As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because the adjacent orchard crops, such as citrus and avocado, are "often compatible," do not "result in significant indirect impacts," and have "fewer compatibility issues" than other types of agricultural operations as explained in the County Guidelines for the Determination of Significance- Agricultural Resources (March 19, 2007) (County Guidelines), Section 4.2.2., which is incorporated herein by reference. Compatibility buffers are the primary tool for increasing compatibility between existing agricultural uses/resources and proposed new non-agricultural uses. In determining the width of the agricultural buffer and related LBZ proposed by the mitigation measures, the County reviewed and considered the County Guidelines and a literature review of agricultural buffers, which cited a range of potentially adequate buffer widths starting as narrow as 10 feet, with an average recommended buffer width of approximately 100 feet. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary (and the proximate agricultural operations). The LBZ would also ensure that residents would not be congregating within areas in proximity to off-site pesticide application. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-3**: The project proposes an institutional site, as shown on the Specific Plan Map, FEIR Figure 1-4. An institutional site, which allows concentrations of people, would be considered a sensitive receptor in the analysis of agricultural impacts. The institutional site is identified as an agricultural adjacency site (AA 13) as it would be located adjacent to existing off-site nursery/greenhouse uses and flower crops. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 13 located along the eastern project boundary of Phase 5 where on-site residential and institutional uses are proposed, would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include nursery/greenhouse uses and flower crops. Rodriguez Road is situated between the proposed project and the adjacent agricultural operations (see Appendix F, Figure 16i). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would result in an agricultural buffer 50 feet wide, along with one row of trees (the existing utility easement prevents planting a second row of trees), a LBZ 50 feet wide, and a fence between the adjacent, existing agricultural operations and the proposed residential development. Therefore, the total buffer in this area would be 100 feet wide, include one row of trees, a fence, and a public road (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7i).

In determining the width of the agricultural buffer and related LBZ proposed by the mitigation measures, the County reviewed and considered the County Guidelines and a literature review of agricultural buffers, which cited a range of potentially adequate buffer widths starting as narrow as 10 feet, with an average recommended buffer width of approximately 100 feet. The 100-foot buffer would also incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland. Moreover, the existing off-site flower crop production and nursery/greenhouse uses are generally considered compatible with the proposed use because the production of cut flowers is not generally associated with generation of dust or noise, as mechanized equipment is not used because of the nature of the crop

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Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-4**: The project proposes an age-restricted community, as shown on the Specific Plan Map, FEIR Figure 1-4. This type of residential use would be considered a sensitive receptor in the analysis of agricultural impacts. The age-restricted community is identified as an agricultural adjacency site (AA 8) as it would be located adjacent to existing off-site orchards that are aerially sprayed with pesticide. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 8 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site age-restricted residential uses (i.e., a senior living community) would result in a significant impact. The off-site agricultural operations include intensely farmed groves that are aerially sprayed with pesticides (see Appendix F, Figures 10 and 16f). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would result in a buffer of 50 feet, along with two rows of trees, and a fence between the adjacent, existing agricultural operations and the proposed residential use. In addition, a 50-foot LBZ is proposed, making the width of the buffer 100 feet. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary (and the proximate agricultural operations). (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7e.)

In determining the width of the agricultural buffer and related LBZ proposed by the mitigation measures, the County reviewed and considered the County Guidelines and a literature review of agricultural buffers, which cited a range of potentially adequate buffer widths starting as narrow as 10 feet, with an average recommended buffer width of approximately 100 feet. As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland.

Further, pesticide use is regulated at both the state and County levels as pesticide applicators are subject to a rigorous permitting process. The County, through the CAC, is required to deny a permit application if it is determined that the pesticide use may harm people or the environment and no restrictions are available to mitigate that harm. The LBZ would also ensure that residents would not be congregating within areas in proximity to off-site pesticide application.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-5**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 3, located along the northwestern corner of the project site. Off-site agriculture at this location includes groves. The project is proposing on-site residential lots at this location. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 3 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site residential lots would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations

include estate residences, groves, youth camps, and religious retreats. Standel Lane is situated between the proposed project and the adjacent agricultural operations. In addition, there is an existing fence that runs the length of AA 3 on the west side of Standel Lane, bordering the adjacent single-family residential area. A portion of the existing Standel Lane is located off site, but would provide a larger buffer width; however, this area is not included in the buffer width since it is located outside of the project boundaries. (See Appendix F, Figure 16a). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would result in a 70-foot-wide buffer that is comprised of the portion of Standel Lane within the project boundaries, two rows of trees, and an LBZ of 20 feet. Therefore, the total buffer for AA 3 would be 70 feet wide, with two rows of trees, a fence, and a public road. (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7a).

As proposed, the 70-foot-wide buffer would be adequate because it would include project design and compatibility elements – termed "compatibility buffers" – recommended by the County Guidelines (see County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51.) The proposed buffer includes recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls." (Id.) These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland. Moreover, the existing groves are generally compatible with the proposed uses so the reduced LBZ of 20 feet would be adequate separation. As such, the proposed compatibility buffers would provide land use transitions to reduce real or perceived conflicts between agricultural operations and new non-agricultural neighbors.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-6**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 4, located along the southwestern corner of the project site. Off-site agriculture at this location includes orchards which could result in incompatible effects due to proposed on-site residences at this location. The project proposes the retention of existing on-site orchards, as well as a park (identified as P-1) which surround the entire southwestern corner. However, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur along those areas within AA 4 that contain orchard trees but are not immediately adjacent to the on-site retained orchards.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 4 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site residential lots and a park would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include citrus and avocado orchards and estate residences. Rocking Horse Road is situated between the proposed project and the adjacent agricultural operations (see Appendix F, Figure 16b). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would include a 50-foot wide buffer with two rows of trees except in locations where a proposed trail would meander through the buffer. The proposed trail is compatible with the agricultural buffer because of the temporary nature of the use (trail users move through the area in a relatively short time). In addition, a fence would be installed along the north side of Rocking Horse Road to provide further separation between the on-site uses and off-site agricultural operations. Approximately 10 feet of Rocking Horse Road within the project boundaries would be included in the 50-foot buffer. Additionally, an LBZ is proposed in locations where the buffer is adjacent to proposed single-family residential uses.

The LBZ ranges from 20 feet wide to 42 feet wide in the areas adjacent to proposed on-site residential uses and provides adequate buffering from off-site land uses. Therefore, the total buffer in this area would range between 70 and 92 feet wide, and would include two rows of trees (except where site constraints exist), a fence, a LBZ, and a public road. (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7b.)

As proposed, the 70- to 92-foot buffer would be adequate because it would include recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls" (County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51). These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce density near adjacent farmland. Additionally, orchard crops, such as citrus and avocado, are "often compatible," do not "result in significant indirect impacts," and have "fewer compatibility issues" than other types of agricultural operations as explained in the County Guidelines, Section 4.2.2 . Therefore, the proposed reduced LBZ would be adequate separation in this area.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-7**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 5, located southwest of the public park. The project proposes residential lots at this location. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include off-site groves that are intermittently aerially sprayed with pesticide. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Aerial pesticide spraying is regulated at both the state and County levels as pesticide applicators are subject to a rigorous permitting process. The County, through the County Agricultural Commissioner (CAC), is required to deny a permit application if it is determined that the pesticide use may harm people or the environment and no restrictions are available to mitigate that harm (California Department of Pesticide Regulation, *"What You Need to Know About California Department of Pesticide Regulation"*, www.cdpr.ca.gov).

To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would include a buffer 50 feet wide with two rows of trees, an LBZ 50 feet wide, and a fence between the adjacent, existing agricultural operations and the proposed residential development. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary (and the proximate agricultural operations). Therefore, the total buffer in AA 5 would be 100 feet wide with two rows of trees and a fence. (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7c.)

As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it includes recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls" (County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51). These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland. The LBZ would also ensure that residents would not be congregating within areas in proximity to off-site pesticide application.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-8**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 7, located along the eastern boundary of the northern portion of the project site. The project proposes residential lots at this location. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include off-site flower crop production with nursery/greenhouse uses. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 7 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site residential lots would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include off-site flower crop production with nursery/greenhouse uses (see Appendix F, Figure 16e). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would include an agricultural buffer 50 feet wide with two rows of trees, an LBZ 50 feet wide (for 1,122 feet of the project boundary), and a fence. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary (and the proximate agricultural operations). Therefore, the total buffer in this area would range between 50 to 100 feet wide, including two rows of trees, and a fence. (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7e.)

As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it would include recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls" (County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51). These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland. (Id.) Moreover, the existing off-site flower crop production and nursery/greenhouse uses are generally considered compatible with the proposed uses because the production of cut flowers is not generally associated with generation of dust or noise, as mechanized equipment is not used because of the nature of the crop.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-9**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 9, located north of Covey Lane. The project proposes residential lots at this location. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include agricultural groves. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 9 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site residential lots would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include agricultural groves. Covey Lane is situated between the proposed project and the adjacent agricultural operations (see Appendix F, Figure 16g). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would include an agricultural buffer with a single row of trees (instead of two), staggered on each side of the new Covey Lane alignment as shown on Figure 16g of the Agricultural Resources Report (see Appendix F). However, the overall agricultural buffer would be 50 feet wide, in addition to a 50-foot wide LBZ. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary

(and the proximate agricultural operations). The proposed Covey Lane meanders between both the agricultural buffer and the LBZ. In addition, a fence is proposed along the south side of the existing Covey Lane to provide further separation from the off-site land uses. The existing, off-site Covey Lane would provide an additional 20 feet of buffer separation; however, this is not included in the calculation of the overall buffer width since it is off site. Therefore, the total buffer width would be 100 feet. (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7g.)

As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it would include recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls" (County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51). These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland. (Id.) Moreover, the existing off-site groves are generally considered compatible with the proposed use as explained in the County Guidelines. Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-10**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with AA 10, located along the southwest boundary of the southern portion of the project site. The project proposes residential uses in this location. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include active citrus and avocado orchards that are intermittently aerially sprayed with pesticides. Therefore, a potentially significant adjacency impact could occur at this location.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Notwithstanding the project's inclusion of the aforementioned project design considerations, AA 10 located between off-site agricultural operations and proposed on-site residential lots would result in a significant impact. The off-site, adjacent agricultural operations include active citrus and avocado orchards that are intermittently aerially sprayed with pesticides (see Appendix F, Figures 10 and 16h). To mitigate potential compatibility impacts, implementation of mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 would include an agricultural buffer 50 feet wide with two rows of trees, and a LBZ adjacent to the proposed residential land uses ranging in width from 50 feet to 192 feet. The LBZ would prohibit not only habitable structures, but any structure or feature that could attract residents, visitors, or children within close proximity to the project boundary (and the proximate agricultural operations). Therefore, a 50-foot agricultural buffer would occur along the length of this area, with a 100-foot to 242-foot buffer occurring where residential use is proposed adjacent to the agricultural areas (See FEIR Figure 2.4-7h).

As proposed, the multi-width buffer would be adequate because it would include recommended "natural barriers created by landscape features such as . . . planted vegetation; [and] physical barriers such as roads or walls" (County Guidelines, Section 5.2.1, pp. 50-51). These barriers would further separate the on-site uses from off-site activities, providing additional buffering. In addition, the buffer would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce density near adjacent farmland. (Id.) Additionally, orchard crops, such as citrus and avocado, are "often compatible," do not "result in significant indirect impacts," and have "fewer compatibility issues" than other types of agricultural operations as explained in the County Guidelines.

Further, aerial pesticide spraying is regulated at both the state and County levels as pesticide applicators are subject to a rigorous permitting process. The County, through the CAC, is

required to deny a permit application if it is determined that the pesticide use may harm people or the environment and no restrictions are available to mitigate that harm. The LBZ would also ensure that residents would not be congregating within areas in proximity to off-site pesticide application.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-11**: See Impact AG-3.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: See Impact AG-3.

**Evidence Supporting CEQA Findings:**

Substantial evidence to support the finding that Impacts AG-2 -through AG-11 would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation is found within the administrative record pertaining to this FEIR. Please refer to the following document(s):

- FEIR subchapter 2.4- specifically ,subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6
- FEIR Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Report
- Global Response to Comment: Agricultural Resources Indirect Impacts
- Responses to Comments contained in Letter O9 and O10.

**Impact AG-12**: The project could result in a significant adjacency issue associated with interim on-site agricultural activities.

**Mitigation Measure M-AG-5**: Pursuant to the Specific Plan Figure 142, the project shall include a 100-foot fuel modification zone/limited building zone between ongoing agricultural uses and residential development, for each phase of development. The fuel modification zone/limited building zone shall comply with all state law and County Agricultural, Weights and Measures Regulations.

**Rationale**: Mitigation measure M-AG-5 is required to reduce the significant impact identified as AG-12. Implementation of mitigation measure M-AG-5 is enforceable through the Specific Plan and ensures that interim on-site agricultural uses would not result in adjacency issues associated with new residential development within the project site as the project is developed over time. In determining the width of the agricultural buffer and related LBZ proposed by the mitigation measures, the County reviewed and considered the County Guidelines and a literature review of agricultural buffers, which cited a range of potentially adequate buffer widths starting as narrow as 10 feet, with an average recommended buffer width of approximately 100 feet. As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland.

Moreover, Interim on-site agricultural operations will be subject to lease agreements prohibiting aerial pesticide spraying and requiring additional precautions to minimize other impacts (both to and from future residents) including noise and dust generation, trespassing, and vandalism.

Implementation of this mitigation will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Evidence Supporting CEQA Findings:**

Substantial evidence to support the finding that Impact AG-12 would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation is found within the administrative record pertaining to this FEIR. Please refer to the following document(s):

- FEIR subchapter 2.4- specifically ,subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6
- FEIR Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Report
- Global Response to Comment: Agricultural Resources Indirect Impacts

**Impact AG-13**: The project would result in a significant on- and off-site adjacency issue associated with storage of hazardous materials.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 is required to reduce the significant impact identified as AG-13. Implementation of these measures would serve to create a buffer between on-site uses and off-site agricultural operations as discussed in Impacts AG-2 through AG-12, above. Implementation of these mitigation measures will reduce the impact to below a level of significance as explained above.

**Evidence Supporting CEQA Findings:**

Substantial evidence to support the finding that Impact AG-13 would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation is found within the administrative record pertaining to this FEIR. Please refer to the following document(s):

- FEIR subchapter 2.4- specifically ,subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6
- FEIR Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Report

**Impact AG-14**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with non-native pests or domestic pets.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale**: Mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 are required to reduce the significant impact identified as AG-14. Implementation of these measures would work synergistically to provide separation, visual and physical screening in the form of two rows of orchard trees, and a physical barrier in the six-foot fence with a foundation that extends below ground level. The agricultural buffers (as described in Impacts AG-2 through AG-12, above) would provide adequate separation between potential sources of pests and pets, as well as on-site invasive seeds and the off-site agricultural uses because agricultural buffers are effective measures to minimize indirect impacts to adjacent agricultural operations. In determining the width of the agricultural buffer and related LBZ proposed by the mitigation measures, the County reviewed and considered the County Guidelines and a literature review of agricultural buffers, which cited a range of potentially adequate buffer widths starting as narrow as 10 feet, with an average recommended buffer width of approximately 100 feet. As proposed, the 100-foot buffer would be adequate because it would incorporate fencing as a barrier to minimize trespassing and a limitation on building to reduce activity near adjacent farmland.

Implementation of these mitigation measures will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Impact AG-15**: The project would result in a significant adjacency issue associated with the spread of pathogens and disease.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measures M-AG-2, M-AG-3, and M-AG-4.

**Rationale:** Mitigation measures M-AG-2 through M-AG-4 are required to reduce the significant impact identified as AG-15. Implementation of these measures would work synergistically to provide distance separation, visual and physical screening in the form of two rows of orchard trees, and a physical barrier in the six-foot fence with a foundation that extends below ground level. The FEIR recognizes that compatibility issues, including pathogens/diseases, can be contributors to the degradation of the viability of off-site farms. However, such impacts would be less than significant because: (1) the crop types found within the vicinity are primarily citrus and avocado groves and flower/nursery operations, which are not usually found to be incompatible with residential uses; (2) the proposed residential uses do not create conditions (e.g., air contamination/degradation, nighttime lighting) that would adversely affect off-site agriculture; and (3) the project would be subject to regulatory requirements for the control of stormwater discharges.

Implementation of the mitigation measures will reduce the impact to below a level of significance.

**Evidence Supporting CEQA Findings:**

Substantial evidence to support the finding that Impacts AG-14 and AG-15 would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation is found within the administrative record pertaining to this FEIR. Please refer to the following document(s):

- FEIR subchapter 2.4- specifically ,subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6
- FEIR Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Report
- Global Response to Comment: Agricultural Resources Indirect Impacts
- Responses to Comments contained in Letter O9 and O10.

### 3. Cumulative Impact

**Impact AG-16**: The project would result in a considerable contribution to the cumulatively significant loss of Important Farmland.

**Mitigation Measure**: See mitigation measure M-AG-1.

**Rationale**: Mitigation measure M-AG-1 is required to reduce the significant impact identified as AG-16. See Impact AG-1, above. Therefore, while the proposed project would result in potentially significant cumulative impacts, the mitigation measure recommended to mitigate the project's direct impacts by participation in the PACE program at a 1:1 ratio supports the County's efforts to implement a programmatic solution to address preservation of agricultural lands within the unincorporated area. Therefore, the project's incremental contribution toward the cumulative loss of Prime or Statewide Importance soils county-wide would be significant, but mitigated by implementation of mitigation measure M-AG-1.

**Evidence Supporting CEQA Findings:**

Substantial evidence to support the finding that Impacts AG-16 would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation is found within the administrative record pertaining to this FEIR. Please refer to the following document(s):

- FEIR subchapter 2.4- specifically ,subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6
- FEIR Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Report

**D. Biological Resource Impacts**

**Impact BIO-1**: The project would impact more than 5 percent of functional foraging habitat for raptors on-site. Based on the County's Guidelines of Significance, this effect on raptor foraging habitat impact would be significant. As the project construction would occur in five phases, the impacts would occur in phases (see Table 2.5-4 of the FEIR).

**Impact BIO-2**: The project would have direct impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities, consisting of the following: coast live oak woodland (0.3 acre), coastal sage scrub (17.0 acres), disturbed coastal sage scrub (2.6 acres), disturbed coastal/valley freshwater marsh (0.1 acre), southern coast live oak riparian woodland (1.1 acres), disturbed southern coast live oak riparian woodland (0.5 acre), southern mixed chaparral (49.4 acres), disturbed southern mixed chaparral (4.9 acres), southern willow riparian woodland (0.5 acre), southern willow scrub (0.3 acre), disturbed southern willow scrub (0.3 acre), open water (0.5 acre), and disturbed wetland (0.01 acre). Off-site impacts include coastal sage scrub (0.1 acre). As the project construction would occur in five phases, the impacts would occur in phases (see Table 2.5-4 of the FEIR). These impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities would be considered significant.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1a**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for Phase 1, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary;; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 9.8 acres of coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio with 19.6 acres.

2. Impacts to 0.1 acre of disturbed coastal/valley freshwater marsh shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.3 acre.

3. Impacts to 0.5 acre of southern coast live oak riparian woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 1.5 acres.

4. Impacts to 0.5 acre of southern mixed chaparral shall be mitigated at a 0.5 to 1 ratio with 0.3 acre.

5. Impacts to 0.5 acre of southern willow riparian woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 1.5 acres.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1b**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for Phase 2, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 7.0 acres of coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio with 14.0 acres.

2. Impacts to 0.2 acre of southern coast live oak riparian woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.6 acre.

3. Impacts to 0.3 acre of open water shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.9 acre.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1c**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for Phase 3, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 0.3 acre of coast live oak woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.9 acre.

2. Impacts to 3.69 acres[2] of coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio with 7.38[2] acres.

3. Impacts to 0.8 acre of southern coast live oak riparian woodland (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 2.4 acres.

4. Impacts to 53.8 acres of southern mixed chaparral (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 0.5 to 1 ratio with 26.9 acres.

5. Impacts to 0.3 acre of southern willow scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.9 acre.

6. Impacts to 0.1 acre of mule fat scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.3 acre.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1d**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for Phase 4, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

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[2] This acreage includes impacts under M-RD-BIO-1c under road design Option C.

1. Impacts to 0.13[3] acre of southern coast live oak riparian woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.39[3] acre.

2. Impacts to 0.1 acre of disturbed southern willow scrub shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.3 acre.

3. Impacts to 0.1 acre of disturbed wetland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.3 acre.

4. Impacts to 0.11 acre of coast live oak woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.33 acre.[3]

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1e**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for Phase 5, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 0.2 acre of southern willow scrub shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.6 acre.

2. Impacts to 0.2 acre of open water shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.6 acre.

3. Impacts to 0.01 acre of coast live oak woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.03 acre.[4]

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1f**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for off-site improvements, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 0.1 acre of coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) shall be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio with 0.2 acre.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1g**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that prior to issuance of a grading permit for the addition of intermittent turn lanes along West Lilac Road from Old Castle Road to Anthony Road (M-TR-7), a biological survey (including vegetation mapping) shall be completed by a qualified biologist to determine the specific biological impacts of the improvements. Impacts to sensitive resources shall be mitigated in accordance with the County's Biology Guidelines or relevant regulations. Should these improvements require additional grading

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[3] This acreage includes impacts under M-RD-BIO-1d.
[4] This acreage includes impacts under M-RD-BIO-1e.

outside the currently disturbed areas, potential impacts could result to sensitive habitat as follows:

- The additional widening of Lilac Road necessary to add the turn lanes at the Robles Lane and Cumbres Road intersection could impact approximately 0.17 acre of chaparral. Impacts to chaparral would require mitigation at a 0.5:1 ratio.

- Impacts at Sierra Rojo and Lilac Road would affect approximately 0.14 acre of woodlands. Impacts to woodlands would require mitigation at a 3:1 ratio.

Mitigation land shall be provided off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies, as directed in the biological survey identified above.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-1h**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that if the project proceeds prior to the SUKUP project (TM5184), prior to the grading of Rodriguez Road, the following shall be provided either on-site within the open space easement; off-site within a draft PAMA of the draft North County MSCP in Valley Center or on suitable lands with native habitat adjacent to the project boundary; or through a mitigation bank, subject to the approval of the County and appropriate wildlife agencies:

1. Impacts to 0.02 acre of coast live oak woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.06 acre.

2. Impacts to 0.04 acre of coastal sage scrub shall be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio with 0.08 acre.

3. Impacts to 0.03 acre of southern coast live oak riparian woodland shall be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio with 0.09 acre.

4. Impacts to 0.08 acre of non-native grassland shall be mitigated at a 0.5:1 ratio with 0.04 acre.

**Mitigation Measure M-BIO-2**: This mitigation measure specified in the FEIR has been imposed on the project as a condition of approval, requiring that a Resource Management Plan (RMP) be prepared by a qualified biologist prior to the issuance of the first grading permit and each subsequent grading permit to address restoration, enhancement, and maintenance of the open space, which shall be dedicated as a condition of project approval (see FEIR Table 1-3). The report shall describe the location of the mitigation sites that meet the specific mitigation requirement for the type of habitat (e.g., in-kind habitat preservation, no net loss, presence of special status species, etc.) within the project site and off-site, site preparation, irrigation system requirements, on-site culvert maintenance to allow for wildlife passage, plant palettes, and installation procedure, and describe the maintenance and monitoring program for both the establishment mitigation areas and the enhancement mitigation areas per the project conceptual wetland revegetation plan (see FEIR Appendix G, Attachment 16) or requirements for habitat selection contained in the conceptual resource management plans (see FEIR Appendix G, Attachments 17 and 18). The proposed open space easement shall be owned by a conservancy, the County or other similar entity experienced in biological open space management, subject to approval by the County. Maintenance responsibilities shall be provided

by an entity approved by the County, and funding shall be provided through an endowment, Community Facility District, or other finance mechanism approved by the County.

Should a regional entity to manage biological open space be formed, the natural habitat areas within the project site could be dedicated to that entity, subject to County approval, and managed as part of an overall preserve system for northern San Diego County. In addition to the success criteria for the creation, restoration, and/or enhancement of native habitats contained in the conceptual wetland revegetation plan and the conceptual resource management plan, the management goals for the on-site biological open space shall also include the following:

1. Preserve and manage the open space lands to the benefit of the flora, fauna, and native ecosystem functions reflected in the natural communities occurring within the RMP land.

2. Manage the land for the benefit of sensitive plant and wildlife species and existing natural communities, without altering or restricting the natural course of habitat development and dynamics.

3. Reduce, control, and where feasible, eradicate non-native, invasive flora and/or fauna known to be detrimental to native species and/or the local ecosystem.

4. Maintain the character and function of certain agricultural areas within the wetland buffer and open space area.

The Resource Manager shall be responsible for interpreting the results of site monitoring to determine the ongoing success of the RMP and achievement of the success criteria and performance standards contained in the conceptual wetland revegetation plan (see FEIR Appendix G, Attachment 16) and conceptual resource management plans (see FEIR Appendix G, Attachments 17 and 18). Both the On-Site RMP and Off-Site RMP (see, Attachment 17 and 18, respectively, of Appendix G) would be implemented in phases to allow for project mitigation to be implemented consistent with the project phasing.

**Rationale:** Implementation of mitigation measures M-BIO-1a through M-BIO-1h and M-BIO-2 would reduce the impacts identified as BIO-1 and BIO-2. Implementation of these measures would provide approximately 66.4 acres of native habitat mitigation. This acreage of preservation of native habitat will provide protected foraging habitat for raptors in perpetuity, either on- and/or off-site. Specifically, the preservation (on- or off-site) of sensitive vegetation/raptor foraging habitats is based on the appropriate ratio specific to each type of vegetation community in conformance with the mitigation ratios required by the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance for Biological Resources (2010). The required mitigation ratios were determined through consideration of the rarity and sensitivity of each individual vegetation community throughout the County and are appropriate to maintain, preserve, and protect each specific habitat community. Typically, the required mitigation ratios are higher (i.e., 3:1) for vegetation communities that are most sensitive and rare to provide a higher level of preservation and protection.

Mitigation measure M-BIO-1a through M-BIO-1e are applicable to impacts associated with on-site grading and will be conditioned to occur consistent with the identified construction phase. Mitigation measure M-BIO-1f is applicable to impacts associated with off-site improvements. Mitigation measure M-BIO-1g is applicable to impacts associated with the construction of