a mitigation program. Nevertheless, as described in Section VIII, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, directly before the list of design features, these measures would be required for the Project "included as conditions of approval by the County."</p> <p>Additionally, VMT reduction measures are not required as "The TIA identified that the proposed Project is located within an adopted Infill Area. The TSG states that projects located within Infill Areas are screened from further VMT analysis and are considered to have a less than significant impact for transportation, because they meet the qualitative and quantitative criteria in the TSG to determine that they are located in a VMT-efficient area and meet the policy goals of SB 743. Development within Infill Areas meets the legislative intent of SB 743, which established VMT as the metric to evaluate transportation for CEQA because promoting development within the County's denser village areas create a greater diversity of land uses that would encourage transit and lower average VMT over time. Therefore, the Project would result in a less than significant impact related to VMT, and no mitigation is required."</p>
N18	The comment claims that the Project should not be compared against the allowable General Plan buildout scenario. As noted in Section III(a), "the construction and operational emissions from the Project are anticipated to be below established screening-level thresholds (SLTs), as addressed under Section III(b), and would not violate any ambient air quality standards." In addition, Section III, Air Quality, of the Draft IS notes that, "The regional air quality standards (RAQS) and State Implementation Plan (SIP) rely on the San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG's)

	<p>growth projections, which are developed based on proposed buildout of land uses identified in the County’s General Plan. Because the RAQS and SIP project future air quality conditions based on growth projections assuming buildout of the County’s General Plan, it is assumed that a project that generates fewer emissions than what is allowable under its existing General Plan designation would also comply with the RAQS and SIP.” Therefore, since the GRSP establishes an “overall density of 1.6 dwelling units per acre for the buildout of Phases I and II,” while the actual buildout would be 1.03 dwelling units per acre, it should be noted that the Project would generate fewer air pollutant emissions than was assumed in the General Plan, and subsequently, the RAQS and SIP.</p> <p>In addition, the County is not comparing the air pollutant emissions that would be generated by the Project against those of “an imaginary development scenario,” as noted in the comments. As discussed in Section III of the Draft IS, the County has identified screening level thresholds (SLTs) which incorporate the San Diego Air Pollution Control District’s (SDAPCD’s) established air quality impact analysis trigger levels for all new source review in SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and Rule 20.3. As shown in Tables 2 and 3 of the Draft IS, the Project’s construction and operational air emissions are estimated by the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) to be well below the SLTs that would require new source review. Therefore, the Project would result in less than significant impacts related to a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the air quality or GHG analysis.</p>
N19	Refer to response to comment N17. VMT reduction measures are not required, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis.
N20	<p>A Noise Assessment was prepared by LDN Consulting, Inc. dated September 28, 2020 (Appendix M of the Draft IS/MND), which evaluated potential noise impacts to the existing and future noise sensitive land uses from the proposed development. As noted in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS, “The Project is also subject to the County Noise Ordinance. Temporary construction noise is subject to Section 36.408, 409, and 410 of the Ordinance. Construction equipment operations are subject to a 75 dBA 8-hour average sound level limit at the boundary of an occupied residence.” Therefore, impacts are based on an objective County standard and the mitigation measures identified in the Noise Assessment have been designed to keep Project-related noise levels below that standard. As noted in the Draft IS, “To reduce potential noise impacts from construction equipment, the Noise Assessment includes construction mitigation. MM NOI-1a would require standard construction BMPs and equipment siting. MM NOI-1b would require 8-foot-high temporary noise barriers to screen grading activities along the impacted areas and reduce noise levels at the adjacent occupied residences (see the Appendix M of the Draft IS/MND for temporary noise barrier locations). The Project would be conditioned to install these temporary noise barriers prior to commencing grading and construction activities. Incorporation of MM NOI-1a and MM NOI-1b would reduce noise levels to comply with</p>

	<p>the County Noise Ordinances and result in a less than significant impact.” Further, these mitigation measures are included in the MND as conditions of Project approval and are therefore enforceable requirements of the Project. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the noise analysis.</p>
N21	<p>The comment suggests that the noise mitigation plan, which is required if rock crushing or drills are staged or used within 225 feet of occupied noise sensitive land uses, required under MM NOI-2 constitutes improper deferral of mitigation under CEQA. According to the CEQA Portal Topic Paper for Mitigation Measures (2020), “The essential rule for proper deferral of the specifics of mitigation was established in <i>Sacramento Old City Assoc. v. City Council of Sacramento</i> (1991) 229 Cal. App. 3d 1011. This case held that the City of Sacramento had correctly deferred the selection of specific mitigation measures to reduce the parking impacts from the expansion of its convention center. Under the reasoning established in this case and cited in many decisions since, in order to meet CEQA’s requirements a mitigation measure must meet one of the following basic conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The agency must commit itself to the mitigation by identifying and adopting one or more mitigation measures for the identified significant effect. The mitigation measure must also set out clear performance standards for what the future mitigation must achieve. 2) Alternatively, the agency must provide a menu of feasible mitigation options from which the applicant or agency staffs can choose in order to achieve the stated performance standards.” <p>MM NOI-2 meets both of the basic conditions for CEQA’s mitigation measure requirements listed above. For example, MM NOI-2 meets the first condition as it commits the County and the applicant to preparation and implementation of a specific mitigation plan by a County certified acoustical engineer for the identified potentially significant noise impact “based upon the location of the construction equipment, topography and construction schedule.” The mitigation measure also sets clear performance standards for what the future noise mitigation plan must achieve. For instance, MM NOI-2 states that “All rock drilling and rock crushing activities shall comply with County noise standards pursuant to County Noise Ordinance, Section 36.409 and 36.410.” MM NOI-2 also meets the second condition listed above since it provides an example of a feasible mitigation option to be included in the noise mitigation plan (i.e., a temporary noise barrier along any property line ranging from 8 to 12 feet in height). The noise mitigation plan included in MM NOI-2 is also enforceable, as it is included in the MND as a condition of County approval.</p> <p>“‘[W]hen a public agency has evaluated the potentially significant impacts of a project and has identified measures that will mitigate those impacts,’ and has committed to mitigating those impacts, the agency may defer precisely how mitigation will be achieved under the identified measures pending further study.” (<i>Oakland Heritage Alliance v. City</i></p>

of Oakland (2011) 195 Cal.A^{pp}.4th 884, citing *California Native Plant Society v. City of Rancho Cordova (2010)* 172 Cal.A^{pp}.4th 603.)

The comment makes similar claims about the blasting and monitoring plan included in MM NOI-3. MM NOI-3 also meets both of the basic conditions for CEQA's mitigation measure requirements listed above. It meets the first condition by committing the applicant to preparation and implementation of the blasting and monitoring plan "prior to approval of the grading permit for any portion of the proposed project" and submitting to the County Planning and Development Services (PDS) "for review and approval for conformance with the noise control measures." The performance measure for this mitigation is established as "comply[ing] with the noise level limits of the County's Noise Ordinance, Sections 36.409 and 36.410." The mitigation measure also provides many measures that would be required as part of the blasting and monitoring plan (e.g., using a blast contactor and blasting personnel licensed to operate in the County, monitoring and recording each blast with an air-blast overpressure monitor and groundbourne vibration accelerometer that is located outside the closest residence to the blast, limiting blasting operations specific days and times, providing notice in writing to all residences, including mobile homes, and businesses within 600 feet of any potential major blast location or 300 feet from any potential minor blast location, etc.).

The comment goes on to suggest that the temporary noise barrier may or may not be installed at the whim of the Director of PDS, which does not represent an enforceable mitigation. In fact, MM NOI-1b states that 8-foot high temporary noise barrier "shall be installed and remain in place for the following cases:

- a) Grading activities consist of more than two pieces of equipment operating within 50 feet of occupied residences and/or;
- b) Grading activities consist of more than four pieces of equipment are located within 100 feet of occupied residences."

The mitigation also states that temporary noise barriers would be removed or relocated based on the location of grading activities, in order to demonstrate compliance with the County Noise Ordinance and properly screen the impacted residence.

In addition, the Draft IS/MND includes a number of other noise control measures described in detail under MM NOI-1 through MM NOI-4. All of the mitigation measures are included in the MND as conditions of Project approval by the County and are therefore enforceable requirements of the Project. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the noise analysis.

N22	<p>The comment states that the Noise Assessment does not determine or provide evidence that construction noise impacts will be less than significant even with implementation of MM NOI-1 through MM NOI-4 and that noise levels are only “anticipated” to be below the 75 decibel (dB) noise level limit with the incorporation of an 8-foot high noise barrier. Noise modeling, such as that conducted for the Noise Assessment prepared by LDN Consulting, Inc. (Appendix M of the Draft IS/MND), can only result in estimations of the noise levels that may occur during construction activities. As described in the Noise Assessment, the noise modeling uses data compiled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) regarding the noise generating characteristics of specific types of construction equipment. The Noise Assessment states that “Noise levels generated by heavy construction equipment can range from 60 dBA to in excess of 100 dBA when measured at 50 feet. However, these noise levels diminish rapidly with distance from the construction site at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance. For example, a noise level of 75 dBA measured at 50 feet from the noise source to the receptor would be reduced to 69 dBA at 100 feet from the source to the receptor, and reduced to 63 dBA at 200 feet from the source.” Given this concept of noise levels diminishing with distance from the construction site, mitigation measure MM NOI-1b requires a noise barrier for construction activities within certain distances of nearby residences and MM NOI-2 requires a specific noise mitigation plan if rock crushing or drilling is within 225 feet from the nearest property line. As noted in the Noise Assessment, “The Fresnel Diffraction Method was utilized for determining the relative noise reduction associated with a temporary wooden mitigation II... The temporary mitigation wall [noise barrier] would reduce octave-band (250-Hz and 500-Hz) sound levels associated with typical construction activities between 8.5 dB and 10.1 dB. The reduction is dependent upon the source elevation and the topography between the source and receptor. The effective mitigated sound level at the nearest occupied residential area is therefore anticipated to be at or below 75 decibels (83.2 dB minus 8.5 dB).” The results of the Fresnel model output are provided as Attachment C, as noted in the Noise Assessment. Therefore, the Noise Assessment provides substantial evidence that construction noise would be less than significant with implementation of required mitigation measures.</p> <p>The comment claims that the numerous assumptions in the Noise Assessment about the locations of equipment, the timing of equipment operation, etc. make it difficult to determine that impacts are less than significant. These assumptions were made to create estimates of the construction noise levels that would occur at the nearest residences. Additionally, these assumptions were made in order to provide a conservative analysis of worst-case noise levels from construction of the Project. For example, the Noise Assessment notes that “To determine the worst-case noise levels from the drilling operations both rock drills were assumed to be placed in the same location on the site, which is not physically possible.” The Noise Assessment determines that, with this worst-case scenario, “The cumulative noise level from the equipment would be 88.0 dBA at 50 feet. Utilizing a 6 dBA reduction per doubling of distance, at distances of 225 feet from any property line, the noise levels will comply with the County of San Diego’s 75 dBA</p>
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	<p>standard as shown in Table 3-2.” Therefore, the Noise Assessment provides substantial evidence that construction noise levels would be below the 75-dBA noise level limit established by the County if construction occurs at least 225 feet from a property line; in addition, MM NOI-2 would require a specific noise mitigation plan if rock crushing or drilling is within 225 feet from the nearest property line to ensure construction noise levels remain below the 75-dBA noise level limit.</p> <p>In addition, the mitigation measures require monitoring and adjustments to ensure construction noise levels remain below the County noise level limits. For example, the blasting and monitoring plan requires monitoring and recording of each blast with an air-blast overpressure monitor and groundbourne vibration accelerometer that is located outside the closest residence to the blast and shall not exceed 0.1 inch per second peak particle velocity at the nearest occupied residence, in accordance with County of San Diego’s Noise Guidelines, Section 4.3.</p>
N23	<p>The comment claims that the Draft IS does not include an analysis of Project-related noise impacts on wildlife in the existing or future open space and conservation areas. However, as noted in the Biological Resources Report dated January 2021 prepared by DUDEK (see Appendix C of the Draft IS/MND), “Construction-related noise could occur from equipment used during vegetation clearing. Noise impacts can have a variety of indirect impacts on wildlife species, including increased stress, weakened immune systems, altered foraging behavior, displacement due to startle, degraded communication with conspecifics (e.g., masking), damaged hearing from extremely loud noises, and increased vulnerability to predators.” Given this potential for impacts from construction noise, the Biological Resources Report recommends MM BIO-7, which is included in the Draft IS/MND. MM BIO-7 states “All vegetation clearing must be done outside of the breeding season. Construction may occur during the breeding season is a waiver or approval is received from the County and the Wildlife Agencies. If construction within suitable nesting habitat occurs during the breeding season and to address avoidance of indirect impacts, a nesting survey for birds protected under Migratory Bird Treaty Act, shall be conducted prior to the onset of construction. Construction may occur if active nests can be avoided and provided an adequate buffer or noise levels are documented to be below 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA) equivalent sound level (Leq) at the nest site.”</p>
N24	<p>The Conceptual Fire Protection Plan (FPP) was most recently updated on November 21, 2022. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District, the fire district that serves the Project area. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the FPP prepared for the Project.</p>
N25	<p>Refer to response to comment E2. The Conceptual Fire Protection Plan (FPP) dated November 21, 2022 prepared by Firewise 2000, Inc. for the proposed Project (Appendix I of the Draft IS/MND), concluded that development would</p>

	<p>have adequate emergency access in terms of access and construction standards for roadways and streets. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District, the fire district that serves the Project area.</p> <p>Additionally, the Project includes several measures aimed at reducing fire risk and mitigating fire hazards. For example, MM BIO-9 (landscaping pallets) states that only fire-safe native plants, such as those described in page 4 of County form PDS 199, shall be planted in Fuel Mod Zone 2 adjacent to Preserve Open Space. MM BIO-11 requires the Project to implement all features of the FPP to minimize the potential exposure of the Project area to fire hazards. For instance, the Project would be developed in accordance with the Fire Conceptual Fuel Treatment Map, which identifies fuel treatment zones surrounding all areas of the property adjacent to vegetated areas, no build zones, and roadside treatment zones. The Project would also comply with the regulations relating to emergency access, water supply, and defensible space specified in the Consolidated Fire Code for San Diego County. The Fire Service Availability Letter (Appendix J of the Draft IS/MND) indicates the expected emergency travel time to the Project site to be 3.2 minutes. The Maximum Travel Time allowed pursuant to the General Plan Safety Element is 5 minutes; therefore, the Project meets emergency response travel time. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.</p> <p>As described further in response to comment E2, a Wildfire Evacuation Plan prepared by Dudek dated December 2023, outlines strategies, procedures, recommendations, and organizational structures that can be used to implement a coordinated evacuation effort in the case of a wildfire emergency affecting the Project. According to the Wildfire Evacuation Plan, the Project would not be expected to significantly impact evacuation of existing land uses based on the typical road capacity like those found in and around the Project area during an evacuation event. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.</p>
N26	Refer to response to comment E2. In response to comments regarding evacuation planning of the Project and surrounding residences, a Wildfire Evacuation Plan was prepared by Dudek dated December 2023.
N27	The comment inaccurately claims that the Project does not adopt mitigation measures for fire safety risk and in accordance with the FPP. MM BIO-11 states that all features of the FPP shall be implemented in conjunction with development of the Project. As such, the Project does adopt the measures included in the FPP as a mitigation measure required for the Project. The Project applicant and the Fire Consultant for the Project (Firewise 2000) have worked closely with the County Fire Marshal to mitigate any fire concerns with the project. Additionally, the FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District, the fire district that serves the Project area. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of fire safety.

N28	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.
O1	Responses are provided to the joint comment letter dated May 8, 2023 from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (Wildlife Agencies) following their review of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the proposed Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan Phase II Project (Project; PDS2016-SPA-16-001). The draft responses are based on discussions during a meeting between the applicant's consultant team and County of San Diego (County) planning staff on May 23, 2023.
O2	The comment is a summary of the Project description, and no response is required.
O3	<p>Coastal sage scrub and Riversidean sage scrub within the designated Impact Neutral Open Space areas on site are included in the Conceptual Resource Management Plan (RMP) and will be managed in concert with the Preserve Open Space areas on site. The RMP was included as Appendix E of the Biological Resources Technical Report and was prepared in accordance with the format and content requirements of the County of San Diego (County) Report Format and Content Requirements for Biological Resources for preparing a RMP (County of San Diego 2010a). As described in the RMP, the goal of the RMP is to preserve and manage lands to the benefit of the flora, fauna, and native ecosystem functions reflected in the natural communities occurring within the open space preserve. Specific management actions identified in the RMP that will help to maintain the existing biological value of the Impact Neutral Open Space areas include exotic plant control and trash/debris removal. In addition, the RMP prohibits recreational activities including, but not limited to, horseback riding, biking, target shooting, hunting, or fishing. As such, there is not expected to be an increase in recreation within the on-site open space preserve, and management under the RMP will help retain the overall biological value of the open space preserve, including the coastal sage scrub and Riversidean sage scrub areas within the designated Impact Neutral Open Space.</p> <p>Of the 5.08 acres of coastal sage scrub and Riversidean sage scrub located within the proposed Impact Neutral Open Space, 0.14 acres of coastal sage scrub is located within three small areas located directly along the western and southern limits of the excluded parcel in the center of the project site and would otherwise be surrounded on all sides by existing or proposed development. As recommended by the Wildlife Agencies, these three small areas totaling approximately 0.14 acres of Tier II habitat will be treated as permanent impacts and the required 1.5:1 mitigation ratio, amounting to an additional 0.21 acre of Tier II mitigation, will be accommodated within the existing on-site and off-site mitigation proposed for the project. With 0.14 acres of additional permanent impacts, the total impacts to Tier II</p>

	<p>habitat under the proposed project would be 12.19 acres and the required Tier II mitigation would be 18.28 acres. The total mitigation within the existing on-site preserve area and off-site mitigation lands is 19.1 acres.</p> <p>The remaining 4.94 acres of coastal sage scrub and Riversidean sage scrub within Impact Neutral Open Space will remain as proposed under the current impact analysis (i.e., as impact neutral) as they represent larger pieces of habitat either directly contiguous to or indirectly connected to existing or proposed conserved areas via habitat within the SDGE easement, or that protect existing sensitive biological resources including approximately 365 linear feet (0.02 acre) of jurisdictional non-wetland ephemeral drainages.</p>
O4	<p>The project site is located within Core 9 of the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon Core Area within the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment of the MSCP. In addition, the site is near to, but not a part of, the Lakeside Linkage, identified in the MSCP as that area in the vicinity of Interstate 8 in Lakeside. Although the Lakeside Linkage has several impediments as it lies today with considerable development and multiple small parcels of land, the design of the proposed project acknowledges the importance of maintaining an east-west connection between the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon Core Area and the Lakeside Linkage (see Figure 4 of the Biological Resources Technical Report). To that end, the proposed project was designed to meet the Project Design Criteria identified in the Subarea Plan for protecting the biological values of linkages and corridors (County of San Diego 1997). Consistent with protecting the existing biological value of the site in a key location near the Lakeside Linkage and avoiding further impediments to connectivity in the area, the proposed development footprint was placed adjacent to existing developed areas, allowing the project to provide open space contiguous with adjacent open space or undeveloped lands and within the Pre-approved Mitigation Areas (PAMA).</p>
O5	<p>The recommendation to achieve a minimum of 75 percent conservation to retain linkage function is not directly applicable to the project site due to its location within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon Core Area rather than the Lakeside Linkage itself. For context, however, adherence to the applicable BMO requirements to mitigate impacts to Tier II vegetation communities at a 1.5:1 ratio provides approximately 34 percent conservation via on-site mitigation lands within the proposed open space preserve, and increases to 55 percent conservation relative to the proposed impacts when including additional Tier II habitats within Impact Neutral Open Space. Furthermore, the proposed project increases conservation to 55 percent within the project area but also provides an additional 10.23 acres of offsite Tier II habitat preservation within the core area.</p>
O6	<p>The Conceptual Resource Management Plan (RMP) included as Appendix E in the Biological Resources Technical Report prepared for the Project includes a requirement to conduct surveys for California gnatcatcher and cactus wren every 5 years. Under the RMP, species-specific management tasks are required and shall be determined as-needed</p>

	<p>based on the results of these species surveys. In addition, adaptive management is included as a general provision in the RMP whereby remedial measures may be implemented if a decline is documented in the special-status wildlife or plant species or important vegetation communities in the open space preserve. As requested, MM BIO-1 will be conditioned such that the Wildlife Agencies have the opportunity to review and approve the final RMP.</p>
O7	<p>MM BIO-2, MM BIO-6 and MM BIO-7 will be combined into a single mitigation measure addressing resource avoidance identified as MM BIO-11 and which reads as follows:</p> <p>MM BIO-11 RESOURCE AVOIDANCE</p> <p>INTENT: In order to avoid impacts to migratory birds, coastal California gnatcatcher, and raptors which are sensitive biological resources pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), a Resource Avoidance Area (RAA) shall be implemented on all plans. DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT: There shall be no brushing, clearing and/or grading such that none will be allowed within 300 feet of migratory bird and gnatcatcher nesting habitat and 500 feet of raptor nesting habitat during the breeding season of the migratory bird, gnatcatcher, and raptor as indicated on these plans. The breeding season is defined as occurring between February 15 and August 31. If clearing or grading would occur during the breeding season, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted 72-hours prior to starting work to determine whether breeding birds occur in or within 500 feet of the impact area(s). If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within this area, clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within the area, the biologist shall flag the active nests and construction activities shall avoid active nests until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged. Construction near an active nest (within 300 feet for passerines, 500 feet for raptors, or as otherwise determined by a qualified biologist) shall either: (1) be postponed until a qualified biologist determines the nest(s) is no longer active or until after the respective breeding season; or (2) not occur until a temporary noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the development footprint and/or around the piece of equipment to ensure the noise levels are reduced to below 60 dBA or ambient, as confirmed by a County-approved noise specialist. Intermittent monitoring by a qualified biologist would be required for construction near an active nest. The Director of PDS may waive this condition, through written concurrence from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided that no migratory birds are present in the vicinity of the brushing, clearing or grading. DOCUMENTATION: The applicant shall provide a letter of agreement with this condition; alternatively, the applicant may submit a written request for waiver of this condition. Although, no grading shall occur within the RAA until concurrence is received from the County and the Wildlife Agencies. TIMING: Prior to preconstruction conference and prior to any clearing, grubbing, trenching, grading, or any land disturbances and throughout the duration of the grading and construction, compliance with this condition is mandatory unless the requirement is waived by the County upon</p>

	<p>receipt of concurrence from the Wildlife Agencies. MONITORING: The [DPW, PDCI] shall not allow any grading in the RAA during the specified dates, unless a concurrence from PDS is received. PDS shall review the concurrence letter.</p>
O8	<p>MM BIO-2, MM BIO-6 and MM BIO-7 will be combined into a single mitigation measure addressing resource avoidance identified as MM BIO-11 and which reads as follows:</p> <p>MM BIO-11 RESOURCE AVOIDANCE</p> <p>INTENT: In order to avoid impacts to migratory birds, coastal California gnatcatcher, and raptors which are sensitive biological resources pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), a Resource Avoidance Area (RAA) shall be implemented on all plans. DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT: There shall be no brushing, clearing and/or grading such that none will be allowed within 300 feet of migratory bird and gnatcatcher nesting habitat and 500 feet of raptor nesting habitat during the breeding season of the migratory bird, gnatcatcher, and raptor as indicated on these plans. The breeding season is defined as occurring between February 15 and August 31. If clearing or grading would occur during the breeding season, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted 72-hours prior to starting work to determine whether breeding birds occur in or within 500 feet of the impact area(s). If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within this area, clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within the area, the biologist shall flag the active nests and construction activities shall avoid active nests until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged. Construction near an active nest (within 300 feet for passerines, 500 feet for raptors, or as otherwise determined by a qualified biologist) shall either: (1) be postponed until a qualified biologist determines the nest(s) is no longer active or until after the respective breeding season; or (2) not occur until a temporary noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the development footprint and/or around the piece of equipment to ensure the noise levels are reduced to below 60 dBA or ambient, as confirmed by a County-approved noise specialist. Intermittent monitoring by a qualified biologist would be required for construction near an active nest. The Director of PDS may waive this condition, through written concurrence from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided that no migratory birds are present in the vicinity of the brushing, clearing or grading. DOCUMENTATION: The applicant shall provide a letter of agreement with this condition; alternatively, the applicant may submit a written request for waiver of this condition. Although, no grading shall occur within the RAA until concurrence is received from the County and the Wildlife Agencies. TIMING: Prior to preconstruction conference and prior to any clearing, grubbing, trenching, grading, or any land disturbances and throughout the duration of the grading and construction, compliance with this condition is mandatory unless the requirement is waived by the County upon receipt of concurrence from the Wildlife Agencies. MONITORING: The [DPW, PDCI] shall not allow any grading in</p>

	the RAA during the specified dates, unless a concurrence from PDS is received. PDS shall review the concurrence letter.
O9	<p>As noted, jurisdictional non-wetland ephemeral waters are located within the impact neutral open space proposed as part of the Project. The following notice will be included in the conditions of approval acknowledging the presence on site of jurisdictional resources under the regulatory authority of CDFW and other state and federal resource agencies, and designating the applicant's responsibility to consult with CDFW and others as appropriate.</p> <p>NOTICE: The subject property contains wetlands, a lake, a stream, and/or waters of the U.S. which may be subject to regulation by State and/or federal agencies, including, but not limited to, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. It is the applicant's responsibility to consult with each agency to determine if a permit, agreement or other approval is required and to obtain all necessary permits, agreements or approvals before commencing any activity which could impact the wetlands, lake, stream, and/or waters of the U.S. on the subject property. The agency contact information is provided below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: 6010 Hidden Valley Rd, Suite 105, Carlsbad, CA 92011-4219; (858) 674-5386; http://www.usace.army.mil/ • Regional Water Quality Control Board: 9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92123-4340; (858) 467-2952; http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/ • California Department of Fish and Wildlife: 3883 Ruffin Rd, San Diego, CA 92123; (858) 467-4201; http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/
O10	The Wildlife Agencies following their review of the Draft IS/MND conducted discussions with the applicant during a meeting between the applicant's consultant team and County planning staff on May 23, 2023.
P1	The MND has examined the full environmental impact of the Project. No further analysis is required.
P2	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.

P3	<p>This comment incorrectly characterizes the location of the Project as not within an infill area. The Project is located in an infill area for VMT analysis based upon the 2022 Transportation Study Guide (TSG) approved by the Board of Supervisors. As noted in Section XVII, Transportation, of the Draft IS, “The TSG was updated in 2022 to address legislative changes in SB 743, which changed the basis for evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA from the Level of Service (LOS) metric to the VMT metric. As noted in the TSG, “The legislative intent of SB 743 was to ‘more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.’” To that end, the County performed a qualitative and quantitative analysis (found in Appendix D of the TSG) to determine the appropriate “infill” areas that support SB 743 goals. Qualitative measures included an analysis of the definition of “infill” used in State law, the Federal Census, and scholarly literature. Quantitative information included the use of population density; housing density; employment density; intersection density; access to jobs within a 15-mile radius; and access to shopping/restaurant uses within a 1-mile radius. The qualitative and quantitative information was applied to the County through GIS to create geographic maps of the County meeting the “infill” criteria.</p> <p>Refer to responses to comments A2 and N17. VMT reduction measures are not required, and the comment does not present a deficiency in the transportation analysis. Because the Project is located in an infill area designated by the County, no further VMT analysis is required.</p> <p>Further, as described in Section VIII, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the Project would be required through conditions of approval by the County to implement a number of design features aimed at minimizing the Project’s effect on generation of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). With incorporation of these design features, the Project would contribute its fair share to help the State meet carbon neutrality as codified in AB 1279, and would not hinder the County from meeting GHG reduction benchmarks. Therefore, applying Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in the absence of locally adopted screening criteria or GHG significance thresholds, the Project would generate a less than significant GHG impact (see Appendix H of the Draft IS/MND).</p>
P4	<p>Refer to response to comment E2. The Conceptual Fire Protection Plan (FPP) dated November 21, 2022 prepared by Firewise 2000, Inc. for the proposed Project (Appendix I of the Draft IS/MND), concluded that development would have adequate emergency access in terms of access and construction standards for roadways and streets. As noted in the FPP, the Project is within a high FHSZ rather than a very high FHSZ as claimed in this comment. As noted in response to comment P3, the County has determined that the Project is located in an infill area. Although the Project is located in a high FHSZ, this designation does not preclude development and the County has made no pledge to eliminate all development in these areas. Projects located in very high fire severity zones must take appropriate action through the preparation of a FPP to include adequate fuel modifications zones to protect development. It should be</p>

	<p>noted that large portions of populated areas in the urbanized areas of San Diego County are located in very high FHSZs. The risk of wildfire is mitigated through fuel modification zones, ignition resistant construction and measures such as the inclusion of fire sprinklers in homes as noted above. The Draft IS/MND acknowledges the potential of wildfire and mitigates the potential risk with specific actions stated in the Draft IS/MND and FPP. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District (the fire district that serves the Project area) and the County of San Diego.</p> <p>Wildfire risks are fully analyzed in Section XX of the Draft IS. As described therein, the “Project would have adequate water supply and facilities for fire protection, adequate emergency access (to and from Lake Jennings Road and Adlai Street), would maintain required fuel modification zones, and would implement ignition resistant construction measures including automatic fire sprinkler systems in each residence.” In addition, “The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires because the Project would comply with the regulations relating to emergency access, water supply, and defensible space specified in the Consolidated Fire Code for San Diego County. Implementation of these fire safety standards would occur during the TM, Tentative Parcel Map, or building permit process. The Fire Service Availability Letter (Appendix J) indicates the expected emergency travel time to the Project site to be 3.2 minutes. The Maximum Travel Time allowed pursuant to the General Plan Safety Element is 5 minutes; therefore, the Project meets emergency response travel time.”</p> <p>Additionally, the Project includes several measures aimed at reducing fire risk and mitigating fire hazards. For example, MM BIO-9 (landscaping pallets) states that only fire-safe native plants, such as those described in page 4 of County form PDS 199, shall be planted in Fuel Mod Zone 2 adjacent to Preserve Open Space. MM BIO-11 requires the Project to implement all features of the FPP to minimize the potential exposure of the Project area to fire hazards. For instance, the Project would be developed in accordance with the Fire Conceptual Fuel Treatment Map, which identifies fuel treatment zones surrounding all areas of the property adjacent to vegetated areas, no build zones, and roadside treatment zones. The Project would also comply with the regulations relating to emergency access, water supply, and defensible space specified in the Consolidated Fire Code for San Diego County. The Fire Service Availability Letter (Appendix J of the Draft IS/MND) indicates the expected emergency travel time to the Project site to be 3.2 minutes. The Maximum Travel Time allowed pursuant to the General Plan Safety Element is 5 minutes; therefore, the Project meets emergency response travel time. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire risk.</p>
P5	<p>The FPP addresses access (including secondary/emergency access where applicable) in addition to water supply, structural ignitability and fire resistive building features, fire protection systems and equipment, impacts to existing emergency services, defensible space, and vegetation management. A project of medium size, such as the proposed Project, must provide two avenues of ingress and egress which is precisely what has been proposed. The FPP concluded that the development would have adequate emergency access in terms of access and construction standards for</p>

	<p>roadways and streets. As described in Section XX, Wildfire, of the Draft IS, the Project would have adequate emergency access (to and from Lake Jennings Road and Adlai Street) as well as adequate water supply and facilities for fire protection, would maintain required fuel modification zones, and would implement ignition resistant construction measures including automatic fire sprinkler systems in each residence. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District and the County of San Diego, which evaluated adequacy of evacuation routes. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.</p> <p>Additionally, as described further in response to comment E2, a Wildfire Evacuation Plan prepared by Dudek dated December 2023, outlines strategies, procedures, recommendations, and organizational structures that can be used to implement a coordinated evacuation effort in the case of a wildfire emergency affecting the Project. According to the Wildfire Evacuation Plan, the Project would not be expected to significantly impact evacuation of existing land uses based on the typical road capacity like those found in and around the Project area during an evacuation event. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.</p>
P6	<p>Biological resources have been fully analyzed in Section IV of the Draft IS, in the Biological Resources Report dated January 2021 prepared by DUDEK (Appendix C of the Draft IS/MND), and a Biological Resources Addendum dated August 2020 prepared by DUDEK (Appendix D of the Draft IS/MND).</p> <p>As noted by the commenter and described in the Biological Resources Report dated January 2021 prepared by DUDEK (see Appendix C of the Draft IS/MND), the Project area is within the boundaries of land covered by the South County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan, specifically within the Unincorporated Land in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment. The Biological Resources Report also notes that the Project site is designated a pre-approved mitigation area (PAMA); thus, the proposed Project will be able to direct mitigation needs to on-site preserve areas. Areas defined as PAMA are areas designated by the Wildlife Agencies as preapproved for meeting the South County MSCP Subarea Plan conservation goals. The Project site is also within the MSCP Biological Resource Core Area (BRCA). Areas defined as BRCA are lands that are: located within PAMA; areas of habitat which contain biological resources that support or contribute to the long-term survival of sensitive species; areas considered a regional linkage or corridor; areas containing habitat that is ranked as high or very high in the Habitat Evaluation Map; land that is within a block greater than 500 acres; or land that contains a number of sensitive species due to special soil conditions. Of these criteria, the Project meets the definition of BRCA because it is mostly located within PAMA (except for the existing development and an area of Riversidean sage scrub onsite), is largely dominated by coastal sage scrub occupied by California gnatcatcher, is near a linkage, and contains areas ranked very high in the Habitat Evaluation Map. The site is located within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon Core Area, Core 9. The site is near to</p>

the Lakeside Linkage that has been identified in the MSCP as that area in the vicinity of Interstate 8. This linkage is described in the MSCP as an area with considerable development and multiple small parcels of land.

The comment asserts that development should not be permitted with the MSCP. However, projects consistent with the MSCP may be developed. Project impacts have been fully mitigated based on the South County MSCP's Schedule of Mitigation Ratios table (Table 4-8, County of San Diego 1997). Proposed mitigation for Project impacts is in conformance with the County BMO, the implementing ordinance for the County's MSCP. Substantial evidence for findings related to MSCP compliance has been provided in the Draft IS/MND and technical appendices. For example, Section 86.505 Project Design Criteria in the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO) references clustering as a means of configuring developed land uses together in a manner that supports the goals of avoiding impacts to sensitive biological resources to be protected under the South County MSCP Subarea Plan. The proposed Project meets this design criteria by consolidating the proposed development footprint adjacent to existing developed areas to the south and east and minimizing development along the northern portion of the Project site. This configuration allows the development footprint to occupy a single, contiguous area adjacent to existing developed areas and ensures that proposed open space along the northern portion of the site continues to provide east-west connectivity between existing open space lands in the Project area.

In addition to configuring the proposed development in accordance with the clustering criteria in Section 86.505 of the BMO, avoidance of sensitive biological resources onsite has been accomplished by significantly reducing the total number of residential units proposed under the Project during the design review process with the applicant relative to the number of residential units allowed under General Plan. Phase I of the GRSP has been approved and the site currently has built out 31 units. The allowable buildout of the Project site in the County's General Plan includes the construction of an additional 117 residential units, as compared to the proposed Project's 63 residential units. Therefore, the Project's design configuration, reduced size, and biological open space easement and other mitigation measures contribute to the Project's efforts to avoid impacts to biological resources.

Further, the proposed Project ensures that conservation of appropriate habitat values is accomplished by properly adhering to the project design criteria and applicable specific habitat and species mitigation requirements identified in the County's BMO. The loss of biological habitat is fully analyzed in the Biological Resources Report and Section IV, Biological Resources, of the Draft IS. As described therein, the Project would result in impacts to 12.05 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub, disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub, and Riversidian coastal sage scrub. Mitigation for these impacts includes the preservation of 8.89 acres onsite and 10.23 acres offsite and adjacent of vegetation communities generally consistent with the assemblage of vegetation communities impacted by the Project, for a total of 19.11 acres contiguous coastal sage scrub adjacent to existing MSCP preserves (MM BIO-1). Based on the mitigation ratios

	<p>established in the South County MSCP Subarea Plan (Table 4-8 of the South County MSCP Subarea Plan), impacts to 12.05 acres of Tier II vegetation communities require 19.11 acres of in-kind mitigation; therefore, the preservation of 19.11 acres of a Tier II vegetation community under MM BIO-1 exceeds the minimum criteria and provides a 1.5 to 1 mitigation ratio. This mitigation meets the criteria in the MSCP Subarea Plan and Section 86.506 of the County's BMO.</p> <p>In addition to the preservation of a total of 19.11 acres on site and off site in open space under MM BIO-1, MM NOI-2 would require avoidance of the bird nesting season or a nesting bird survey; MM BIO-3 would control fugitive dust during construction activities; MM BIO-4 would require installation of temporary prominently colored fencing and signage wherever the limits of grading are adjacent to sensitive vegetation communities or other biological resources; MM BIO-5 would require preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and related best management practices (BMPs); MM BIO-6 would avoid the bird breeding season or conduct a nesting bird survey; MM BIO-8 would require an open space fence or wall along all open space edges where open space is adjacent to residential uses to protect the preserve from entry upon Project completion; MM BIO-9 (landscaping palettes) would prohibit the planting of invasive plant species on the Project site; MM BIO-10 (weed control treatment) would provide control measures for non-native, invasive species; and MM BIO-11 (fire protection plan) would minimizes fire exposure to the preserve.</p> <p>The comment further claims that the biological assessments were conducted during a drought in 2015 and 2016. As noted in the Biological Resources Report, following the original submittal of the report in January 2016, the report was updated and resubmitted in August 2017, November 2017, August 2018, and January 2021. As requested by the County, Dudek biologist Kamarul Muri revisited the Project site on 19 June 2020 in order to assess current site conditions as they relate to Dudek's prior biological studies as reported in the Biological Resources Report (August 2018). Dudek conducted vegetation mapping, a special-status plant survey, and a jurisdictional delineation in October 2015, an update of the delineation and mapping of erosional features in November 2017, and a general wildlife survey in December 2015 for the Project. Dudek conducted surveys for special status wildlife in 2016 (Quino checkerspot butterfly and California gnatcatcher) and a special-status plant survey in May 2016. During our most recent reconnaissance in July 2020, Dudek searched for any changes in previous site conditions and recorded observed wildlife species in order to document biological resources conditions.</p> <p>Please also see technical memoranda prepared by Dudek (June 30, 2023 and June 5, 2023) as part of these responses to comments.</p>
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P7	<p>Regarding the Project's impacts on visual character, refer to response to comment K3. As described in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, the proposed homes would be located on a higher elevation than the surrounding area and would be visible from lower elevation residential areas south of the site. Section 4.4.2.2 of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment (SPA) describes general standards for future development of the residential lots through Site Plan application(s). Item 3 of this section limits maximum coverage of residential lots to be 60 percent with structures of any type. Item 6 requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. These lots comprise 10 of the 15 lots that face the residential areas to the south along Adlai Road. These standards, or project design features, would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Refer to response to comment K3. To evaluate the potential impacts of the Project on a scenic vista, a Conceptual Landscape Plan (CLP) was prepared for the Project by Martin Schmidt of Environs dated February 16, 2016 and updated May 25, 2021 (see Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND). The CLP requires the Project to include landscaping throughout the Project development to screen views of the development from surrounding areas. The CLP also requires trees on the building pads along the Project boundaries and throughout the development including along the proposed interior streets to further screen the homes. The Project would be conditioned to obtain County approval of a Landscape Plan in conformance with the CLP. The photo simulations included in the depict what the Project site would look like when viewed from immediately south of the site (north end of Adlai Road) and from further south (Vecinio Del Este Place and Adlai Road). As demonstrated by the photo simulations, the Project development would be well screened with required landscaping.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to surrounding residents from Project-related blasting activities, refer to response to comment A4. The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting/rock breaking required during construction of the proposed Project. The Project would require preparation and implementation of a blasting and monitoring plan, which would require approval by the County Sheriff and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS), among other measures. The analysis in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS found that mitigation measures MM NOI-2, MM NOI-3, and MM NOI-4 would fully mitigate for noise and groundbourne vibration from blasting operations of the proposed Project. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the noise and vibration analysis.</p> <p>The effects of Project-related blasting on air quality and health were evaluated and discussed in Section III, Air Quality, of the Draft IS. Refer to the response to comment E4. The comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of noise or air quality related to blasting activities.</p>
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	Regarding the commenter's suggestion that the blasting and monitoring plan under MM NOI-3 constitutes improper deferral of mitigation under CEQA, refer to the response to comment N21. The comment does not present a deficiency in the language describing the require blasting and monitoring plan under MM NOI-3.
P8	The comment suggests that the Draft IS does not mention cumulative impacts of the Project as required by CEQA. Analyses of cumulative Project impacts are discussed throughout the resource area discussions in the Draft IS as well as in Section XXI(b). Section XXI(b) of the Draft IS provides a table list of past, present, and future projects considered and evaluated as part of the Draft IS. As described therein, "there were determined to be no potentially significant cumulative effects the Project would have a considerable contribution to. Mitigation has been included for Project impacts that clearly reduces any potential for a considerable contribution to any cumulative effects to a level below significance."
P9	The comment claims there are discrepancies in the Draft IS/MND regarding the use of natural gas in Project construction and operation. To clarify, the statement in Section VI(a) of the Draft IS should state that "The Project would result in the use of electricity, petroleum, and other consumption of energy resources during both the construction and operation phases of the project." As described several times further below, the Project would not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing. Therefore, the statement that the project would result in the use of natural gas will be stricken from the Draft IS.
P10	Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). An Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project.
Q1	The comments presents the commenter's opposition to the Project and a summary of the Project description; no response is required.
Q2	The comment provides a vague statement of dissatisfaction with the Draft IS/MND and suggests there is evidence that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment even with the proposed mitigation measures. The comment does not represent a specific comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.
Q3	The comment suggests the proposed Project has the potential to damage or degrade scenic resources and the rural character and visual quality of the properties adjacent to the Project site.

The areas surrounding the Project site are described on page 3 of the Draft IS, as “surrounded by residential neighborhoods, open space, and public facilities. Open space and residential uses developed as a part of Phase I of the GRSP [Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan] occur northwest of the Project site. Residential development is located directly to the south and east. Additional residential is located further to the north and west. Open space also occurs west of the site boundary. A water filtration plant operated by the Helix Water District is located just northeast of the site. Four residential lots that are not a part of the GRSP occur within, and are mostly surrounded by, the Project site.” As noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, “The Project site and much of the immediately surrounding area of Lakeside is classified as urbanized.” In fact, as shown in the figure provided in comment Q3, the majority of the lands surrounding the Project site are designated as residential and the Project site itself is designated as Specific Plan Area.

Refer to response to comment K3. To evaluate the potential impacts of the Project on a scenic vista, a Conceptual Landscape Plan (CLP) was prepared for the Project by Martin Schmidt of Environs dated February 16, 2016 and updated May 25, 2021 (see Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND). Given the Project’s higher elevation than the surrounding existing residences, the CLP requires the Project to include landscaping throughout the Project development to screen views of the development from surrounding areas. For example, the CLP requires landscaping on the fill slopes between the proposed homes and residential areas south of the site. The CLP also requires trees on the building pads along the Project boundaries and throughout the development including along the proposed interior streets to further screen the homes. The Project would be conditioned to obtain County approval of a Landscape Plan in conformance with the CLP. In addition, the comment claims that the Draft IS does not provide any specific details or analysis of the proposed design standards. However, Section I(a) of the Draft IS states that Section 4.4.2.2 of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment (SPA), which describes general standards for future development of the residential lots, limits maximum coverage of residential lots to be 60 percent with structures of any type and requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. The photo simulations, which incorporate these standards, or project design features, provide evidence that these measures would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area. As demonstrated by the photo simulations in the CLP, the Project development would be well screened with required landscaping and would not detract from the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area. Therefore, the photo simulations and the CLP provide evidence that the proposed Project, through implementation of all conditions of approval including project design features (i.e., development limitations) and mitigation (i.e., landscaping), would result in less than significant impacts to the scenic vista of and from the Project site.

The comment claims that the measures "are insufficient to address the significant and irreversible visual impacts of the project, which will significantly alter the character of the surrounding rural landscape. Trees along the proposed interior streets will not further screen the homes.” However, the comment does not provide evidence to support this claim and

	<p>thus, does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis. The comment is mere speculation and suspicion and therefore, does not constitute substantial evidence under CEQA. (Guidelines § 15384(a); Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors, supra, at p. 1352; Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino (2016) 1 Cal.App.5th 677, 690 [“Complaints, fears, and suspicions about a project’s potential environmental impact likewise do not constitute substantial evidence.”].) Further, “the mere possibility of adverse impact on a few people, as opposed to the environment in general” does not constitute substantial evidence and thus the comment letter’s unsubstantiated concerns about the Project’s potential impacts to the views of a few individual landowners does not support a fair argument that the Project will have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. (Dunning v. Clews, supra, at p. 170; see also Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville, supra, at p. 891 [“The vague concerns about the housing project expressed by a few members of the public during the two public hearings do not constitute substantial evidence supporting a fair argument, even when doubts are resolved in favor of EIR preparation.”]; Bowman v. City of Berkeley, supra, at p. 586 “[O]bstruction of a few private views in a project’s immediate vicinity is not generally regarded as a significant environmental impact.”)</p> <p>Further, the comment claims that the Draft IS is “deficient as it fails to acknowledge that the project site can readily see and be seen from Interstate 8.” However, as described in Section I(b), “There are no State scenic highways within the Project viewshed. The nearest State scenic highway is a segment of State Route 52, approximately 5.4 miles west of the Project site. The nearest eligible highway for a State scenic designation is Interstate 8, approximately 0.77 mile southeast of the Project site... The Project site is not in line with road users’ line of sight of the roadway and the Project site is not visible due to intervening vegetation, topography, and structures.” In the picture provided in this comment, which is presumably taken from an area near or within the Project site, Interstate 8 is barely visible due to distance and intervening vegetation, topography, and structures. Views of the Project site from Interstate 8 are similarly barely detectable, if at all, due to distance and intervening vegetation, topography, and structures. In addition, views towards the Project site from Google Street View do not show the Project site. Therefore, this photo does not present evidence that the Project site is within the viewshed of Interstate 8. Further, the proposed vegetation screening conditioned as part of the Project would further screen views, if any, of the proposed residential structures.</p>
Q4	<p>The comment suggests the proposed Project has the potential to damage or degrade scenic resources and the rural character and visual quality of the properties adjacent to the Project site.</p> <p>The areas surrounding the Project site are described on page 3 of the Draft IS, as “surrounded by residential neighborhoods, open space, and public facilities. Open space and residential uses developed as a part of Phase I of the GRSP [Greenhills Ranch Specific Plan] occur northwest of the Project site. Residential development is located directly to the south and east. Additional residential is located further to the north and west. Open space also occurs west of</p>

the site boundary. A water filtration plant operated by the Helix Water District is located just northeast of the site. Four residential lots that are not a part of the GRSP occur within, and are mostly surrounded by, the Project site.” As noted in Section I, Aesthetics, of the Draft IS, “The Project site and much of the immediately surrounding area of Lakeside is classified as urbanized.” In fact, as shown in the figure provided in comment Q3, the majority of the lands surrounding the Project site are designated as residential and the Project site itself is designated as Specific Plan Area.

Refer to response to comment K3. To evaluate the potential impacts of the Project on a scenic vista, a Conceptual Landscape Plan (CLP) was prepared for the Project by Martin Schmidt of Environs dated February 16, 2016 and updated May 25, 2021 (see Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND). Given the Project’s higher elevation than the surrounding existing residences, the CLP requires the Project to include landscaping throughout the Project development to screen views of the development from surrounding areas. For example, the CLP requires landscaping on the fill slopes between the proposed homes and residential areas south of the site. The CLP also requires trees on the building pads along the Project boundaries and throughout the development including along the proposed interior streets to further screen the homes. The Project would be conditioned to obtain County approval of a Landscape Plan in conformance with the CLP. In addition, the comment claims that the Draft IS does not provide any specific details or analysis of the proposed design standards. However, Section I(a) of the Draft IS states that Section 4.4.2.2 of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment (SPA), which describes general standards for future development of the residential lots, limits maximum coverage of residential lots to be 60 percent with structures of any type and requires residences to be restricted to one-story with a maximum height of 20 feet on lots 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14. The photo simulations, which incorporate these standards, or project design features, provide evidence that these measures would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area. As demonstrated by the photo simulations in the CLP, the Project development would be well screened with required landscaping and would not detract from the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area. Therefore, the photo simulations and the CLP provide evidence that the proposed Project, through implementation of all conditions of approval including project design features (i.e., development limitations) and mitigation (i.e., landscaping), would result in less than significant impacts to the scenic vista of and from the Project site.

The comment claims that the measures "are insufficient to address the significant and irreversible visual impacts of the project, which will significantly alter the character of the surrounding rural landscape. Trees along the proposed interior streets will not further screen the homes.” However, the comment does not provide evidence to support this claim and thus, does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis. The comment is mere speculation and suspicion and therefore, does not constitute substantial evidence under CEQA. (Guidelines § 15384(a); Leonoff v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors, supra, at p. 1352; Joshua Tree Downtown Business Alliance v. County of San Bernardino (2016) 1 Cal.App.5th 677, 690 [“Complaints, fears, and suspicions about a project’s potential environmental impact likewise

	<p>do not constitute substantial evidence.”].) Further, “the mere possibility of adverse impact on a few people, as opposed to the environment in general” does not constitute substantial evidence and thus the comment letter’s unsubstantiated concerns about the Project’s potential impacts to the views of a few individual landowners does not support a fair argument that the Project will have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. (Dunning v. Clews, supra, at p. 170; see also Porterville Citizens for Responsible Hillside Development v. City of Porterville, supra, at p. 891 [“The vague concerns about the housing project expressed by a few members of the public during the two public hearings do not constitute substantial evidence supporting a fair argument, even when doubts are resolved in favor of EIR preparation.”]; Bowman v. City of Berkeley, supra, at p. 586 “[O]bstruction of a few private views in a project’s immediate vicinity is not generally regarded as a significant environmental impact.”)</p> <p>Further, the comment claims that the Draft IS is “deficient as it fails to acknowledge that the project site can readily see and be seen from Interstate 8.” However, as described in Section I(b), “There are no State scenic highways within the Project viewshed. The nearest State scenic highway is a segment of State Route 52, approximately 5.4 miles west of the Project site. The nearest eligible highway for a State scenic designation is Interstate 8, approximately 0.77 mile southeast of the Project site... The Project site is not in line with road users’ line of sight of the roadway and the Project site is not visible due to intervening vegetation, topography, and structures.” In the picture provided in this comment, which is presumably taken from an area near or within the Project site, Interstate 8 is barely visible due to distance and intervening vegetation, topography, and structures. Views of the Project site from Interstate 8 are similarly barely detectable, if at all, due to distance and intervening vegetation, topography, and structures. In addition, views towards the Project site from Google Street View do not show the Project site. Therefore, this photo does not present evidence that the Project site is within the viewshed of Interstate 8. Further, the proposed vegetation screening conditioned as part of the Project would further screen views, if any, of the proposed residential structures.</p>
Q5	<p>Refer to the response to comments Q3 and Q4. The Project site is not visible from Interstate 8. Additionally, East Lakeview Road is not a scenic road designated by the County. The Draft IS evaluates the Project’s potential to impact views along roads in the County Scenic Highway System. As described in the Draft IS, “The nearest route in the County Scenic Highway System is El Monte Road located approximately 0.66 mile north of the site (Table COS-1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan). The Project site is not in line with road users’ line of sight of the roadway and the Project site is not visible due to intervening vegetation, topography, and structures.”</p> <p>The comment further suggests that the Project would “detract from the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding area” with no evidence to support this claim. Refer to the response to comments Q3 and Q4. As described therein, the CLP and photo simulations, which incorporate the project design features, provide evidence that these measures would reduce the potential for Project impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the surrounding</p>

	<p>area to levels below significance. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the aesthetics analysis and an Environmental Impact Report is not required for the Project. Refer to Master Response A – Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND).</p>
Q6	<p>The potential for the Project to create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, is fully analyzed in Section I(d) of the Draft IS/MND. As described therein, while the Project “would use outdoor lighting,” it would not adversely affect day or nighttime views, including astronomical observations, “because the Project would conform to the Light Pollution Code (County Code Section 51.201-51.209). This discussion provides several measures that the Project would implement to control outdoor lighting and sources of glare, including the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Project would not install outdoor lighting that directly illuminates neighboring properties. 2. The Project would not install outdoor lighting that would cast a direct beam angle towards a potential observer, such as a motorists, cyclist, or pedestrian. 3. The Project would not install outdoor lighting for vertical surfaces such as buildings, landscaping, or signs in a manner that would result in useful light or spill light being cast beyond the boundaries of intended area to be lit. 4. The Project would not install any highly reflective surfaces such as glare-producing glass or high-gloss surface color that would be visible along roadways, pedestrian walkways, or in the line of sight of adjacent properties. <p>These measures would be enforced for the Project because, as described in Section I(d) of the Draft IS/MND, “Compliance with the [Light Pollution] Code is required prior to issuance of any building permit for any project. Mandatory compliance for all new building permits ensures that this Project in combination with all past, present, and future projects would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact” related to light or glare impacts.</p> <p>The comment also suggests the proposed solar panels included as part of the Project would reflect light and create a source of glare. Given that these panels would be installed on the rooftops of the proposed buildings, would be tilted up towards the sun, and that the Project site would be at a higher elevation than the surrounding structures and roadways, any potential reflections from the proposed solar panels would be directed upwards and away from surrounding public views. Additionally, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (https://www.nrel.gov/state-local-tribal/blog/posts/research-and-analysis-demonstrate-the-lack-of-impacts-of-glare-from-photovoltaic-modules.html) states that solar panels are specifically designed to absorb light rather than reflect it, “as any reflected light cannot be converted into electricity” and that “Research on this subject demonstrates that PV modules exhibit less glare than windows and water.” It also mentions that solar panels “have been installed without incident at many airports.”</p>

	Therefore, the comment does not provide evidence that the proposed solar panels would result in impacts related to glare.
Q7	Refer to the response to comment Q6. The Project would be required to comply with the County's Light Pollution Code and all final Project designs would be reviewed by County staff prior to issuance of any building permit to ensure that the Project would not result in a new source of substantial light or glare. Additionally, the Project would implement the measures listed in response to comment Q6 above in order to control outdoor lighting and sources of glare. The comment does not provide evidence that the use of light shields, directional lighting fixtures, or low-wattage fixtures would not be effective in reducing light or glare pollution. Similarly, the comment claims that these measures are insufficient under the law, but does not provide evidence of this claim, and in fact, as previously noted, the Project would be in conformance with the law under the Light Pollution Code (County Code Section 51.201-51.209).
Q8	The comment suggests that the Project would generate "significant emissions of criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHGs) during construction and operation" and that the Draft IS/MND does not "provide adequate measures to reduce these emissions" or "quantify the expected emission reductions or provide enforceable mechanisms for monitoring and reporting." The Project-related air quality impacts are fully analyzed in Section III, Air Quality, of the Draft IS/MND and the Air Quality Assessment prepared for the Project by Ldn Consulting, Inc. dated November 17, 2020 (Appendix B of the Draft IS/MND). Section 3 of the Air Quality Assessment provides a complete description of the methodology and assumptions used to quantify construction and operational emissions that would occur as a result of the Project, and the results of the air quality modeling are presented in both Section 4 of the Air Quality Assessment and in Table 2 and Table 3 in Section III(b) of the Draft IS/MND. The methodology and assumptions for the construction-related air quality modeling assume all proposed phases of construction, including blasting activities. Similarly, the methodology and assumptions for the operational air quality modeling assume account for all operational uses, including vehicle trips, energy use, and landscape maintenance. As described in both the Draft IS/MND and the Air Quality Assessment, no significant construction or operational impacts are expected from the Project based on the results of the air quality modeling. Further, both the Draft IS/MND and the Air Quality Assessment provide a list of construction-related and operational measures that would be included as conditions of Project approval to ensure air quality impacts are minimized (e.g., the use of Tier 4 diesel construction equipment with diesel particulate filters [DPFs] during construction, compliance with the County Grading Ordinance and San Diego Air Pollution Control District [SDAPCD] Rule 55 to reduce fugitive dust [particulate matter], compliance with SDAPCD Rule 67, building efficiency features, etc.). Compliance with the applicable state and local codes are required to be shown on all final building plans prior to issuance of any building permit for any project. Additionally, as described in Section IV, Biological Resources, MM BIO-3 would require all grading within sensitive resource areas to be monitored by a County approved biologist to ensure dust is minimized and to prevent inadvertent

	disturbance to areas outside the limits of grading. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the air quality analysis.
Q9	Refer to the response to comment Q8. As shown in Table 2 in Section III(b) of the Draft IS/MND, the results of the air quality modeling presented in the Air Quality Assessment show that the criteria pollutant emissions expected to be generated by the Project would be well below the County's screening level thresholds, which demonstrate that a project's total emissions (e.g., stationary, fugitive dust, and mobile emissions) would not result in a significant impact to air quality. The proposed Project is not required to include air quality monitoring during Project construction or operation. Nevertheless, as described in Section IV, Biological Resources, MM BIO-3 would require all grading within sensitive resource areas to be monitored by a County approved biologist to ensure dust is minimized and to prevent inadvertent disturbance to areas outside the limits of grading.
Q10	<p>The comment claims that the Project would "result in adverse health impacts to nearby residents." As explained in Section III(c) of the Draft IS/MND and Section 4.2 of the Air Quality Assessment, the Project would not generate a health risk greater than the established thresholds for cancer and non-cancer health risks. Therefore, the Project's effect on health of nearby residents would be less than significant. Also, since construction emissions were found to be less than significant, and since no nearby cumulative construction projects have been identified, there would be a less than significant cumulative construction air quality impact.</p> <p>The comment further suggests that the Draft IS/MND "does not identify implementing construction dust control measures" beyond complying with air quality regulations. As described throughout Section III of the Draft IS/MND and the Air Quality Assessment, the Project would require all Project-related grading and site preparation activities to employ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) certified Tier 4 construction equipment with DPFs, which would ensure the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to excessive concentrations of fugitive dust.</p>
Q11	The comment questions the enforceability of the Project's compliance with applicable state and local standards for controlling criteria pollutant emissions, including fugitive dust and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Compliance with the applicable state and local codes are required to be shown on all final building plans prior to issuance of any building permit for any project. Additionally, as described in Section IV, Biological Resources, MM BIO-3 would require all grading within sensitive resource areas to be monitored by a County approved biologist to ensure dust is minimized and to prevent inadvertent disturbance to areas outside the limits of grading.
Q12	Refer to response to comment A2. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). Due to the

	Project's location within an Infill Area, the TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions.
Q13	Construction of the Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project is expected to be complete well before the initiation of Project construction. Nevertheless, given that the construction emissions expected to be generated by the Project would be well below the County's screening level thresholds, the Project would not contribute to a cumulative air quality impact. Additionally, the 15183 Exemption Checklist prepared for the Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project notes that the project would result in an incremental increase in criteria pollutant emissions during construction activities that would not exceed established SLTs. Given this, and the fact that the Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project includes only 18 residences as compared to the Project's 63 proposed residences, construction of the proposed Project in conjunction with the Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project would not result in a cumulative air quality impact even if construction periods were to overlap, which is highly unlikely. As noted in the Air Quality Assessment, a cumulative health risk impact related to air emissions would only occur if the cumulative project were within 971 feet of the Project site. The Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project is more than 3,400 feet from the Project site at the nearest portions of each project site. Therefore, no cumulative health risk impact would occur. Nevertheless, the Lake Jennings Residential Subdivision project will be added to the IS/MND for clarity.
Q14	Construction of the Adlai Residential Subdivision project (PDS2004-3100-5356) is expected to be complete well before the initiation of Project construction. Nevertheless, given that the construction emissions expected to be generated by the Project would be well below the County's screening level thresholds, the Project would not contribute to a cumulative air quality impact. Additionally, the IS/MND prepared for the Adlai Residential Subdivision project notes that the project would result in an incremental increase in criteria pollutant emissions during construction activities. Given this, and the fact that the Adlai Residential Subdivision project includes only 9 residences as compared to the Project's 63 proposed residences, construction of the proposed Project in conjunction with the Adlai Residential Subdivision project would not result in a cumulative air quality impact even if construction periods were to overlap, which would not occur. Nevertheless, the Adlai Residential Subdivision project will be added to the IS/MND for clarity.
Q15	During the construction phase the project is subject to enforcement under the General Construction Permit (CGP). The project is required to develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the construction phase and implement construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) which may include silt fencing, geotextile mats, fiber rolls, and sedimentation basins to prevent runoff that would cause erosion, sedimentation or pollutant loading downstream. During the operation phase the property is subject to enforcement under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Under the MS4 permit the project is a Priority Development Project (PDP) and has a

	<p>PDP Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) dated July 31, 2020 and prepared by REC Consultants, Inc. that identifies permanent post-construction BMPs that include three biofiltration basins designed to meet water quality, hydromodification and 100 year peak flow detention to mitigate increases in flow and prevent erosion, sedimentation and pollutant loading to downstream waterbodies during the operational phase. See Step 6.1 Description of structural BMP strategy of the PDP SWQMP.</p> <p>The existing drainage brow ditch is not a mitigation measure nor a design feature of this project. The existing drainage brow ditch will be unaffected by the development of this project because of the BMPs implemented under the SWPPP and SWQMP.</p> <p>The change in topography will have no significant impact on the capacity of the brow ditch because the increased runoff will be mitigated by the proposed detention basins which will detain the 100-year peak flow and release at a volume and velocity that is less than the existing runoff conditions. Please refer to Table 3 Summary of Developed Condition Flows – Mitigated in the Drainage Study revised July 2020 prepared by REC Consultants, Inc. During construction the SWPPP will identify BMPs that will prevent debris and excess runoff from entering the drainage system.</p>
Q16	The existing drainage brow ditch is not a mitigation measure nor a design feature of this project. A dispute over access is considered a civil matter and it is typically up to the parties involved to resolve the issue.
Q17	The overall density of a subdivision is calculated by dividing the total net area of the subdivision divided by the number of units, per Section 4115 of the Zoning Ordinance. The County’s General Plan also supports changes in density within a project site with parcels that have more than one land use designation to provide flexibility in project design, when approved by Major Use Permit or Specific Plan (Policy LU-1.8 Density Allocation on Project Sites).
Q18	<p>Per Section 4010 of the Zoning Ordinance, any provision of the Specific Plan relating to subjects contained in the part shall prevail over the Zoning Ordinance regulations. The project proposes a setback designator of V, which is defined the proposed Specific Plan, section 4.4.2.3 Setbacks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Yard setback of 10 feet from the property line • Side Yard setback of 5 feet • Rear Yard setback of 10 feet
Q19	The comment suggests that the Draft IS fails to provide an operational noise analysis of the proposed project on residences in the vicinity and claims that the mitigation measures proposed to address noise impacts are “insufficient”

	<p>but provides no evidence to support this claim. A Noise Assessment was prepared by LDN Consulting, Inc. dated September 28, 2020 (Appendix M of the Draft IS/MND), which evaluated potential noise impacts to the existing and future noise sensitive land uses from the proposed development. As described in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS, “Project implementation is not expected to expose existing or planned noise sensitive areas to road, airport, heliport, railroad, industrial or other noise in excess of the 60 dBA CNEL or 65 dBA CNEL.” The proposed Project would consist of residential development, which would be consistent with the noise sensitive land uses surrounding the Project site. Therefore, operation of the proposed residential land uses would generate noise levels and types consistent with those generated by the existing neighboring residences and would not result in a significant increase in operational noise levels. As described in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS, “Non-transportation operational noise generated by the Project is not expected to exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.404) at or beyond the Project’s property line. The site is zoned S88 that has a 1-hour average sound limit of 45 between 10 P.M and 7 A.M and 50 dB between 7 A.M and 10 P.M. The adjacent properties are zoned A70, RR, and S80, which have the same 1-hour average sound limits. Based on review by staff and the County Noise Specialist, the Project’s operational noise levels are not anticipated to impact adjoining properties or exceed County Noise Standards, which is 45 dB, because the Project operation would not involve any noise producing equipment that would exceed applicable noise levels at the adjoining property line.”</p>
Q20	<p>Refer to the response to comment Q19. The proposed Project is not expected to exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36.404) at or beyond the Project’s property line. Therefore, operation of the Project would have no cumulative noise impact and less than significant impacts or no impact at off-site noise sensitive receptors. Operation of the project would have no noise impact on Lakeview Elementary School, located more than 0.43 mile away.</p> <p>The comment again claims that the mitigation measures proposed to address construction noise impacts are “insufficient” but provides no evidence to support this claim. Refer to responses to comments N20 and N22. As described in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS and in the Noise Assessment prepared by LDN Consulting, Inc. dated September 28, 2020 (Appendix M of the Draft IS/MND), mitigation measures MM NOI-1a through MM NOI-4 are expected to reduce construction noise levels to below significance thresholds based on the comprehensive noise analysis conducted in the Noise Assessment prepared by LDN Consulting, Inc. The Noise Assessment provides a cumulative analysis of noise impacts on noise sensitive land uses in the Project vicinity. As described therein and in Section XIII, Noise, of the Draft IS, no cumulative impacts are anticipated. As described in response to comment Q14, construction of the Adlai Residential Subdivision project (PDS2004-3100-5356) is expected to be complete</p>

	well before the initiation of Project construction. Nevertheless, the Adlai Residential Subdivision project will be added to the IS/MND for clarity.
Q21	The Draft IS has fully analyzed the impacts from blasting required during construction of the proposed Project. Refer to response to comment A4.
Q22	<p>The comment inaccurately states that the Lakeside Community Plan “calls for a park if there are 50 residences or more.” This is not stated anywhere in the Community Plan or the County’s General Plan.</p> <p>Additionally, as described in Section XVI, Recreation, of the Draft IS, “To avoid substantial physical deterioration of local recreation facilities, the Project would be required to pay fees or dedicate land for local parks to the County pursuant to the Park Land Dedication Ordinance (PLDO). The PLDO is the mechanism that enables the funding or dedication of local parkland in the County. The PLDO establishes several methods by which developers may satisfy their park requirements. Options include the payment of park fees, the dedication of a public park, the provision of private recreational facilities, or a combination of these methods. PLDO funds must be used for the acquisition, planning, and development of local parkland and recreation facilities. Local parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of the communities in which they are located. The proposed Project has opted to provide payment of park fees in lieu of park land dedication. Therefore, the Project meets the requirements set forth by the PLDO for adequate parkland dedication, thereby reducing impacts, including cumulative impacts to local recreational facilities. The Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts, because all past, present and future residential projects are required to comply with the requirements of PLDO.” Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of impacts to recreation facilities.</p>
Q23	<p>See response to comment A2.</p> <p>Traffic volumes were validated by pre-pandemic counts near the project area. Based on the traffic analysis in the LMA, the intersection of Lake Jennings Park Road and Highway 8 Business (Old Highway 80) operates at LOS F in the existing condition. In the peak periods, the project is adding 26 trips in the AM and 32 trips in the PM. The minimal amount of delay added to the failing intersection is well within the allowable limits per the TSG.</p>
Q24	A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated November 18, 2022 was prepared by Linscott, Law, and Greenspan Engineers for the proposed Project (Appendix N of the Draft IS/MND). As described in the TIA, the weekday AM/PM peak hour intersection turning movement traffic counts were conducted at the study area intersections on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, when schools were in session. The peak hour counts were conducted during the commuter peak hours of 7:00-

	<p>9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM. Validation counts were conducted on multiple segments near the study area on October 1, 2019. Given that the results indicated growth in background traffic, the 2019 counts were used for the traffic analysis. All turning movement volumes were increased according to the growth factor calculated from 2019 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes and 2015 ADT volumes, where applicable. Therefore, the traffic counts included in the TIA represent travel behavior during peak travel periods and are consistent with the growth factor calculated from the increases in traffic. The TIA found that the proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions. Refer to response to comment A2.</p>
Q25	<p>As described throughout the Draft IS/MND, access to the Project site would be via two access points: proposed Greenhills Way connecting to Lake Jennings Park Road and another private road connecting to Adlai Road. A project of medium size, such as the proposed Project, must provide two avenues of ingress and egress which is precisely what has been proposed. Therefore, the Project would comply with the regulations relating to emergency access specified in the Consolidated Fire Code for San Diego County. As described in the FPP and Section XX, Wildfire, of the Draft IS, the Project would have adequate emergency access (to and from Lake Jennings Road and Adlai Street) in terms of access and construction standards for roadways and streets. The FPP has been accepted by the Lakeside Fire Protection District, the fire district that serves the Project area.</p> <p>Additionally, given that there would be two access points in the proposed Project, Project residents evacuating the Project site would be split between both access points and there wouldn't be 63 residents on either of the roadways. Existing residents would not be rerouted from their existing evacuation routes as suggested by the comment, and would be able to continue using Audubon Road to Adlai Road to exit the neighborhood.</p> <p>Additionally, in response to comments regarding evacuation of the Project and surrounding residences, a Wildfire Evacuation Plan was prepared by Dudek dated December 2023. The Wildfire Evacuation Plan was prepared based on guidance from the County of San Diego Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) including Annex Q- Evacuation (County of San Diego 2022) and outlines strategies, procedures, recommendations, and organizational structures that can be used to implement a coordinated evacuation effort in the case of a wildfire emergency affecting the Project. The Wildfire Evacuation Plan conservatively assumes that more than one vehicle would be used to evacuate each proposed new home. According to the Wildfire Evacuation Plan, "the Project would not be expected to significantly impact evacuation of existing land uses based on the typical road capacity like those found in and around the Project area that can support between 1,500 and 1,900 vehicles per hour (Federal Highway Administration Highway Safety Manual 2023) during an evacuation event. The addition of 126 vehicles to an evacuation could increase times between 5 and 8 minutes if all traffic was utilizing the same evacuation routes. However, the Project would have two potential</p>

	<p>evacuation routes, one of which avoids use of Adlai Road, resulting in no measurable impact on existing residential area evacuation times. Further, evacuations are typically managed in a sequential or phased manner to avoid large area notices that result in congested roadways. Under this approach, traffic movement is prioritized through targeted evacuation notices and intersection control to move populations at higher risk as the priority. Therefore, if the project site and the neighboring residential areas were considered priority areas, they would be evacuated via all available evacuation routes with support from technological tools and in-the-field officers. The inclusion of the new road providing connection with Jennings Lake Park Road not only provides additional evacuation capacity for the Project, but would also be available to existing area residents during an evacuation.”</p> <p>Additionally, in regards to the proposed gates, the Wildfire Evacuation Plan continues, “The inclusion of the new road providing connection with Jennings Lake Park Road not only provides additional evacuation capacity for the Project, but would also be available to existing area residents during an evacuation. Although the road would be gated, it would include the necessary automatic opening features upon vehicle approach as well as Knox Key Switches and/or Knox Boxes that enable any fire and law enforcement personnel to open the gate. Further, during a power outage, the gate would default to open using the battery back up feature. The gated roadways are not anticipated to represent an impediment to evacuations. In fact, they will provide greater road connectivity and additional options for the Project’s residents as well as area residents.”</p> <p>Further, the Project would also be required to implement all of the fire prevention and mitigation measures established in the FPP. Therefore, the comment does not present a deficiency in the analysis of wildfire or emergency access.</p>
Q26	As described in response to comment Q25, there would be two access points in the proposed Project in accordance with the Consolidated Fire Code for San Diego County and therefore, Project residents evacuating the Project site would be split between both access points. There would not be an additional 63 residents on either of the roadways.
Q27	The statement is conclusion to the commenter’s thoughts on the Project, and does not represent a specific comment on the Draft IS/MND or a specific environmental impact of the Project. No response is required.