CEQA SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
976 OSOS STREET • ROOM 200 • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805) 781-5600

Promoting the Wise Use of Land • Helping to Build Great Communities

(ver 3.1) Using Form

Project Title & No. Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:		
☒ Aesthetics	☒ Geology and Soils	☐ Recreation
☒ Agricultural Resources	☐ Hazards/Hazardous Materials	☐ Transportation/Circulation
☐ Air Quality	☐ Noise	☐ Wastewater
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Population/Housing	☐ Water
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Public Services/Utilities	☐ Land Use

A. PROJECT

DESCRIPTION: The portion of the proposed Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road (project) discussed herein is an approximately 4.4-mile (7.1-kilometer) path that would connect the existing path along South Higuera Street from the San Luis Obispo Land Conservancy's (SLOLC) Octagon Barn, then south and paralleling San Luis Obispo Creek (SLO Creek) to the Ontario Road Staging Area, near State Route 101 and Avila Bay Drive in San Luis Obispo County, California. The purpose and need is for County of San Luis Obispo Parks, with the assistance of FHWA funding, to complete a primarily Class I (off street) pedestrian/bike path for recreational and alternative transportation use that will connect the community of Avila Beach with San Luis Obispo. Portions of the Bob Jones Pathway have previously been completed from Avila Beach to the Ontario Road Staging Area, and this project would reconcile the discontinuity between Avila Beach and San Luis Obispo.

Several proposed project alternatives were examined for feasibility and to examine relative impacts to sensitive resources. During the project development phase it was proposed that the path would either be on the west side of SLO Creek, between State Route 1, existing streets, and the creek, or on the east side of SLO Creek within a 20-foot (ft) (6-meter (m)) corridor at the top of bank (or beyond the riparian edge), or a combination of both. The final preferred alignment was selected based on an evaluation that determined which path has the least environmental and land use impacts and is most cost effective, while still meeting the overall purpose of the project.

Construction of the proposed project would primarily occur within a typically narrow 30 to 140-ft (9 to 43-m) wide construction disturbance zone on nearly level terrain. In several areas the path would run parallel to and within 30 ft (9 m) of the banks of SLO Creek and its riparian corridor. Some tree trimming at the riparian canopy edge will be required for construction access and to ensure adequate overhead clearance for bicyclists, where the trail parallels the creek corridor. Trimming and possible removal of some trees may be necessary for placement of bridge decks at the creek crossings.

The proposed path has been broken down into five segments for descriptive purposes. Segment 1 of the new path would begin at the Octagon Barn on South Higuera Street where a trailhead with parking and other facilities would be constructed. A Class I path would proceed along the east side of South Higuera Street, and then cross to the west side, where the Class I path would be between the road and SLO Creek. The path would then be routed across to the east side of South Higuera Street before reaching a new South Higuera Bridge (BR-A) for the path to be constructed across SLO Creek near the Filipponi Ecological Reserve. Several culverts would be installed along this segment.

Segment 2 of the Class I path would proceed between the east edge of South Higuera Street and SLO Creek at or near the top of bank, upon reaching the Maino property in the vicinity of the U.S. 101 northbound off ramp. Along this section, rock slope protection (RSP), a retaining wall, and curb would be added as needed where the west bank of SLO Creek slopes steeply toward the thalweg (low point of the channel). At the southern end of this section, the path would be located within the Cloveridge Lane right-of-way and would become a Class III, then a Class I path, before crossing SLO Creek again at the new Bunnell Bridge (BR-B). Several culverts would be installed or repaired along this segment.

After crossing SLO Creek at the Bunnell Bridge, Segment 3 of the Class I path would proceed adjacent to an agricultural field in Baron Canyon open space lands east of the SLO Creek corridor. Four new culverts would be installed under the path along this section, primarily extensions of the culverts that drain Monte Road, along with the improvement of two existing culverts near where the path would join Monte Road, as needed. Once this section of the trail reaches Monte Road, it would proceed along Monte Road as a Class III path before converting to a Class I path through the edge of agricultural land just west of Monte Road, with the extension of three existing culverts as needed and the installation of two new culverts, before reaching San Luis Bay Drive.

Segment 4 of the Class I path would parallel San Luis Bay Drive with RSP on the graded slope of the elevated path before reaching a new San Luis Bay Drive Bridge (BR-C) for the path across SLO Creek. Several culverts would be installed or extended.

The final segment of the path, Segment 5, extends from San Luis Bay Drive to the Ontario Road Staging Area. The Class I path would extend from the junction of Segment 4 and Segment 5, eventually traveling along an existing farm access road easement with two culverts installed under the path. The Class I path would then reach an elevated approach ramp for the new Highway 101 pedestrian overcrossing toward the Ontario Road Staging Area before connecting with the existing Bob Jones Trail to the south.

Several proposed staging areas have been identified along the new path. All staging areas will result in temporary impacts unless otherwise described. Access will be along public and private roads and along California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) ROW.

The County has indicated that construction of the new corridor would be in roughly three sections/phases. The County plans to construct at least one section in fiscal year 2010/2011. The remaining section(s) would be constructed in roughly fiscal year 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 as funds are available. Construction of the entire path would be anticipated to be completed by 2016.

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S): see table below SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #3

Property Owners & Assessor Property Numbers	
Property Owner	**APNs**
SLO Land Conservancy Contact: Brian Stark	076-081-018
John Hayashi	076-081-018
City of SLO Filipponi Ecological Reserve Contact: Neil Havlik	076-061-075 076-021-018
Maino	076-121-027 076-121-028
Bunnell	076-121-030
Baron Canyon Open Space Contact Phil Grey	076-243-008 076-241-018
Blithe Gable	076-241-020 076-251-046
SLO Land Conservancy	076-261-032
Whitaker	076-261-021
Pollard	076-251-027
Villa	076-251-021
Kruse	076-251-017
Caltrans r.o.w.	076-261-031?

B. EXISTING SETTING

PLANNING AREA: San Luis Obispo and San Luis Bay – Inland

LAND USE CATEGORY: Agriculture and Rural Lands

EXISTING USES: Primarily agricultural uses; Caltrans ROW

TOPOGRAPHY: Nearly level to gently sloping

VEGETATION: Agricultural land, ruderal (disturbed), landscaping/ornamental vegetation (including groundcover and planted trees), non-native annual grassland, serpentine bunchgrass, coastal scrub, coast live oak woodland, riparian (including riparian forest, riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, and riverine habitats), and seasonal wetlands.

PARCEL SIZE: Several parcels comprise the project area. The size of the study area is approximately 6,480,807 ft² (602,087 m^2) (148.78 ac) and encompasses an area larger than the area likely to be impacted by project-related activities.

SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES:

North: Agriculture; Rural Lands	*East:* Agriculture; Rural Lands
South: Agriculture; Rural Lands	*West:* Agriculture; Rural Lands

C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
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1. AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

Setting. A Visual Impact Assessment for the proposed project was prepared by Wallace Group in November 2008 (Wallace Group, 2008). Along the affected portion of Highway 101, the general character of the area is agricultural with scattered residences. The adjacent hills, designated as The Irish Hills, are a significant natural feature of this area. The existing environment and evaluation of impacts were divided into segments coinciding with the Preliminary Plans prepared by Questa Engineering Corporation (Questa Engineering).

Segment 1
The Octagon Barn and the South Higuera/Northbound Highway 101 entrance form the boundaries of Segment 1 which is approximately 0.7 miles in length. San Luis Obispo Creek runs along the northwest side of South Higuera, with flat agricultural land to the southeast of the travel corridor. Cyclists and vehicles are consistently visible along this stretch of road, which may be classified as generally rural in character.

Segment 2
This 1-mile segment continues from the Northbound Highway 101 entrance south past the interchange with Ontario Road to the area of the proposed bicycle bridge crossing of San Luis Creek, which runs along the east side of Highway 101 and South Higuera. To the west, the Ontario Range lies directly adjacent to the highway and frontage road forming a series of steep slopes. This area is classified as generally rural with the highway interchange providing the dominant visual element.

Segment 3
This 1.5-mile segment is generally parallel to the Highway 101 corridor that runs north and south. The visual character is dominated by the gap in the Ontario Hills created by San Luis Obispo Creek. The tree and riparian vegetation adjacent to the creek and the adjacent farm and orchard lands east of the creek create an important secondary visual pattern in the visual scene.

Segment 4
Segment 4, at 0.25 miles in length, is located between Monte Road and Highway 101 directly north of San Luis Bay Drive. Apple orchards and vineyards run on either side of San Luis Obispo Creek between the highway and Monte Road. The creek crosses San Luis Bay Drive and relatively dense riparian vegetation extends along the south east side of the highway interchange. There are rolling hills with a residential community entrance off Ontario Road on the west side of the highway. This area is a cross between rural and residential suburban in nature.

Segment 5
This 0.75-mile segment is dominated by Highway 101 and the rolling hills along Ontario Road on the west side of the highway, which includes a few commercial businesses and residences within view of the highway. Agricultural fields continue to run along the east side of the Highway 101 corridor with the creek running parallel where the hills begin rising to create Squire Canyon. The existing Bob Jones Bike Trail picks up at the end of Segment 5 at the Ontario Road Staging Area. From the staging area the existing Bob Jones Bike Trail follows the creek out to the community of Avila Beach.

Issues. The greatest number of potential viewers will be from Highway 101, along both the north and south directions; averaging around 68,000 trips per day (Caltrans statistics for the year 2007). Bicycle trail improvements, especially the highway crossing east of the Salisbury Winery will predominantly be seen from the highway. Some portions of the trail project will also be visible from South Higuera and Ontario Road, where they run parallel to the highway, with approximately 7,300 trips per day since they are essentially a continuation of each other.

In summary, the number of potential Viewers (even discounting for some overlap in the figures below since the majority of the South Higuera traffic, for example, will have also been included in Highway 101 figures) will be over 70,000 per day, and is classified as high. However the visibility of various components of the bicycle trail varies greatly and is quantified below by Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts:

1. Views from South Higuera: 7,300 AADT (County of San Luis Obispo, 2007);
2. Views from Highway 101: 68,000 AADT (Caltrans, 2007);
3. Views from San Luis Bay Drive eastbound: less than 3,600 AADT (County of San Luis Obispo, 2007); and,
4. Views from Monte Road: less than 500 AADT (Consultant estimate based on units served).

Impact. Based on the results of the Visual Impact Assessment, the existing visual quality of the project area varies from moderate to moderately high depending on the location and direction of the viewer as one approaches various Key Viewing Areas (KVAs). Viewers of the project will have varying sensitivities regarding changes to the visual environment, but are expected to have moderate to moderately high expectations given the overall rural character of the area and the generally high scenic qualities created by the hills and vegetation along the 4.4-mile corridor.

VR/Impact 1 There is potential for the grading and vegetation removal required for the bicycle route and related fencing to negatively affect the visual resources of Segments 1 through 5.

VR/Impact 2 There is potential for the bridge crossings at San Luis Obispo Creek opposite south of Cloveridge (Segment 2) and adjacent to San Luis Bay Drive (Segment 4) to negatively affect the visual resources of the area both through the removal of vegetation and with an intrusive bridge design.

VR/Impact 3 At the proposed bicycle overpass and Highway 101 in Segment 5, the visual quality will be reduced by the addition of the new structure adjacent to the Salisbury Winery.

VR/Impact 4 There is potential for the approach ramp up to the east side of the Highway 101 bridge/overpass in Segment 5 to negatively affect the visual resources of the area.

VR/Impact 5 There is potential for the approach ramp retaining wall up to the west side of the Highway 101 bridge/overpass in Segment 5 adjacent to the Salisbury Winery to negatively affect the visual resources of the area.

The discussion of cumulative impacts relates to the potential for the project to contribute to an aggregate change in visual quality of the area. The corridor between the southern end of the City of San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach has seen a limited amount of residential or commercial development over the last several years that will be visible to travelers along the Highway 101 corridor and most of this work is now complete and no new major projects are known to be in the application stages that will be visible along the corridor. A future development that would be visible from Highway

101 between Los Osos Valley Road and Madonna Road several miles north of the project site has been proposed but withdrawn for redesign. There are several Highway 101 improvements that are currently under construction and are scheduled to be completed in 2008/9. These include southbound ramp alignment and widening improvements and a reconfigured and widened underpass at Avila Beach Drive. While these improvements will modify the undercrossing and ramp configuration as well as the length of merging lanes in the area of the new Bob Jones overcrossing, this effort, when complete, will not create a noticeable visual difference to the average traveler since they are changes to existing highway structures.

The proposed Los Osos Valley Road/Highway 101 interchange will result in substantial visual changes at that location including bridge widening and reconfiguration of the approach ramps and the attendant grades. While within the general corridor of the Bob Jones Pathway, this modification of the Los Osos Valley highway structures will not be directly visible by highway travelers in the area of the proposed Bob Jones highway bridge.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures addressing VR/Impacts 1 to 5 are included in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table.

2. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Setting. An Agriculture Report for the proposed project was prepared by SWCA in November 2008 (SWCA, 2008). The project corridor is located in an area with multiple agricultural operations, and the area has been used for agriculture for many years. Crops are generally high value crops such as apples, tomatoes, squash, and other row crops. The operations are in close proximity to the City of San Luis Obispo and South County markets and restaurants. Access to Highway 101 is generally good from all locations, providing a quick route to wholesale and retail outlets. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil classifications range from I (prime) to VII (riverbed) within the corridor. Water is available for irrigation due to the proximity to SLO Creek.

a. Land Use Designation

The project corridor is located within the County's Agriculture (AG) Land Use Designation. The purposes of the AG designation include recognizing areas where: 1) agriculture is the primary land use; 2) a combination of soil types, topography, water supply, existing parcel sizes and good management practices would result in the protection of agricultural land for agricultural uses; and, 3) is intended to protect the agricultural basis of the county economy, among others and encourage the open space values of agriculture to continue agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber, among others (County of San Luis Obispo, 2007).

b. Soils

Based on the Soil Survey of San Luis Obispo County, California Coastal Part soil survey maps, eleven soil units are present within the project APE (Area of Potential Effect) and would be affected by the project to varying degrees (refer to table below). It is important to note that the APE includes all staging areas, areas of temporary disturbance and proposed biological mitigation sites, and therefore the acreage shown below is not necessarily that which would be impacted by the proposed project.

Soil Types

Soil Number	Soil Type	Irrigated Class	Acres	% of Total
116	Chamise Shaly Loam	VI	1.0	0.7%
120	Concepcion Loam	III	1.4	0.9%
131	Diablo And Cibo Clays	IV	4.5	3.02%
142	Gaviota Fine Sandy Loam	VII	9.9	6.7%
152	Lodo-rock outcrop complex	VII	0.164	0.1%
156	Lopez Very Shaly Clay Loam	VII	7.3	4.9%
169	Marimel Sandy Clay Loam	III	73.3	49.3%
181	Nacimiento-Calodo complex	VI	0.029	0.02%
191	Pismo-Tierra Complex	VI	1.5	1.0%
194	Riverwash	VIII	4.8	3.2%
197	Salinas Silty Clay Loam	I	21.1	14.2%
198	Salinas Silty Clay Loam	II	10.1	6.8%
203	Santa Lucia shaly clay loam	VI	0.022	0.01%
210	Still Gravelly Sandy Clay Loam	II	13.6	9.1%
		Total	148.779	100.0%

Source: Soil Survey of San Luis Obispo County, California Coastal Part, USDA Soil Conservation Service (September 1984)

Three soil types, comprising approximately 44 acres within the approximately 149 acre project corridor could be considered prime because they meet the first criteria by being either Class I or II. These soils are generally located in the northern two-thirds of the project corridor near South Higuera Street and Cloveridge Lane (Segments 1 and 2). According to the 2003 and 2005 Annual Report produced by the County Department of Agriculture, crops including apples, squash, and tomatoes have met or exceeded the value of $1,000 or more per acre in gross production value over the last 3 years. Therefore the orchard areas along Monte Road south to San Luis Bay Drive (Segment 3 and portions of Segment 5) may also be considered prime even though the soil type is considered Class III. This soil type constitutes approximately 50 percent of the total soils in the project corridor.

c. California Department of Conservation Classification

The California Department of Conservation (CDC) Division of Land Resource Protection developed the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1984 to analyze impacts to California's agricultural resources. Land is rated based on the land capability classification system, Storie Index, and land use (California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2008). Based on the Important Farmland Map for San Luis Obispo County and the Soil Survey information, Farmland with Local Potential, Grazing land, Prime Farmland, lands of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland, are located within or adjacent to the project site.

d. Agricultural Production

A variety of row and orchard crops is produced within the project corridor and has been for many years. They include apples, tomatoes, peas, squash, and others. No specific yield or economic data is available for the agricultural operations within the project corridor although the crop types produced are generally considered high value crops that require fertile soils and irrigation. Production can occur year round due to favorable climate and soil conditions.

e. Agricultural Investments/Improvements

Agricultural operations that include improvements such as barns, storage systems, fruit trees, drainage or irrigation systems, are more likely to be able to support agriculture in the long-term because the need for capital investment is lower than on sites without these improvements. Based on field surveys and use of aerial photos, barns and agricultural accessory structures exist on the Maino, Bunnell, and Gable parcels. There are a number of bridges across SLO Creek that allows growers to access lands on both sides of the creek. Much of the producing land within the project corridor is irrigated. Irrigation pipes and related equipment are stored within the project corridor at numerous locations. Orchards located on Land Conservancy and Gable properties are well established.

f. Williamson Act

California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, encourages and enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming uses rather than full market value. Local governments receive a subsidy for forgone property tax revenues from the state via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971. There are currently two parcels (both owned by Maino) in the project corridor that have entered into a Williamson Act contract with San Luis Obispo County.

g. Surrounding Land Uses/Incompatibilities

The Octagon Barn, the proposed northern end of Phase II of the Bob Jones Pathway, is located near the San Luis Obispo Urban Reserve Line. Uses to the north are therefore more urban, and include residential, commercial, and industrial. There is however a fairly substantial change in land uses just south of the city limits, where agriculture and open space dominate. There are few existing incompatible uses south of the city limits in this area.

Beginning about 0.5 mile south of the Octagon Barn, agricultural operations are generally shielded from potential incompatibilities by a number of physical barriers, including Highway 101, SLO Creek, and the narrow nature of the valley between the South Higuera Street//Highway 101 interchange and Ontario Road. Recent residential development in Squire Canyon and Baron Canyon, both accessed from San Luis Bay Drive and Monte Rd, have theoretically increased the potential for incompatibilities with the operations, but local producers have not noticed an increase in the number of conflicts/complaints. The operator consulted for this report was not aware of any complaints from producers or residents (Stark, 2006). The relatively low density of the developments, and the distance between the active agricultural operations and residences may have helped prevent significant conflicts.

Impact. Impacts to agricultural resources were assessed by utilizing data and maps published by the United States Department of Agriculture, California Department of Conservation, and County Agriculture Department, including soil information, farmland mapping, and economic data. The project was analyzed for the potential conversion of productive farmland, loss of productive agricultural soils, incompatible land uses, and inconsistencies with regulations and policies intended to preserve agricultural resources. A Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form (Form AD-1006) was completed and submitted to the local NRCS office for review. The analysis of agricultural impacts included a review of GIS maps, local and state literature and records, consultation with the County Agriculture Department and the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and field visits to the project study area and the surrounding region.

As currently proposed, the project most often consists of Class I trails, although small portions would be Class III (trail unmarked but shared with road). At various points along the corridor, the pathway would be located on former unpaved roads used to access agricultural operations. The pathway may cross existing agricultural roads. In some locations there is not enough space between roads or

creeks and agricultural roads to locate the pathway. As a result, existing agricultural roads may need to be realigned to allow for construction and use of the pathway.

AG/Impact 1 Construction of the project has the potential to disrupt and /or conflict with existing agricultural activities within the project corridor by displacing agricultural access points and roads along South Higuera Street, Cloveridge Lane, Monte Road, and San Luis Bay Drive.

The trail is expected to attract local residents and tourists looking for a recreational experience to an area that has traditionally been occupied only by agriculturalists and a few local residents. Pesticide use, dust, odors, and noise associated with agricultural operations could irritate these users. Domestic animals can harass livestock, and trespassers can injure themselves, remove/break fences and gates or disrupt operations. These conflicts may result in stricter regulations for operations, reduced yields, or in some cases lawsuits, the costs of which can make agriculture less viable. Fences are proposed along the trail corridor, and these would help to reduce potential trespass and conflicts.

AG/Impact 2 The pathway would introduce a new population to areas that have traditionally been accessed only by agriculturalists and a limited number of residents, increasing the potential for trespass, pesticide exposure and other conflicts with the agricultural operations resulting in significant impacts to agriculture.

Much of the proposed project is expected to be constructed within the 100-year floodplain. Local ordinance requires the project to be engineered in a manner that would not significantly alter floodplain levels. In addition, the sedimentation and erosion control plans would be required for the project by both the County of San Luis Obispo. The Regional Water Quality Control Board would require that the project implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. However, construction of the pathway could impact agricultural operations by increasing stormwater runoff onto adjacent agricultural lands and altering local drainage patterns.

AG/Impact 3 The project may affect local drainage patterns increasing runoff onto adjacent agricultural lands.

A portion of Segment 2 of the proposed project would be located on parcels that are part of a Williamson Act contract. Trails such as the one proposed may conflict with Williamson Act contract provisions as they potentially result in either the direct conversion of productive farmland identified in the contract or the types of incompatibilities discussed above. The proposed project was taken to the Agricultural Preserve Review Committee on October 30, 2006. The committee determined that the proposed project would not impact the existing preserve due to its location on the opposite side of the creek and because the proposed project was likely to include additional mitigation to reduce agricultural incompatibilities and conflicts.

Mitigation/Conclusion. Mitigation measures addressing AG/Impacts 1 to 3 are included in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table.

3. AIR QUALITY

Setting. Air quality impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project. The Air Pollution Control District (APCD) has developed the 2003 CEQA Air Quality Handbook to evaluate project specific impacts and help determine if air quality mitigation measures are needed, or if potentially significant impacts could result. To evaluate long-term emissions, cumulative effects, and establish countywide programs to reach acceptable air quality levels, a Clean Air Plan has been adopted (prepared by APCD).

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County coordinate with APCD to evaluate any potential air quality impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Setting. A Draft Caltrans Natural Environment Study (NES) and Biological Assessment (BA) were prepared by SWCA in January 2009 (SWCA, 2009a; 2009b). The NES was prepared for Caltrans for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance and the BA was prepared for eventual submittal to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for compliance with Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA).

The Biological Study Area (BSA) is defined as the area that may be directly, indirectly, temporarily, or permanently impacted by construction and construction-related activities. The BSA encompasses an area in the vicinity of San Luis Obispo Creek (SLO Creek) between San Luis Obispo and Avila Beach, California. The northern terminus of the BSA begins just southwest of the San Luis Obispo Land Conservancy's (SLOLC's) Octagon Barn on South Higuera Street; continues south along a corridor that includes SLO Creek, State Route 101, and adjacent lands; and, reaches the southern terminus at the Ontario Road Staging Area/parking lot, south of Avila Bay Drive.

The size of the BSA is approximately 6,480,807 ft² (602,087 m^2) (148.78 ac) and encompasses an area larger than the area likely to be impacted by project-related activities. The BSA includes the location of the proposed pathway route in the vicinity of State Route 101 and adjacent agricultural and conservation lands, various stream crossings over SLO Creek, potential access and staging areas, and roadside drainages and other aquatic areas within the immediate vicinity of proposed project activities.

The north-to-south oriented BSA roughly parallels SLO Creek and State Route 101, east of the Irish Hills, in central San Luis Obispo County at an elevation of approximately 50 to 150 feet (15 to 46 meters). SLO Creek is a perennial stream subject to flooding, and is the dominant hydrological feature within the BSA. This stream is fed by a number of perennial and ephemeral drainages, including the East Fork of SLO Creek, Davenport Creek, and several unnamed tributaries. Land use in the area is primarily agricultural and conservation lands.

Natural communities/habitats present within the BSA include agricultural land, ruderal (disturbed), landscaping/ornamental vegetation (including groundcover and planted trees), non-native annual grassland, serpentine bunchgrass, coastal scrub, coast live oak woodland, riparian (including riparian forest, riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, and riverine habitats), and seasonal wetlands. Much of the remaining areas within the BSA consist of roads, buildings, and other artificial structures, are largely unvegetated, and have been mapped as developed areas but not quantified. Habitats in the BSA have been mapped using global positioning system (GPS) and geographic information system (GIS) technology.

Based on a review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB, 2006-2008) and other sources, the following is a list of special-status plants, animals, and/or habitats that have been identified as having the potential for occurrence within the BSA:

Special-status Plants -- marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola*), Miles's milk-vetch (*Astragalus didymocarpus* var. *milesianus*), Obispo Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja densiflora* ssp. *obispoensis*), La Graciosa thistle (*Cirsium lonchloepis*), Pismo clarkia (*Clarkia speciosa* ssp. *immaculata*), San Luis Obispo serpentine dudleya (*Dudleya abramsii* ssp. *bettinae*), Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae* ssp. *blochmaniae*), Kellogg's horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* ssp. *sericea*), southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*), Jones's layia (*Layia jonesii*), Gambel's water cress (*Nasturtium gambelii*), adobe sanicle (*Sanicula maritima*), and San Bernardino aster (*Symphyotrichum defoliatum*).

Floristic surveys were conducted in 2006 during the appropriate flowering periods to enable identification and determine presence or absence of special-status plant species within the BSA. Supplemental botanical inventories were also conducted in April 2008 during field work for the wetland delineation. Freshwater marsh, annual grassland, and coastal scrub habitats were considered to be the habitats that were most likely to support special-status plant species; however, these habitats are marginal within the BSA and may not be within the appropriate elevation limits or have the required soil types to support each of the special-status species considered.

The only special-status plant species observed within the BSA was southern California black walnut, a CNPS List 4.2 species that occurs at various locations along the SLO Creek riparian corridor. Southern California black walnut occurs on a CNPS watch list and is among the lowest degrees of sensitivity that CNPS considers. Southern California black walnut is fairly common along stream reaches in San Luis Obispo County (personal observation), and many local specimens of this tree may be the result of plantings by humans. No other special-status plant species were observed in the BSA or are expected to occur.

Special-status Animals – south-central California coast steelhead evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), Coast Range newt (*Taricha torosa torosa*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata pallida*), silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), purple martin (*Progne subis*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), other nesting birds, pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), and other roosting bats.

Marginal upland grassland habitat occurs in the BSA for California tiger salamander (CTS) but SLO Creek does not support breeding habitat. Although riparian habitat occurs in the BSA, it is not of suitable structure to support nesting yellow-billed cuckoo or least Bell's vireo (LBV). Steelhead are known to inhabit SLO Creek and the presence of California red-legged frog (CRLF) has been inferred.

Special-status Habitats -- serpentine bunchgrass is a CNDDB Sensitive Habitat (CNDDB, 2006-2008) that occurs just south of the East Fork of SLO Creek, on the Filipponi Ecological Reserve. The Build Alternative would completely avoid this sensitive habitat type.

Impact. Impacts to habitats within the project BSA have been quantified based on the project Area of Direct Impact (ADI). The ADI was derived from the project plans presented as of September 2008. Permanent impact areas include the pathway trail including pavement and shoulders, graded bridge approaches, bridge piers and footings, retaining walls, traffic barriers, culverts, new permanent parking areas, and RSP of graded slopes and stream banks. Also quantified as permanent impacts are bridge spans where riparian trees must be removed for construction and on-going maintenance, landscape screen planting areas, and the entire trail ROW because permanent maintenance is assumed. Temporary impact areas include all construction access routes and staging areas. Temporary impacts areas have also been described for diversion/dewatering and cover streambed and riparian areas approximately 50 ft (15 m) upstream and downstream of each proposed RSP installation. Ten-foot (3-m) work buffers around riprap sites, parking lots, retaining walls, and traffic barrier installations have also been included in the temporary impact area.

The ADI was overlain with habitat mapping and with jurisdictional areas to quantify both permanent and temporary impacts. Estimated impacts to habitats quantified in the table below.

Estimated Impacts to Habitats

Habitat Type	Permanent			Temporary			TOTAL		
	ft^2	m^2	ac	ft^2	m^2	ac	ft^2	m^2	ac
Agricultural Land	176,343	16,383	4.05	85,823	7,973	1.97	262,166	24,356	6.02
Ruderal (Disturbed)	165,883	15,411	3.81	67,279	6,250	1.54	233,162	21,661	5.35
Landscaping/ Ornamental	8,276	769	0.19	11,326	1,052	0.26	9,328	1,821	0.45
Annual Grassland	102,959	9,565	2.36	120,038	11,152	2.76	222,997	20,717	5.12
Serpentine Bunchgrass	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coastal Scrub	63,840	5,931	1.47	50,811	4,720	1.17	114,651	10,651	2.64
Oak Woodland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Riparian	110,352	10,252	2.53	124,860	11,598	2.87	235,212	21,850	5.40
Seasonal Wetlands	3,485	324	0.08	0	0	0	3,485	324	0.08

Impacts to aquatic areas could result from deposition of RSP fill, temporary dewatering, worker foot-traffic, hazardous material spills, and increased erosion and sedimentation. Any required dewatering/diversion structures would be removed following project completion and permanent adverse impacts would not result from these activities. Construction of the new pathway and associated structures, the new bridges, and the State Route 101 overcrossing would permanently impact vegetation displaced by these structures and temporarily impact vegetation within the disturbance corridor needed by construction equipment and worker foot-traffic.

BR/Impact 1 The proposed project may impact jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian areas.

All components of the new bridges, including the abutments and pilings, would avoid discharge of fill below the ordinary high water marks (OHWMs) of SLO Creek; however, the placement of RSP in the vicinities of the proposed South Higuera Bridge (BR-A), adjacent to South Higuera Street north of Cloveridge Lane, Bunnell Bridge (BR-B), and San Luis Bay Drive Bridge (BR-C) would result in permanent impacts to jurisdictional wetlands in SLO Creek below the OHWMs. A small amount of other waters associated with the drainage ditch with connectivity to SLO Creek located toward the northern section of the proposed project would be impacted for a part of the trail that would cross this area. Riparian vegetation associated with the stream corridor under the jurisdiction of CDFG would be permanently impacted to accommodate the three proposed bridge crossings over SLO Creek. Temporary impacts to streamside vegetation could result from temporary diversion/dewatering, hazardous material spills, and the indirect effects of increased erosion and sedimentation. Dewatering within SLO Creek could result in a temporary loss of approximately 32,311 ft^2 (3,002 m^2) (0.74 ac) of in-stream habitat. Diversion/dewatering structures would be removed following project completion, and it is anticipated that permanent adverse impacts would not occur as a result.

BR/Impact 2 The proposed project may impact federally designated critical habitat for steelhead.

It is anticipated the proposed project would permanently impact approximately 22,199 ft^2 (2,062 m^2) (0.51 ac) of steelhead critical habitat associated with construction of bridge crossings through the SLO Creek riparian corridor and RSP installation. Temporary impacts to approximately 70,834 ft^2 (8,643 m^2) (2.14 ac) of steelhead critical habitat are estimated to result from work space associated with bridge construction, RSP installation, and establishment of stream diversions. These amounts are also equivalent to the anticipated permanent and temporary loss of service to steelhead.

BR/Impact 3 The proposed project may impact southern California black walnut, which is a CNPS sensitive species.

The construction of bridge crossings over SLO Creek may require the trimming and/or removal of southern California black walnut trees, which could result in the direct injury or mortality of trees and affect their availability as habitat to animal species. The temporary construction corridor needed to construct the new pathway may also require the trimming of southern California black walnut trees and other trees. Indirect impacts could also occur to root zones of walnut trees.

BR/Impact 4 The proposed project may impact the south-central California coast steelhead ESU, which is a federally threatened species.

Diversion/dewatering and construction in aquatic areas inhabited by steelhead could result in direct impacts to the species in the form of injury or mortality as steelhead stranded in residual wetted areas are captured, handled, and relocated. Construction leading to the placement of fill for bridges or other structures within the wetted portions of SLO Creek could result in the permanent loss of steelhead habitat in SLO Creek; although, this amount is estimated to be minimal. The act of diversion/dewatering and its eventual dismantling and restoration of normal flows could result in

indirect impacts that could affect the structure of the streambed substrate. This could be particularly adverse to steelhead, which use streambed gravels and cobbles for spawning and rearing of young. These impacts would likely be temporary and rectified once the pre-construction stream flow conditions were restored. Erosion and sedimentation could also pose other indirect impacts.

The project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, south-central California coast steelhead. The basis for this determination is that steelhead inhabit SLO Creek and there would be a considerable potential for take of the species during any construction activities in the stream channel, dewatering/diversion activities, and capture and relocation of steelhead. The proposed project will also result in temporary and/or permanent impacts to vegetation along SLO Creek, which may offer shading and microhabitat temperature regulation in the channel.

BR/Impact 5 The proposed project may impact California red-legged frog (CRLF), which is a federally threatened species.

Direct impacts to CRLF adults, sub-adults, tadpoles, and eggs could potentially include injury or mortality in aquatic areas or adjacent uplands from construction equipment, construction debris, and worker foot traffic. The installation of RSP within the channel of SLO Creek, any implementation of stream diversion/dewatering during this activity, and the resulting potential need to capture and relocate CRLFs may also result in injury or mortality. Indirect effects of construction activities, including noise and vibration, may cause CRLFs to temporarily abandon habitat adjacent to work areas. This disturbance may increase the potential for predation and desiccation if CRLFs abandon shelter sites. Temporary loss of CRLF habitat could result from diversion/dewatering of aquatic areas required for construction. The indirect effects of erosion and sedimentation could also impact CRLFs. The removal of any encountered exotic species from SLO Creek may produce a beneficial effect by likely increasing reducing predation and competition pressures for CRLF.

The project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, CRLF. Although no CRLFs were observed during reconnaissance surveys within the BSA, USFWS has indicated that CRLF presence within the BSA should be inferred. There would be a potential for take of CRLF during construction in the stream channel, dewatering/diversion activities, and capture and relocation of CRLF. The proposed project will also create temporary and/or permanent impacts to vegetation along SLO Creek, which may offer shading and microhabitat temperature regulation in the channel. The potential for take of CRLF is believed to be much less than that expected for steelhead, as CRLF are believed to be much less common along the SLO Creek corridor.

BR/Impact 6 The proposed project may impact other special-status aquatic and terrestrial species such as Coast Range newt, southwestern pond turtle, silvery legless lizard, and two-striped garter snake.

Potential project impacts to these species are similar to those described for CRLF and other aquatic species. Construction or dewatering activities in aquatic habitats within the BSA could result in direct impacts to these species, which could result in injury or death to individuals if they are found inhabiting aquatic areas or estivating along the banks of SLO Creek or uplands. Temporary loss of habitat for these species could result from dewatering/diversion of aquatic areas required for construction. Project-related installation of RSP could permanently displace aquatic habitat, resulting in loss of available habitat for the species. The indirect effects of erosion and sedimentation could also impact two-striped garter snake, as could noise and vibration disturbance. Ground disturbing activities such as grading, other earth movement, or worker foot traffic within the BSA could result in direct impacts to silvery legless lizard, which could result in injury or death to individual lizards if they are found occupying soils in certain habitats. Temporary loss of silvery legless lizard habitat could result from the displacement of soil during construction.

BR/Impact 7 The proposed project may impact Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, white-tailed kite, western yellow-billed cuckoo, loggerhead shrike, least Bell's vireo, purple martin, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, and other nesting bird species.

The removal of vegetation could directly impact bird nests and any eggs or young residing in nests. Indirect impacts could also result from noise and disturbance associated with construction, which could alter perching, foraging, and/or nesting behaviors.

BR/Impact 8 The proposed project may impact pallid bat, western mastiff bat, and other roosting bats.

The proposed project has minimal potential to directly impact bat species that may utilize existing structures within the BSA as roosting habitat. As bats can be sensitive to noise disturbance, indirect impacts could also result from construction, which could alter roosting behaviors.

Mitigation/Conclusion. Mitigation measures addressing BR/Impacts 1 to 8 are included in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Setting.

a. Archaeological Resources

A Draft Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) was prepared by Far Western Anthropological Research Group in August 2006 (Far Western, 2006). This document is currently under revision to account for a larger Area of Potential Effects (APE) compared to what was originally under study in 2006. A Draft Supplemental ASR was prepared by Far Western in March 2009.

The project vicinity was inhabited by speakers of the Obispeño language of the Chumash language family. Present knowledge about these people is derived from a variety of early sources, including reports made by Spanish priests and explorers, Spanish mission records, and the work of linguist and ethnographer J.P. Harrington (Milliken and Johnson, 2002). Harrington conducted interviews with descendants of the Mission Indians during the early 1900s, amassing voluminous field notes. While these data are derived from contact-period accounts and records and cannot be strictly applied to cultures inhabiting the areas throughout the prehistoric past, they do, however, provide a comparative framework for interpretation of earlier population distributions and lifeways.

The Obispeño Chumash practiced a hunter-gatherer-fisher economy and used stone, bone, and shell implements to hunt game animals and capture fish and birds, along with basketry items (rarely preserved) to gather various vegetal resources. Males generally hunted while females collected and processed vegetal resources (i.e., seeds, nuts, roots, and bulbs) and prefer foods for consumption. Houses were small and either grass-thatched or earth-covered, with larger structures used as dance or sweat lodges. Tule balsa canoes, constructed from bundled reeds, were used in estuary and embayment settings found at Morro Bay, Avila Beach, and Pismo Beach.

Socio-political organization within the Obispeño Chumash language group was organized at the village level. Village headmen had the authority to resolve internal disputes, redistribute wealth, and engage in welfare, and they received status privileges such as the acquisition of multiple wives, and

tributes of food and various goods. Marriage networks were far-ranging, extending to 50 kilometers in distance. Mission records have recorded inter-marriages of individuals from such present-day areas as San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Cambria, Avila, Morro Bay, and Santa Margarita. These marriages created an interaction sphere between interior and coastal regions and provided a means of exchanging resources from these varied zones.

In 1772, the Mission San Luis Obispo was established. Manned by "Fr. Jose Cavaller, five soldiers, and two Lower California Mission Indians (Milliken and Johnson, 2002), the location was referred to as *Tixlini*. This reference appears in the confirmation register, entered by Father Serra (founder of the mission), and likely reflects a native place name rather than an inhabited village location (Engelhardt, 1963). Conversion of the local native population was slow over the first few years, probably due to the abundance of wild food resources (seeds and berries, game animals, and fish) that allowed the small, mobile groups to remain independent. Three factors – the impacts of European diseases, diminishing local resources, and an increase in the area's non-native population – forced the resistant natives to turn to the Mission San Luis Obispo for food, clothing, and shelter. That the natives grudgingly relinquished their traditional lifeway is reflected in the pulses in conversions and baptisms recorded for the mission from the late 1770s until the 1830s. Termination of the Mexican government's mission land holdings in 1836 found the Mission Indians in search of jobs as laborers for various ranchos.

An initial archaeological pedestrian survey for the Bob Jones Trail project area was undertaken July 11-13, 2006 by Dustin McKenzie. A second survey to investigate the boundaries of three previously recorded historic-period archaeological sites surrounding the southern extent of the survey area was conducted on July 17, 2006 by Deborah Jones, and Linda Thorpe of Foothill Resources. An additional portion of the Bunnell property was field surveyed by Far Western on January 1, 2007. The approximately 11-acre parcel consists of plowed creek terrace lands and fenced pastureland situated west of San Luis Obispo Creek between Cloveridge Road and the creek channel. Access issues delayed survey of the newly incorporated APE until November 14 and 21, 2008 and December 31, 2008. A small (~0.18 acre), northern portion of the survey area extending from the Kruse property into the Villa property was not surveyed because access was denied to the Villa property.

No prehistoric archaeological deposits were identified within project boundaries during the surveys in 2006 and 2007; however, one historic-period archaeological site (field number Baron Canyon H-1, CA-SLO-XXX) was identified during the supplemental archaeological survey in 2008 on parcel 076-243-024 (435.53 acres). Domestic structural foundation remains and associated non-native landscaping were found on Baron Canyon open space lands approximately one-third of a mile north of the termination of Monte Road near the mouth of a narrow canyon. Only a few artifactual materials were observed on the site surface; a piece of aqua glass, clear glass, and a fragment of white (modern) dinnerware were found to the west of the berm on a small grassy flat, with a piece of marine shell and a clear glass fragment found along the roadway in the northern site area. Additional historic-period research was conducted on the parcel by JRP Historical Consulting (see below).

a. Historical Resources

A Draft Historical Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) was prepared by JRP Historical Consulting in September 2006 (JRP, 2006). This document is currently under revision to account for a larger Area of Potential Effects (APE) compared to what was originally under study in 2006. An HRER Memorandum was prepared by JRP in March 2009.

The development of the Study Area is consistent with the Section 106 PA, encompassing only the areas expected to be directly affected by construction of the bike path. Once the Study Area was defined, JRP staff conducted background research on all buildings, structures, and objects located within the Study Area. This research included review of records from the First American Real Estate Solutions commercial database and the San Luis Obispo County Assessor's Office, as well as review

of historic and current USGS topographic maps. Additionally, JRP reviewed the results of the records search that Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., conducted for this project at the Central Coast Information Center in January 2006. The records search identified two architectural resources that had previously been recorded within the Study Area: the Octagon Barn on South Higuera Street (CA-SLO-1002H / P-40-001002) and remnants of the Pacific Coast Railway tracks (CA-SLO-1612H / P-40-001612). Neither of these resources had been previously evaluated for National Register or California Register eligibility.

This pre-field research helped to determine which buildings and structures appeared to have been built in 1961 or earlier and would therefore be studied for this project. Architectural resources built after 1961 are not included in the survey. JRP conducted field surveys of the Study Area on July 18 and 19, 2006, to identify historic architectural resources. Investigation of the survey population resources included research regarding their historical context, as well as property-specific research conducted in both archival and published records. Letters informing interested parties of this project were sent to local historical societies and planning agencies on September 1, 2006.

The Draft HRER concluded that two properties evaluated for this project appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources: 1) the octagonal barn (aka the "Octagon Barn") of the Santa Fe Dairy property along the east side of South Higuera Street toward the extreme north end of the proposed pathway; and, 2) Stornetta Bridge, located at APN 076-081-018 west of South Higuera Street and west of the Octagon Barn.

The octagonal barn, with an estimated construction date of 1900, was a dairy barn during the first half of the twentieth century as part of the Santa Fe / Home Dairy operations. As one of less than half a dozen known historic-period round barns extant in California, the barn appears eligible under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criterion C (California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) Criterion 3) as a significant example of a type, period, and method of construction. Stornetta Bridge, built in 1915 from the designs of Leonard & Day, consulting engineers, is one of four surviving examples of the firm's patented "canticrete" bridge type built between about 1914 and 1921. Stornetta Bridge appears eligible under Criteria C (3) as an important work of a significant designer. Both the octagonal barn and Stornetta Bridge appear significant at the statewide level and retain sufficient historic integrity to convey their significance.

Although the octagonal barn appears individually eligible, the Santa Fe Dairy complex at 4435 South Higuera Street as a whole does not appear eligible for the NRHP or CRHR. This complex was operated between about 1903 and 1914 by Antonio Stornetta as the Santa Fe Dairy, and later by Joaquin Pereira and his partners as the Home Dairy. Other than the octagonal barn, which may have been built during the 1890s, the buildings all date from about 1910 to 1938. The property does not appear to be significant under Criteria A and 1 for associations with significant aspects of the development of dairy operations in San Luis Obispo County, nor does it appear that that either Stornetta or Pereira made important contributions within the dairy industry or specifically within their individual ethnic communities (Criteria B and 2). The property does not appear eligible under Criteria C and 3 because the buildings do not represent pioneering or groundbreaking advancements in dairy technology, layout or design. With the exception of the octagonal barn, the individual farm buildings are all modest examples of the types of buildings typically found on farmsteads of this era, and the residential buildings are modest examples of residential architecture common to the period. This property is otherwise documented in the historic record and has not yielded, nor is it likely to yield, important information that would make it eligible Criteria D or 4.

The abandoned segment of State Route 2, located on the Santa Fe Dairy agricultural parcel on the opposite (west) side of South Higuera Street, does not appear eligible for the NRHP or CRHR because it lacks integrity. State Route 2 is potentially eligible under Criteria A (1) as a component of California's first comprehensive highway system, and under Criteria C (3) as an example of early

highway engineering principles. However, this short, isolated segment does not retain sufficient integrity to convey its potential significance. The highway remnant does not appear eligible under Criteria B (2) or D (4).

Bridge 49C-396, Higuera Street over San Luis Obispo Creek, was categorized as ineligible to the National Register (Category 5) in the Caltrans 1987 bridge inventory. The bridge was recently determined to retain its Category 5 status in the Caltrans Statewide Bridge Inventory Update (2005), when it was not individually surveyed because it is a common bridge type (concrete t-beam).

A Memorandum in 2009 was prepared to document additional identification efforts conducted for the project in response to changes in the APE. The revised APE included portions of parcels previously outside the original APE. Survey of the new areas did not reveal any extant built environment, or historic architectural, resources. No further study of the new areas was required and no changes to the HRER document were necessary, except to revise the number of properties present.

Because the 2008 archeological survey identified a potential historic archeological site within the revised APE, JRP conducted documentary research to establish property ownership and land use history for the site located on parcel 076-243-024 (435.53 acres) in the Baron Canyon area. The site consists of a former building site and foundation remains with no extant intact buildings. While no surface artifacts were observed in these areas, historic-period research conducted on the parcel by JRP Historical Consulting shows that a late 1890s furnace and an early 1900s house were once mapped on lands on the north side of the drainage on the flat at the mouth of the canyon.

In the JRP 2009 Memorandum, findings concluded that summary results of the HRER for this project now indicate that one historic architectural property exists within the revised APE: the Octagon Barn. The Octagon Barn property is OHP Status Code 3S. It appears eligible for listing under NRHP Criterion C (CRHR Criterion 3) as a significant example of a type, period, and method of construction at the statewide level and has a period of significance of 1903-1946.

Impact. According to SWCA's review of the polygon encompassing the archaeological site found by Far Western near Baron Canyon in 2008, the proposed trail alignment would avoid this site; however, a staging area proposed at this location would disturb the site.

CR/Impact 1 A proposed staging area for the project may impact an archaeological site discovered in 2008 near Baron Canyon.

No other prehistoric archaeological deposits were identified within project boundaries during the survey for the ASR. None of the historic resources identified in the HRER would be impacted by the proposed project.

Mitigation/Conclusion. A mitigation measure for unexpected archaeological material unearthed during construction is included in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table. No other cultural resources mitigation has been identified to date. It is anticipated that with future coordination with Caltrans during the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation process, a recommendation will be made that impacts at the archaeological site near Baron Canyon be avoided. It is also likely that Caltrans will require a survey of the Villa property prior to the completion of Section 106 documentation for the project, which will consist of a final Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) combining the findings of the ASR and HRER.

6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Setting. A Phase I Initial Site Assessment for the proposed project was prepared by Questa Engineering Corporation in January 2009 (Questa, 2009).

The proposed construction project involves installing three pre-fabricated steel truss bridges, along with pier-supported elevated approach ramps over SLO Creek, and building one highway overcrossing. The proposed bridge/approach ramp construction will involve drilling pier holes for new reinforced, poured in-place concrete abutments and piers outside of the existing low-flow channel, and constructing short lengths of compacted earthfill approach ramps with vertical concrete retaining walls at the end of the bridge approach ramps, where they will join the at-grade trail. All of the abutment and support piers and portions of the approach ramps would be within the 100-year flood elevation; however, most of the structures, including all of the bridge structures crossing the creeks, will be elevated a minimum of one foot above the estimated 100-year flood elevation. In addition to the piers, local rock slope protection is included in a zone 50 to 75 feet upstream and downstream from each creek crossing bridge structure. The piers and abutments for the clear-span bridge structures would be located at top of bank, rather than within the active flow line of the channel. Because portions of the bridge approach ramps are within the 100-year floodplain, use of breakaway handrails are proposed. The lower portions of the approach ramps therefore represent longitudinal floodplain encroachment, along with any portions of the trail that are elevated slightly above (± 0.5 foot) adjacent grade.

The 100-year floodplain elevation is shown on the 1985 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the floodplain along SLO Creek. This is an approximate study (Zone A) and no base flood elevations are provided. The FIRM indicates that San Luis Bay Drive, from the western edge of the Highway 101 on ramp to Monte Road, portions of Highway 101 immediately upstream and downstream of the Clover Ridge on-/off-ramp, and all of South Higuera Street, including the South Higuera Street Bridge, are within the 100-year floodplain. All of the proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridges, as well as the eastern abutment and landing of the proposed Highway 101 Bicycle/Pedestrian Overcrossing, would be located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain. However, no FEMA-defined floodway has been designated along SLO Creek. Questa referenced the floodplain based on the more detailed hydrology/hydraulic analysis completed for the San Luis Obispo Creek Waterway Management Plan (SLO WMP), a 2003 floodplain management plan written by Questa Engineering for the City and County of SLO. Under existing conditions, portions of the trail project area experience over-bank flooding at flows greater than the 10-year flood event.

This location study evaluated the hydraulics of the proposed bridge sites under the 2-, 10-, 25-, 50-, and 100-year recurrent flow conditions of 6,745 cubic feet per second (cfs), 13,278 cfs, 18,116 cfs, 21,295 cfs, and 24,226 cfs, respectively. The flows were obtained from the San Luis Obispo Waterway Management Plan (SLO WMP) (Questa, 2003), a floodplain management plan previously written by Questa for the City and County of San Luis Obispo. The hydrologic analysis completed as part of the SLO WMP included rainfall runoff simulation modeling for various rainfall and flood return intervals using the USACE HEC-HMS model. Rainfall information for the model was collected from various rain gages in the watershed, and from a Nexrain radar rainfall simulation for select storm events and calibrated using surveyed flood height information. This hydrology model and hydraulic model were subsequently peer reviewed and accepted by the Los Angeles District office of the USACE.

Impact. Location hydraulic studies must include discussion of the following items, commensurate with the significance of the risk or environmental impact, for all alternatives containing encroachments and for those actions which would support base floodplain development:

a. **The risks associated with implementation of the action:** The proposed action would not pose any significant risks or have significant impacts on floodplain values in the San Luis Obispo area.

b. **The impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values:** The project will not impact natural or beneficial floodplain values.

c. **The support of probable incompatible floodplain development:** The proposed project will not support incompatible floodplain development. This is a recreational trail and the bridges have not been designed to accommodate truck traffic or emergency vehicles.

d. **The measures to minimize floodplain impacts associated with the action:** Measures proposed as part of the project to minimize floodplain impacts, include implementation of construction Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as development and implementation of erosion control, stormwater management plans, and live water or creek flow water management during construction of bridge abutments and placement of rock slope protection, management of dense willows in the vicinity of proposed bridges to reduce roughness, and live willow staking of any placed rock riprap. Pre-construction biological surveys to identify and relocate special status species from construction work areas (under proper regulatory permit approval), placement of construction barriers and exclusion fencing to keep sensitive species out of work areas, and having a biological monitor present during certain phases of the work are included in the avoidance and minimization measures for temporary or construction-related impacts. Riparian restoration and enhancement is also proposed to mitigate for more long lasting or permanent impacts on sensitive riparian habitat.

e. **The measures to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial floodplain values impacted by the action:** Restoration and protection measures for floodplain functions and values were summarized in item (d) above. Especially important is the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Creek Protection Plan that shows the location of all work areas and staging areas, and the placement of temporary barriers to protect trees, riparian habitat and wetland areas, the installation of temporary erosion control measures such as use of silt fencing and straw rolls, as well as permanent erosion control, including the use of erosion control blankets and fiber rolls, hydro-seeding and mulching, and planting using native woody plants.

No significant (negative) encroachment or incompatible floodplain development is proposed as part of the project that cannot be minimized and reduced in significance or that cannot be adequately mitigated. This is based on the following criteria for determination of significance: 1) significant potential for interruption or termination of a transportation facility, which is needed for emergency vehicles or provides a community's only evacuation route, 2) a significant risk to life or property, or 3) a significant adverse impact on natural and beneficial floodplain values. Construction of the pathway, including three bridges and one highway overpass, will not affect evacuation routes in the area. The bridge construction would not pose a significant risk to life or property, as the trail will be closed during times of flood hazard. The proposed project has been carefully designed (and hydraulically modeled) to create less than a 0.1-foot rise in flood water-surface elevations. Some potentially significant adverse impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values could occur as a result of the project, but avoidance and minimization measures have been developed for temporary construction related impacts, and habitat restoration and enhancement along the creek is proposed for mitigation of permanent impacts on riparian and special status species habitat. A close look at project alignment alternatives did not indicate any environmentally superior alternatives that would avoid creek crossings and consequent localized habitat impacts, and that also met project goals and objectives.

The proposed project is consistent with the County of SLO Floodplain Management Ordinance and the SLO Creek Waterway Management Plan (Questa, 2003) adopted by both the City of SLO City Council, and the SLO County Board of Supervisors.

Mitigation/Conclusion. Mitigation measures to minimize floodplain impacts and to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial floodplain values that may be impacted are included in the Biological Resources mitigation measures in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table. The proposed project was determined to have a minimal encroachment with no significant impacts on the flood-carrying capacity of the San Luis Obispo Creek. No significant impacts on local flooding are predicted due to proposed pedestrian bridge construction project. During the CEQA review process, additional issues concerning geology and soils may require evaluation, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

7. HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Setting. A Phase I Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment (ISA) for the proposed project was prepared by Questa Engineering Corporation in December 2007 (Questa, 2007).

The trail study corridor was divided into two parts for evaluation and discussion purposes: a) an overall and more general assessment of all lands within 1 mile of the proposed trail, and b) a more detailed or focused assessment of the lands immediately adjacent to the proposed trail (the lands through which the trail would run).

The existing corridor land uses within the focused assessment area consist primarily of scattered rural residences along the major county roads within the corridor and agricultural lands, including farmsteads and associated barns and out buildings. The only commercial and industrial land uses in the focused assessment area of the study corridor are the Salisbury Winery, the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall, and the Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Community Center, all located along Ontario Road, and the Avila Hot Springs and Ocean Canyon resorts on nearby Avila Beach Road. A recreational vehicle storage lot and the PG&E Los Padres Maintenance Center are immediately adjacent to the Octagon Barn trailhead at the north end of the focused assessment area.

Review of an environmental records database search completed by Environmental Data Resources (EDR, 2007) for the overall general assessment study corridor indicated that only one site had an environmental records listing as storing hazardous materials. This is an active and permitted fuel storage tank at the James Maino Ranch off of Clover Ridge Lane, near the center of the study corridor; there was also an environmental records listing for a historical underground storage tank (UST) at this site. The database included notation of an old Unocal pipeline along Higuera Street and a Proposition 65 filing for Bob's/Denny's Restaurant on Calle Joaquin, but these two sites were not listed as facilities that store, use, or dispose of appreciable or reportable quantities of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes. Because the Maino underground tank is located across SLO Creek and more than 0.25 mile away from the proposed trail alignment, it is not considered to present a potential environmental threat to construction or public use of the trail. Visual inspection of the PG&E Los Padres Maintenance Center at 4325 South Higuera Street also indicated the presence of aboveground fuel storage tanks (in a concrete containment berm). There are no environmental records of a fuel storage tank leak at this facility and it is not listed on the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Geotracker site, which contains groundwater monitoring results of sites with leaks. These aboveground tanks also do not represent a threat to trail construction or use.

Although not identified in the EDR data base search for this project, several gas stations are present just outside of the overall general assessment study area near the intersection of Los Osos Valley Road and west of Calle Joaquin at the north end of the study corridor. Several of these stations are listed as having had underground storage tank (UST) spill/leak incidents with groundwater contamination. These are described in the ISA completed by Dokken Engineering (2007) for the Los Osos Valley Road/US 101 interchange project at the north end of the general assessment area. Because of distance, none of these sites are considered to present potential environmental risks to the trails project due to their storage and dispensing of petroleum products, or associated with the noted shallow contaminated groundwater in this general area.

Historical records indicate that an approximately 150 million-gallon crude oil spill occurred in April 1926 and directed oil into SLO Creek. The oil flowed down East Branch Creek and joined SLO Creek at the South Higuera Bridge. The oil subsequently caught fire, leaving burnt trees along the Creek from SLO to Avila Beach. The fire also left deposits of burnt oil containing low (generally non-hazardous) levels of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PNAs) at several locations along the Creek, although subsequent fieldwork has indicated nearly all of it has been scoured away by subsequent creek flow. According to Brian Stark of the SLO County Land Conservancy, one such small deposit of burnt oil residue occurred at the Filipponi Ecological Preserve along East Branch Creek, above its confluence with SLO Creek near the South Higuera Bridge. The burnt oil residue was visible in the creek banks of East Branch and was uncovered at shallow depths (1 to 2 feet) during restoration grading. The burnt oil residue was subsequently excavated and hauled to the County landfill as low-level non-hazardous waste. Because the creek has undergone a number of significant flood events over the ensuing 80 years, has been realigned in places, and has eroded and shifted its channel in most areas, it is believed that nearly the entire burnt oil residue on the creek banks has been scoured away. Detailed inventories of the creek channel completed by Questa for the SLO Creek Waterway Management Plan did not identify any areas of creek channel containing obvious remnants of burnt oil. Close examination of the creek banks and surface soils in the vicinity of the proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridges, completed as part of this Phase I ISA, did not identify any burnt oil residue.

Although not fully listed in the EDR database report, or in easily accessible historic records, the trail corridor also contains several underground utilities, including buried high pressure gas lines, and petroleum lines. Some of the petroleum lines are currently unused, and have been emptied and pressurized, but still may contain small quantities of oil. These represent a potential risk of spill or leakage, if the lines were ruptured during construction, or by a flood, landslide or earthquake. Since the pipelines are owned by national utilities which have in place agreements for emergency response and ample reserves for any necessary cleanup, this also is not considered to represent a serious threat or environmental risk to trail construction and usage.

A small oil leak or spill was detected in June 2006 at the northern end of Monte Road, immediately adjacent to and on the banks of San Luis Obispo Creek. This incident was investigated and successfully remediated by a small excavation and burial by new bank stabilization rock. It was not conclusively determined if the small oil exposed on the creek banks represent a natural release, (there are natural oil deposits in the rocks in this area), was oil from the petroleum pipeline, or was a remnant of the 1926 oil spill/fire. The proposed trail (shared use along Monte Road) would be within about 25 feet of the incident in this location. Information on this incident was provided by Morro Group/SWCA and San Luis Obispo County Land Conservancy. This incident also was not contained in the EDR database

There is also the potential that some of the properties within the trail study corridor could be affected by pesticides or other chemicals used routinely in agricultural production. The greatest potential risk appears to be where the proposed trail is located immediately adjacent to apple orchards along Monte Road. However, the apple orchards in this area have only been in production since the late 1990's and have operated under current (modern) regulations by the California Department of Pesticide

Regulation and the EPA. Current controls on pesticide regulation, toxicity, and use restrictions are much more restrictive than in previous decades. The existing/completed Bob Jones trail located further southwest of the proposed trail, along Avila Beach Road, also traverses through an area of apple orchards, and there has been no reported incidents associated with use of farm chemicals proximate to the trail.

Impact. Based on the findings of the Phase I ISA, there are six potential recognized environmental conditions in connection with the subject trail study corridor:

1. The historic use of the property for agriculture, with associated use of agricultural chemicals, is a potential recognized environmental condition.

2. The April 1926 crude oil spill and fire, which affected properties adjacent to the San Luis Obispo Creek below the South Higuera Bridge, is a potential recognized environmental condition.

3. The occurrence of buried petroleum and natural gas pipelines that parallel the corridor and are located in many places within 30 feet of the proposed trail represents a potential recognized environmental condition.

4. The occurrence of a small oil leak/spill/natural release along an oil pipeline at the northern end of Monte Road represents a recognized environmental condition.

5. The occurrence of an active small (550 gal.) fuel storage tank within the center part, and 3 above ground fuel storage tanks at the PG&E Las Padres facility at the northern end of the focused assessment portion of the trail study corridor, are potential recognized environmental conditions.

6. The occurrence of several gas stations at the northern end of the study corridor within the general assessment area, including underground storage tanks with reported leaks and contaminated groundwater, is a potential recognized environmental condition.

None of the above represents serious environmental risks requiring further Phase II investigations associated with the proposed trail construction project.

Mitigation/Conclusion. No mitigation has been determined to be necessary at this time.

8. NOISE - *Will the project:*		Potentially Significant	Impact can & will be mitigated	Insignificant Impact	Not Applicable
a)	*Expose people to noise levels that exceed the County Noise Element thresholds?*	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	*Generate increases in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?*	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	*Expose people to severe noise or vibration?*	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	*Other:* _____	☐	☐	☐	☐

Setting. Noise impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any potential noise impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

9. POPULATION/HOUSING

Setting. Population/housing impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project but may not be necessary. The County currently administers the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which provides limited financing to projects relating to affordable housing throughout the County.

Impact. The project will not result in a need for a significant amount of new housing, and will not displace existing housing.

Mitigation/Conclusion. No population and housing impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation measures should be necessary.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/UTILITIES -

Setting. Public services/utilities impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any potential public services/utilities impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

11. RECREATION

Setting. The project is consistent with the County Trails Plan.

Impact. The proposed project will result in a net beneficial recreation impact by establishing trail continuity from San Luis Obispo to Avila Beach.

Mitigation/Conclusion. No negative recreation impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation measures should be necessary.

12. TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION*:*

Setting. Transportation/circulation impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any potential transportation/circulation impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

13. WASTEWATER

Setting. Wastewater impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any potential transportation/circulation impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

14. WATER

Setting. Impacts to jurisdictional waters have been analyzed in the Biological Resources section, but additional analysis may be necessary.

Impact. The proposed project would result in impacts to San Luis Obispo Creek in the form of bridges, RSP, and proposed culverts that would result in stormwater discharges to San Luis Obispo Creek. Additional water quality impacts are unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. Proposed mitigation for impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and other waters are included in BR-1 to BR-20 of Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table.

15. LAND USE

Setting. Land use impacts have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. Unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. None identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any potential land use impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

15. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Setting. Mandatory findings of significance have not been analyzed to date for the proposed project.

Impact. The proposed project will not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Other findings are unknown at this time.

Mitigation/Conclusion. Impacts to biological and cultural resources will be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measures BR 1 to BR-51 and CR-1 as presented in Exhibit B, Mitigation Summary Table. No other mitigation measures addressing mandatory findings of significance have been identified at this time. During the CEQA review process, it is recommended that the County evaluate any additional mandatory findings of significance, as well as measures to mitigate potential impacts.

Exhibit A – CEQA Summary of Information References

The following project specific information and/or reference materials have been considered as a part of this CEQA Summary of Information:

California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB). 2006-2008. Rarefind data output for the Pismo Beach USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle and six surrounding quadrangles. California Department of Fish and Game. Sacramento, California.

County of San Luis Obispo. 2007. *Framework for Planning (Inland)*.

Dokken Engineering. 2007. *Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment for the Los Osos Valley Road/US 101 Interchange Improvement Project.- Consultant report prepared for City of San Luis Obispo.* August 2007.

EDR. 2007. *EDR Data Map Corridor Study for the Bob Jones Trail, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.* August 14, 2007. Inquiry number 02001143.1r.

Engelhardt, Z. 1963. *Mission San Luis Obispo in the Valley of the Bears*. Missions and Missionaries of California. W.T. Genns, Santa Barbara. Originally printed in 1933.

Far Western Anthropological Research Group. 2006. *Archaeological Survey for the Bob Jones Trail Project, San Luis Obispo County, California, 05-SLO-101, EA 05-0A370*. August 2006 Draft.

Far Western Anthropological Research Group. 2009. *Supplemental Archaeological Survey for the Bob Jones Trail Project, San Luis Obispo County, California, 05-SLO-101, EA 05-0A370*. March 2009 Draft.

JRP Historical Consulting. 2006. *Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the Bob Jones Trail Project, San Luis Obispo County, California, 05-SLO-01, EA 05-0A370*. September 2006 Draft.

JRP Historical Consulting. 2009. *Additional Identification Efforts: Historical Resources Evaluation Report, Bob Jones Pathway -- San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road Project, San Luis Obispo County, California, 05-SLO-01, EA 05-0A370*. March 4, 2009.

Milliken, R. and J. Johnson. 2002. Ethnographic/Ethnohistoric Context. In *Prehistoric Occupations on Ancient Halcyon Bay: Excavations at Sites CA-SLO-832 and -1420, Pismo Beach, California*, edited by D. Jones, W. Hildebrandt, and D.C. Young, pp 17-32. San Luis Obispo County Archaeological Society Occasional Paper 15.

Questa. 2003. *Waterway Management Plan for San Luis Obispo Creek Watershed, Volume 1.* Appendix B: Biological Resources Inventory prepared by Morro Group for San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Zone 9), and City of San Luis Obispo in January 2002.

Questa. 2009. *Location Hydraulic Study, Bob Jones City to Sea Bicycle/Pedestrian Pathway Project, San Luis Obispo Creek, County of San Luis Obispo, California.* January 12, 2009.

Questa. 2007. *Phase I Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment for the Bob Jones City to Sea Bicycle/Pedestrian Project.* December 28, 2007.

SWCA. 2008. *Agriculture Report for the Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road*. November 2008.

SWCA. 2009a. *Natural Environment Study for the Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road*. January 2009 Draft.

SWCA. 2009b. *Biological Assessment for the Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road*. January 2009 Draft.

USFWS. 2003. *Programmatic biological opinion for projects funded or approved under the Federal Aid Program (HAD-CA, File #: Section 7 with Ventura USFWS, Document #S38192) (1-8-02-F-68)*. April 24, 2003.

Wallace Group. 2008. *Visual Impact Assessment for the Bob Jones Pathway – San Luis Obispo to Ontario Road*. Prepared for Morro Group – A Division of SWCA in November 2008.

Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary Table

Aesthetics/Visual Resources

VR-1a For land under the County's jurisdiction, the County shall retain a landscape architect to select appropriate plant materials (ground cover for pathway shoulders, shrubs and trees for areas where these plants have been removed in the area of proposed bridges) that will cover graded cut and fill slopes and that are compatible with adjacent vegetation to minimize visual impacts. Selected species shall be compatible with Caltrans requirements as well as those of the County of San Luis Obispo Office of Environmental Coordinator. Plans shall be submitted to the San Luis Obispo County Parks or its designee for review and approval prior to start of construction. The County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee shall be responsible for mitigation monitoring to insure mitigation planting is installed and maintained for five years.

VR-1b For land under the Caltrans jurisdiction, the project design team shall select appropriate plant materials that will cover graded cut and fill slopes and that are compatible with adjacent vegetation to minimize visual impacts. Selected species shall be compatible with Caltrans requirements. Plans shall be submitted to Caltrans or its designee for review and approval prior to start of construction. The County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee shall be responsible for mitigation monitoring to insure mitigation planting is installed and maintained for five years.

VR-2a The County design team shall utilize some form of a concrete girder bridge or a low truss configuration (with a maximum of six feet in height above the travel-way pavement) at these two locations to reduce the vertical dimension of the structure and therefore the potential for visual intrusion into the view shed.

VR-2b The County design team shall locate the structure in such a way that a maximum number of existing trees can be retained. New trees shall be planted in conformity with County lists and shall be compatible with adjacent vegetation to supplement the screening of the bridge structure as seen from San Luis Bay Drive. The design shall be prepared by a landscape architect and plans shall be approved by the County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee prior to start of construction. The County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee shall be responsible for mitigation monitoring to insure mitigation planting is installed and maintained for five years.

VR-3a The mitigation to this impact will be to reduce other visual impacts along this sector of Highway 101 between Pismo Beach and south San Luis Obispo as an offset to the increased visual impact generated by the Bob Jones overpass by selecting one of the following options:

1. Remove a standard size billboard within the Highway 101 corridor between San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach. The intent shall be to maintain the net visual quality within the corridor for travelers along the highway,

Or

2. The County shall provide and maintain additional landscape planting which will screen visible structures for both north and southbound travelers within the affected Highway 101 corridor. Specifically tree planting along Ontario Road, or within Caltrans right-of-way located adjacent to Highway 101, to partially screen (reduce visibility by 50% after five years) of a minimum of four residential and/or commercial structures between San Luis Bay Drive and Avila Beach Drive. This mitigation alternative shall be reviewed by the County Environmental Coordinator's Office for compliance with the concept of rough proportionality.

The selected mitigation option shall be identified prior to the start of project construction and shall be in place before actual use of the bridge for bicycle traffic. Such actions shall be reviewed and approved by appropriate agencies such as the County of San Luis Obispo Planning Department and Caltrans or their designee where Caltrans property is affected.

3. In either case, the bridge configuration shall utilize the steel truss bridge design painted in a neutral gray to minimize the visual mass of the overpass to passing motorists.

VR-3b The bridge shall be designed in a manner which promotes the highway traveler's perception that the proposed structure is for bicycle use (identified as a socially positive value) through the use of appropriate artistic signage or symbols. The design shall be prepared by a design professional incorporating appropriate signage, graphics or artistic presentation. Plans shall be approved by Caltrans with input from the San Luis Obispo County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee prior to start of construction.

VR-4 The County shall design and locate the structure in such a way that a majority of the existing trees will be retained. New trees deemed compatible with the adjacent vegetation shall be added to supplement the screening of the approach ramp. The design shall be prepared by a landscape architect and plans shall be approved by the San Luis Obispo County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee prior to start of construction. For land under Caltrans jurisdiction, the project design team shall select appropriate plant materials that will cover graded cut and fill slopes and that are compatible with adjacent vegetation to minimize visual impacts. Selected species shall be compatible with Caltrans requirements. Plans shall be submitted to Caltrans or its designee for review and approval prior to start of construction. The County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee shall be responsible for mitigation monitoring to insure mitigation planting is installed and maintained for five years.

VR-5 The County design team shall select a texture or bush hammered pattern if the wall is an exposed concrete surface or add a stone veneer for the vertical retaining surface to reduce the large plane of plain vertical surface. In addition appropriate landscape shrubs are to be planted between the retaining wall and the highway to provide screening. The design shall be reviewed by the County Office of the Environmental Coordinator for compliance prior to start of construction. Caltrans shall also be consulted where the project falls within their jurisdiction. The County Office of Environmental Coordinator or its designee shall be responsible for mitigation monitoring to insure mitigation planting is installed and maintained for five years.

Agricultural Resources

AG-1 Prior to construction of the pathway, the Department of General Services shall develop, in coordination with affected agriculturalists, the Agriculture Department, and representatives from the cycling community, designs for pathways/agricultural road intersections that would minimize conflicts through use of fencing, striping, signage, bollards, paving, etc.

AG-2 To minimize maintenance requirements of the pathway generated from the pathway where it crosses agricultural roads, pavement specifications and intersection designs at these locations shall accommodate use by agricultural machinery and vehicles.

AG-3 Final pathway alignments shall avoid active agricultural roads to the greatest extent feasible by locating them within existing right-of-ways, and/or ruderal lands.

AG-4 Prior construction of the pathway, the Department of General Services, in coordination with property owners and the Agriculture Department shall develop a Farmland Conflict Reduction Plan. The plan shall include, at a minimum:

Methods for minimizing trespassing and disturbance by trail users.

- Procedures for minimizing pesticide exposure (notification, pathway closure, etc.).
- Rules to minimize conflicts between domestic animals and livestock.
- Examples of the signage, striping, designs, etc. described in Ag/mm-2 through Ag/mm-4 above.

AG-5 Trail heads at the north and south ends of this section of the trail shall include signage describing the importance of the local agricultural lands and providing information to the public that would reduce conflicts, including, but not limited to:

- Staying on designated trails.
- Maintaining control of domestic animals.
- Minimizing litter/waste.
- Not picking food.
- Not feeding livestock.

AG-6 In addition to complying with local and state codes relating to drainage and runoff, the Department of General Services shall consider the use of pervious pavements and/or other methods, to increase stormwater infiltration and reduce runoff onto agricultural lands.

AG-7 To reduce the impacts of domestic animals on agricultural lands, the Department of General Services shall provide refuse bags and disposal cans for domestic animal waste at trailheads

Biological Resources

The following measures apply to jurisdictional wetlands, other waters, and riparian areas, as well as federally designated critical habitat for the south-central California coast steelhead ESU.

BR-1 Prior to construction, the applicant will obtain a Section 404 Nationwide Permit from USACE, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from RWQCB, a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG, and coordinate with SWRCB/RWQCB Section 13263(a) regarding the need for a General WDR for project-related impacts that will occur in areas under the jurisdiction of these regulatory agencies.

BR-2 Prior to construction, the applicant will retain a qualified biological monitor(s) approved by all involved regulatory agencies to ensure compliance with avoidance and minimization measures within the project environmental documents. Monitoring will occur throughout the length of construction or as directed by the regulatory agencies. Full-time monitoring will occur during vegetation removal, diversion/dewatering, and erosion control installation. Monitoring may be reduced to part time once construction activities are underway and the potential for additional impacts are reduced.

BR-3 Any construction activities within the channel of SLO Creek will take place between June 15 and October 31 in any given year, or as otherwise directed by the regulatory agencies, when the surface water is likely to be dry or at seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from the relevant regulatory agencies.

BR-4 Prior to construction, the project site will be clearly flagged or fenced so that the contractor is aware of the limits of allowable site access and disturbance. Areas within the designated project site that do not require regular access will be clearly flagged as off-limit areas to avoid/discourage unnecessary damage to sensitive habitats or existing vegetation within the project site.

BR-5 Prior to construction, an Erosion Control Plan and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the project will be prepared. Provisions of these plans shall be implemented during and after construction as necessary to avoid and minimize erosion and stormwater pollution in and near the work area.

BR-6 Prior to construction, the applicant will prepare a Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Response Plan to allow for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur.

BR-7 A conceptual Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been prepared as an appendix to the NES. Prior to construction, the applicant shall prepare a comprehensive final HMMP to mitigate impacts to vegetation and natural habitats. The HMMP will be consistent with federal and state regulatory requirements and will be amended with any regulatory permit conditions, as required. The applicant will implement the HMMP as necessary during construction and immediately following project completion.

BR-8 Prior to construction, if stream diversion/dewatering is necessary, the applicant will prepare a Diversion and Dewatering Plan. The form and function of all pumps used during the dewatering activities will be checked by the biological monitor(s) to ensure a

dry work environment and minimize adverse effects to aquatic species and habitats. After construction, all material used for diversion/dewatering will be removed from creek corridor under the supervision of the biological monitor(s) or qualified fisheries biologist.

BR-9 Prior to construction, plan for minimizing the trimming and removal of trees to the extent feasible.

BR-10 Prior to construction, to avoid the potential for unnecessary removal or trimming of trees, any trees to be removed shall be marked with colored flagging or other suitable material. Trees to be trimmed shall be similarly marked but with a different color to differentiate them from trees to be removed. Unmarked trees shall not be removed or trimmed.

BR-11 After construction, any loss of riparian trees shall be replaced at a minimum 3:1 replacement ratio, or as otherwise directed by regulatory agencies. Methods for riparian vegetation replacement shall be incorporated into the final HMMP.

BR-12 During construction, erosion control measures will be implemented. Silt fencing, fiber rolls, and barriers (e.g., hay bales) will be installed between the project site and adjacent wetlands and other waters. At a minimum, silt fencing will be checked and maintained on a daily basis throughout the construction period. The contractor will also apply adequate dust control techniques, such as site watering, during construction.

BR-13 To control erosion during and after project implementation, the applicant will implement standard Caltrans Best Management Practices (BMPs) (refer to Appendix L of the NES).

BR-14 During construction, the cleaning and refueling of equipment and vehicles will occur only within a designated staging area and at least 65 ft (20 m) from wetlands, other waters, or other aquatic areas. This staging area will conform to BMPs applicable to attaining zero discharge of stormwater runoff. At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles will be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and avoid potential leaks or spills.

BR-15 During construction, all project-related hazardous materials spills within the project site will be cleaned up immediately. Spill prevention and cleanup materials will be on-site at all times during construction.

BR-16 During construction, if pumps are incorporated to assist in temporarily dewater/divert stream flow from work areas, intakes will be completely screened with no larger than 0.2-inch (five-millimeter) wire mesh to prevent aquatic vertebrate species from entering the pump system. Any vertebrate species stranded in dewatered areas will be captured and relocated to appropriate habitat as soon as possible. Pumps will release the additional water to a settling basin allowing the suspended sediment to settle out prior to re-entering drainages outside of the isolated area.

BR-17 During construction, the biological monitor(s) will ensure that the spread or introduction of invasive exotic plant species will be avoided to the maximum extent possible. When practicable, invasive exotic plants in the project site will be removed and properly disposed.

BR-18 During construction, trash will be contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris will be removed

from work areas. All vegetation removed from the construction site shall be taken to a certified landfill to prevent the spread of invasive species. If soil from weedy areas (such as areas with poison hemlock or other invasive exotic plant species) must be removed off-site, the top six inches containing the seed layer in areas with weedy species shall be disposed of at a certified landfill.

BR-19 During construction, no pets will be allowed on the construction site.

BR-20 Stream contours will be returned to their original condition at the end of project activities.

The following measures apply to southern California black walnut and other special-status plant species.

BR-21 Avoid impacts to southern California black walnut trees to the extent practicable. If southern California black walnut trees cannot be avoided and must be removed or trimmed during construction, their loss shall be mitigated at a 4:1 restoration ratio for every walnut tree removed and a 2:1 ratio for every walnut tree trimmed or otherwise impacted but not removed. If more than 25 percent of a walnut tree must be trimmed, it shall be mitigated at a 4:1 restoration ratio.

BR-22 Other special-status plant species were not observed during floristic surveys and are not expected to occur in the BSA; however, if any special-status plant species are observed in or near work areas during the monitoring of construction, the distribution of special-status plant species shall be mapped, marked off with exclusion zones, and avoided until the appropriate regulatory agencies are consulted for mitigation options.

The following measures apply to the south-central California coast steelhead ESU.

BR-23 Prior to construction, Caltrans shall acquire incidental take authorization from NMFS through a FESA Section 7 Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statement. Caltrans will likely need to formally consult with NMFS.

BR-24 Prior to construction, a component including a description of south-central California coast steelhead, its ecology, its legal status, and the need for conservation of the species shall be integrated into a worker environmental training program. All construction personnel conducting in-stream work shall participate in the training program conducted by a qualified biologist.

BR-25 In-stream work shall take place between June 15 and October 31 in any given year, when the surface water within drainages is likely to be dry or at seasonal minimum. Deviations from this work window will only be made with permission from Caltrans and the relevant regulatory agencies.

BR-26 During in-stream work, a qualified biologist shall be retained with experience in steelhead biology and ecology, aquatic habitats, biological monitoring (including diversion/dewatering), and capturing, handling, and relocating fish species. During in-stream work, the biological monitor(s) shall continuously monitor placement and removal of any required stream diversions to capture stranded steelhead and other native fish species and relocate them to suitable habitat as appropriate. The biologist(s) shall capture steelhead stranded as a result of diversion/dewatering and relocate steelhead to suitable instream habitat immediately downstream of the work area. The biologist shall

note the number of steelhead observed in the affected area, the number of steelhead relocated, and the date and time of the collection and relocation.

BR-27 During in-stream work, if pumps are incorporated to assist in temporarily dewatering the site, intakes shall be completely screened with no larger than 0.2 inch (five mm) wire mesh to prevent steelhead and other sensitive aquatic species from entering the pump system. Pumps shall release the additional water to a settling basin allowing the suspended sediment to settle out prior to re-entering the stream(s) outside of the isolated area. The form and function of all pumps used during the dewatering activities shall be checked daily, at a minimum, by a qualified biological monitor to ensure a dry work environment and minimize adverse effects to aquatic species and habitats.

Recommended measures, as provided by the Programmatic Biological Opinion for Projects Funded or Approved under the Federal Aid Program (USFWS, 2003) include the following:

BR-28 Only USFWS-approved biologists shall participate in activities associated with the capture, handling, and monitoring of CRLFs.

BR-29 Ground disturbance shall not begin until written approval is received from the USFWS that the biologist is qualified to conduct the work. Caltrans shall request approval of the biologist from USFWS.

BR-30 A USFWS-approved biologist shall survey the project area 48 hours before the onset of work activities. If any life stage of the CRLF is found and these individuals are likely to be killed or injured by work activities, the approved biologist shall be allowed sufficient time to move them from the site before work activities begin. The USFWS-approved biologist shall relocate the CRLFs the shortest distance possible to a location that contains suitable habitat and will not be affected by the activities associated with the project. The USFWS-approved biologist shall maintain detailed records of any individuals that are moved (e.g., size, coloration, any distinguishing features, photographs [digital preferred]) to assist him or her in determining whether translocated animals are returning to the point of capture.

BR-31 Before any activities begin on a project, a USFWS-approved biologist shall conduct a training session for all construction personnel. At a minimum, the training shall include a description of the CRLF and its habitat, the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the CRLF for the current project, and the boundaries within which the project may be accomplished. Brochures, books, and briefings may be used in the training session, provided that a qualified person is on hand to answer any questions.

BR-32 A USFWS-approved biologist shall be present at the work site until all CRLFs have been removed, workers have been instructed, and disturbance of the habitat has been completed. After this time, the state or local sponsoring agency shall designate a person to monitor on-site compliance with all minimization measures. The USFWS-approved biologist shall ensure that this monitor receives the training outlined in measure 4 above and in the identification of CRLFs. If the monitor or the USFWS-approved biologist recommends that work be stopped because CRLFs would be affected to a degree that exceeds the levels anticipated by Caltrans and the USFWS during the review of the proposed action, they shall notify the resident engineer (the engineer that is directly overseeing and in command of construction activities) immediately. The resident

engineer shall either resolve the situation by eliminating the effect immediately or require that all actions that are causing these effects be halted. If work is stopped, Caltrans and the USFWS shall be notified as soon as is reasonably possible.

BR-33 During project activities, all trash that may attract predators shall be properly contained, removed from the work site, and disposed of regularly. Following construction, all trash and construction debris shall be removed from work areas.

BR-34 All refueling, maintenance and staging of equipment and vehicles shall occur at least 60 ft (18 m) from the riparian habitat or water bodies and not in a location from where a spill would drain directly toward aquatic habitat. The monitor shall ensure contamination of habitat does not occur during such operations. Prior to the onset of work, Caltrans shall ensure that a plan is in place for prompt and effective response to any accidental spills. All workers shall be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take shall a spill occur.

BR-35 Project areas shall be revegetated with an assemblage of native riparian, wetland, and upland vegetation suitable for the area. Locally collected plant materials shall be used to the extent practicable. Invasive, exotic plants shall be controlled to the maximum extent practicable. This measure shall be implemented in all areas disturbed by activities associated with the project, unless the USFWS and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or practical. (For example, an area disturbed by construction that would be used for future activities need not be revegetated.)

BR-36 Habitat contours shall be returned to their original configuration at the end of the project activities. This measure shall be implemented in all areas disturbed by activities associated with the project, unless the USFWS and Caltrans determine that it is not feasible or modification of original contours would not benefit the CRLF.

BR-37 The number of access routes, size of staging areas, and the total area of activity shall be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the project. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be established to confine access routes and construction areas to the minimum area necessary to complete construction, and minimize the impact to CRLF habitat; this goal includes locating access routes and construction areas outside of wetlands and riparian areas to the maximum extent practicable.

BR-38 Work would be scheduled for times of the year when impacts to the CRLF would be minimal. For example, work that would affect large pools that may support breeding would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the breeding season (November through May). Isolated pools that are important to maintain CRLFs through the driest portions of the year would be avoided, to the maximum degree practicable, during the late summer and early fall. Habitat assessments, surveys, and technical assistance between Caltrans and the USFWS during project planning shall be used to assist in scheduling work activities to avoid sensitive habitats during key times of year.

BR-39 To control sedimentation during and after project implementation, Caltrans shall implement BMPs outlined in any authorizations or permits, issued under the authorities of the Clean Water Act received for the project. If BMPs are ineffective, Caltrans shall attempt to attempt to remedy the situation immediately, in consultation with the USFWS.

BR-40 If a work site is to be temporarily dewatered by pumping, intakes shall be completely screened with wire mesh not larger than 0.2 inch (5 mm) to prevent CRLFs from entering the pump system. Water shall be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows during construction. The methods and materials used in any dewatering shall be determined by Caltrans in consultation with the USFWS on a site-specific basis. Upon completion of construction activities, any diversions or barriers to flow shall be removed in a manner that would allow flow to resume with the least disturbance to the substrate. Alteration of the streambed shall be minimized to the maximum extent possible; any imported material shall be removed from the streambed upon completion of the project.

BR-41 Unless approved by the USFWS, water shall not be impounded in a manner that may attract CRLFs.

BR-42 A USFWS-approved biologist shall permanently remove any individuals of exotic species, such as bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), crayfish, and centrarchid fishes from the project area, to the maximum extent possible. The USFWS-approved biologist shall be responsible for ensuring his or her activities are in compliance with the California Fish and Game Code.

The following measure applies to special-status aquatic and terrestrial species such as Coast Range newt, southwestern pond turtle, silvery legless lizard, and two-striped garter snake.

BR-43 Prior to construction, the applicant shall obtain a letter of permission from CDFG to relocate California Special Concern (CSC) species from work areas encountered during construction within the BSA as necessary. Qualified biologists shall capture and relocate any CSC species (if present) or other sensitive species to suitable habitat outside of the area of impact if they are unearthed during construction activities. Observations of CSC species or other special-status species shall be documented on CNDDB forms and submitted to CDFG upon project completion

The following measures apply to Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, white-tailed kite, western yellow-billed cuckoo, loggerhead shrike, least Bell's vireo, purple martin, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, and other nesting birds.

BR-44 Prior to construction, the applicant shall schedule vegetation removal to occur outside of the nesting season (September 1 to February 14) if possible, to prevent birds from nesting within areas of disturbance during or just prior to construction.

BR-45 Prior to construction, if construction activities are proposed to occur during the typical nesting season (February 15 to August 31) within 200 ft (60 m) of potential nesting habitat, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by qualified biologists in potential nesting habitat at least two weeks prior to construction to determine presence/absence of nesting birds. Work activities shall be avoided within 100 ft (30 m) of active bird nests and 200 ft (60 m) of active raptor nests until young birds have fledged and left the nest. Readily visible exclusion zones shall be established in areas where nests must be avoided. USFWS and CDFG shall be contacted for additional guidance if nesting birds are observed within or near the boundaries of the project site. Nests, eggs, or young of birds covered by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code would not be moved or disturbed until the end of the nesting season or until young fledge, whichever is later, nor would adult birds be killed, injured, or harassed at any time.

BR-46 Prior to construction, if construction activities are proposed to occur during the typical nesting bird season (February 15 to August 31) within 100 ft (30 m) of the existing South Higuera bridge, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by qualified biologists to determine if nesting birds such as swallows are nesting under the bridge. Work activities shall be avoided within 100 ft (30 m) of active bird nests at under the bridge. Readily visible exclusion zones will be established in areas where nests must be avoided.

BR-47 The applicant shall ensure avoidance of take of the Fully Protected white-tailed kite.

BR-48 Vegetation removal in potential nesting habitats shall be monitored and documented by the biological monitor(s) regardless of time of year.

The following measures apply to pallid bat, western mastiff bat, and other roosting bats.

BR-49 Prior to construction, if work is to occur within 100 ft (30 m) of bridges or other artificial structures capable of supporting bat roosts, pre-construction surveys (at least two at dawn and two at dusk) shall be conducted by qualified biologists at least 30 days prior to construction to determine if bats are roosting in these structures. The biologist(s) conducting the preconstruction surveys will also identify the nature of the bat utilization of the bridge (i.e., no roosting, night roost, day roost, maternity roost).

BR-50 If bats are found to be roosting in the surveyed areas, the following measures will be implemented during construction:

a) If there is only night roosting by bats, work may proceed as normal provided that no night-time work is scheduled.

b) If there is day roosting by bats (or night roosting and work during nighttime), qualified biologists shall monitor any construction activities within 100 ft (30 m) for disturbance to bat roosting. If bat roosting behavior is determined to be adversely impacted by construction activities, construction must be avoided in the vicinity of bat roosts until either bats are no longer roosting or they have been excluded from roosting.

c) If maternity roosts are detected, construction activities must be avoided within 100 ft (30 m) of an active maternity roost until the end of the maternity roosting season, which typically occurs during the spring and summer months. No roost exclusion shall be conducted if maternity roosts are detected.

BR-51 Readily visible exclusion zones shall be established in areas where roosts must be avoided.

Cultural Resources

CR-1 If previously unidentified archaeological materials are unearthed during construction, it is Caltrans' policy that work be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological survey will be needed if project boundaries are extended beyond the present survey limits.