SAN MATEO RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PHONE: 650.712.7765

80 STONE PINE ROAD, SUITE 100
HALF MOON BAY, CA 94019

SANMATEORCD.ORG

RESOLUTION 2020-2

San Mateo Resource Conservation District as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) regarding the Butano Farms San Francisco Garter Snake Habitat Enhancement Project Approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

WHEREAS, the San Mateo Resource Conservation District is a Special District organized under Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code with an original petition granted on July 1, 1939;

WHEREAS, the San Mateo Resource Conservation District is defined in Section 3501 of the Government Code as a public agency;

WHEREAS, the Butano Farms San Francisco Garter Snake Habitat Enhancement Project (Proposed Project) is intended to enhance 65 acres of upland and wetland habitat in coastal San Mateo County for the Federally and State Endangered San Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*) and the Federally Threatened and State Species of Special Concern California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). The proposed project provides mitigation for biological impacts associated with Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) Line 101 Inline Inspection and Upgrade, and Lomita Park Station Rebuild Project in the City of Millbrae, San Mateo County. PG&E provided financial contribution to the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for management of land with emphasis on management for San Francisco garter snake. Enhancement and restoration activities are consistent with the recovery actions outlined in the federal San Francisco Garter Snake Recovery Plan, and aim to increase forage, shelter, and breeding habitat for California red-legged frog, the primary prey for San Francisco garter snake, and increase basking, forage and prey habitat for San Francisco garter snake;

WHEREAS, San Mateo Resource Conservation District and Vinnedge Environmental Consulting prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) to provide a transparent and comprehensive evaluation of the Proposed Project. San Mateo Resource Conservation District has prepared this resolution to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.). San Mateo Resource Conservation District is a "lead agency" under CEQA;

WHEREAS, consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP), has been prepared by Vinnedge Environmental Consulting for the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for the Proposed Project (Exhibit A). (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6, subd. (a)(1); CEQA Guidelines, § 15097.) San Mateo Resource Conservation District will use the MMRP to track compliance with best management practices

and mitigation measures imposed by San Mateo Resource Conservation District and the MMRP will remain available for public review during the compliance period;

WHEREAS, San Mateo Resource Conservation District's Board of Directors (Board) hereby finds and declares that they have reviewed and considered the MND together with the comments received during the public review process in evaluating the Proposed Project, that the MND is an accurate and objective statement that fully complies with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, and that the MND reflects the independent judgment and analysis of San Mateo Resource Conservation District and Vinnedge Environmental Consulting. The Board further finds and declares that considering the record as whole, there is no substantial evidence that the Proposed Project will have a significant effect on the environment, that no new significant impacts as defined by State CEQA Guidelines section 15073.5 have been identified after circulation of the MND, and that recirculation of the MND is therefore not required. On behalf of San Mateo Resource Conservation District, the Board approves the MND;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21081.6, the Board, on behalf of San Mateo Resource Conservation District, hereby adopts the MMRP attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the San Mateo Resource Conservation District Board of Directors hereby:

1. The Board finds that the approval and implementation of the Proposed Project is critical to recovery efforts for the endangered San Francisco garter snake and threatened California red-legged frog. Based on the entire record before San Mateo Resource Conservation District, including all written and oral evidence presented to San Mateo Resource Conservation District, the Board hereby approves the Butano Farms San Francisco Garter Snake Habitat Enhancement Project, with all the best management practices and mitigation measures in the MMRP as set forth in this document.
2. The Board is the custodian of the records of the proceedings on which this decision is based. Records are located at the San Mateo Resource Conservation District offices located at 80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019.
3. The Board directs San Mateo Resource Conservation District staff to prepare and file a Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research as soon as practicable and no later than five (5) working days after the date of Proposed Project approval as set forth immediately below.

ADOPTED at the May 2020 of the Board of Directors of the San Mateo Resource Conservation District on May 21, 2020.

_____ _____

Barbara Kossy, President Date

INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

BUTANO FARMS SAN FRANCISCO GARTER SNAKE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended

Prepared for San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Prepared by Vinnedge Environmental Consulting
1800 Grant Street
Berkeley, CA 94703

May 2020

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BMPs – Best Management Practices

CalEEMod – California Emissions Estimator Model

CARB – California Air Resources Board

CCC – California Coastal Commission

CDFW – California Department of Fish and Wildlife

CESA – California Endangered Species Act

CEQA – California Environmental Quality Act

CFGC – California Fish and Game Code

CNDDB – California Natural Diversity Database

CRLF – California Red-legged Frog

CO_2 – carbon dioxide

CO_2E – carbon dioxide equivalents

CWA – Clean Water Act

CY – cubic yards

FMMP – Farmland Mapping and Mitigation Program

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

FESA – Federal Endangered Species Act

kW – Kilowatts

GHG – greenhouse gases

HCP – Habitat Conservation Plan

HFC – hydrofluorocarbons

IS/MND – Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration

LSAA – Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

LCP – Local Coastal Plan

MBTA – Migratory Bird Treaty Act

MMRP – Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program

NHPA – National Historic Preservation Act

NWI – National Wetland Inventory

NAHC – Native American Heritage Commission

NF_3 – nitrogen trifluoride

N_2O – nitrous oxide

NOx – nitrogen oxide

NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service

OHP – California Office of Historic Preservation

PG&E – Pacific Gas and Electric

POST – Peninsula Open Space Trust

PFC – perfluorocarbons

PM_{10} – particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter

$PM_{2.5}$ – particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter

ROG – reactive organic gases

RWQCB – Regional Water Quality Control Board

RCD – Resource Conservation District

SFGS – San Francisco Garter Snake

SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office

SWPPP – Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

SF_6 – sulfur hexafluoride

TAC – toxic air contaminants

USACE – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

USFWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project title: Butano Farms San Francisco Garter Snake Habitat Enhancement Project

2. Lead agency name and address: San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

3. Contact person & phone number: Amy Kaeser, (650) 712-7765 x 121

4. Project location: The project is located one mile south of the town of Pescadero, in San Mateo County, California.

5. Project sponsor's name and address: San Mateo Resource Conservation District

6. General Plan Designation: Agriculture

7. Zoning: Coastal Development District and Planned Agricultural District

A.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) proposes to implement the Butano Farms San Francisco Garter Snake Habitat Enhancement Project (proposed project) located in San Mateo County, California. The Butano Farms Project Area consists of 65 acres (Project Area), which is owned and managed by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). The proposed project includes vegetation management targeted across upland habitat and modification to the existing 1-acre pond in the aquatic habitat. For the purposes of this evaluation, the term "project site" includes only the portion of the Project Area that would be directly impacted by project restoration and enhancement activities. The project site consists of 16.57 acres of upland and aquatic habitats. The entire 65 acre Project Area will maintained and managed for 30 years to enhance aquatic and upland habitat for San Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*) and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*).

The proposed project provides mitigation for biological impacts associated with Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) Line 101 Inline Inspection and Upgrade, and Lomita Park Station Rebuild Project in the City of Millbrae, San Mateo County. PG&E provided financial contribution to the RCD for management of land with emphasis on management for San Francisco garter snake. Restoration activities evaluated in this IS/MND are consistent with the recovery actions outlined in the federal San Francisco Garter Snake Recovery Plan, which concludes that restoration of upland, riparian and aquatic habitat is necessary for the recovery of the San Francisco garter snake (SFGS), and will support recovery of the California red-legged frog (CRLF) (USFWS 1985; USFWS 2006a).

The goal of the proposed project is to improve habitat conditions for SFGS on this property. In their 5-year review of SFGS, USFWS identified reduction of habitat quality through woody encroachment and lack of disturbance as one of the "greatest threats" to SFGS and states that "uplands may be essential to the snake's survival" (USFWS 2006b). USFWS also highlights reduction in open, freshwater water habitat as another threat to SFGS habitat. According to USFWS, the ideal percent cover of brush in uplands utilized by SFGS should be between at 10 to 30% cover (1 shrub per 20-30 square meters) (USFWS 2006b). Coastal scrub currently takes up to 75% percent of the grassland habitat. Finally, USFWS recommends livestock grazing to maintain grassland and prevent conversion to shrubland. In light of these recommendations, the proposed project includes the following suite of actions aimed at enhancing both aquatic and upland habitat:

- Excavate existing pond to increase the depth and area of open water;
- Create a sediment retention forebay upstream of the existing pond to reduce erosion in the adjacent drainages and as well as sediment transport into the pond;
- Restore grassland habitat within the pond's watershed to enhance the grassland components and reduce woody vegetation, removing woody vegetation that is encroaching into the grassland, controlling invasive plants through various treatment approaches, increasing soil health through application of soil amendments, and seeding with native grasses; and
- Minimize bank erosion along the pond edges through creation of designated areas for controlled cattle access the pond (drinking water source), and/or development of alternative water systems to reduce erosion and improve distribution of cattle across the landscape.

Implementation of these actions will restore grassland and herbaceous wetland habitats within the Project Area that support movement, foraging, and breeding habitat used by SFGS, CRLF and a variety of other native wetland and grassland dependent species.

A1.1. Revisions to the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

The RCD reviewed the Draft IS/MND and concluded that implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant unmitigable impacts. All impacts would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels or would be less than significant. This section of the Final IS/MND presents all revisions to the following sections of the Draft IS/MND. Where appropriate, revisions are shown in underline and strikeout to display any additions and/or removals, respectively, to the Draft IS/MND.

1. Section A1.4 Project Description, Table 1. Project Design Elements Table, Pages 9-10

The term "permanent impact" was replaced with "habitat conversion" to more accurately reflect results of restoration activities post construction.

2. Section A1.4 Project Description, Page 22

Figure 5 was revised to depict an accurate representation of existing aquatic features.

3. Biological Resources Section, Page 53
Mitigation Measure BIO-3: SFGS Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- Activities that result in ground disturbance will occur May 1–October 30 (active season). Vegetation will be cut to 3 inches in height. Once the ground is visible, a visual survey for SFGS will be conducted by the biologist prior to additional ground disturbance. ~~Field crews will install solid exclusion fencing if the work is in areas of known species presence.~~ <u>If SFGS is found, USFWS will be notified immediate to determine the correct course of action.</u> If work needs to occur during the inactive period (November 1– April 30) and is located in an area of known occupancy, flag and avoid any burrows by at least 10 feet wherever possible. If any burrows cannot be avoided by this distance, a biologist will inspect following activities to determine whether or not the burrow has been collapsed. If a burrow is collapsed, the biologist shall make efforts to open the burrow.

This document has been prepared in compliance with the 1970 CEQA (as amended), codified in California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq., and the CEQA Guidelines in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, § 15000 et seq. The RCD has opted to prepare an IS/MND to achieve the goals and objectives of the proposed project.

A1.2. Regional and Project Setting

Regional Setting

The proposed project is situated within the Central Coast subregion near the boundary of the San Francisco Bay Area subregion of the California Floristic Province in the Butano Creek watershed which is part of the Pescadero Creek watershed (Figure 1). As described in the *Ecological Subregions of California* (USDA 1997) the farm is located within the Santa Cruz Mountains subsection of the Central California Coast Section. The Santa Cruz Mountains subsection is between the San Andreas Fault and the Pacific Ocean. The climate is temperate to hot and sub-humid to humid and is very mild, because of prevalent marine effects.

Project Setting

The Project Area consists of 65 acres located one mile south of the town of Pescadero, San Mateo County California, on the Pigeon Point U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle. The project lies within Assessor Parcel Number 086080030. Access to project site is from Stage Road and Pescadero Creek Road in Pescadero.

The Project Area and surrounding vicinity is currently grazed by cattle and the pond is used as a stock pond (Figure 2). Existing conditions within the Project Area provide a diverse array of vegetation communities, making it suitable for SFGS habitat. Major vegetation communities include coyote bush dominated grassland, willow and red alder riparian and mixed coastal scrub (Figure 3).

Dominant land uses in the vicinity of the project include cattle pasturelands, agriculture, and open space. Adjacent to and directly east of the Project Area is a cut flower operation with greenhouses and agricultural pond. To the immediate south of the Project Area is the Butano Creek channel, which generally flows east to west from the Santa Cruz Mountains to Pescadero Marsh. To the south and west of the Project Area is the

Butano Creek Floodplain Restoration Project, a recently completed RCD habitat enhancement project that reconnected 100 acres of historic floodplain to the Butano Creek channel. The Pacific Ocean is approximately 2 miles west of the Project Area.

A1.3. Ecological Goal and Objectives of Project

The goal of the proposed project is to improve habitat conditions for SFGS by meeting the following objectives.

(1) Create and maintain shallow "bench" habitat around the northern and western sides of the pond margin with open emergent or submergent vegetation that allows sunlight to penetrate and warm the water to increase successful metamorphosis of California red-legged frog and chorus frog tadpoles.

(2) Maintain at least 25% cover of open water habitat in the pond through a combination of deepening and extending the existing pond footprint to provide deep water refuge for various prey species of the San Francisco garter snake, including California red-legged frog.

(3) Maintain a 25-50% cover of emergent vegetation around pond margins for frog breeding and snake cover.

(4) Protect pond water quality and longevity (sediment, nutrients and pathogens) to the greatest extent practicable.

(5) Control and eradicate invasive species, especially bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*).

(6) Reduce woody encroachment into grassland in the surrounding upland areas.

1. Create and Protect Shallow Open Bench Habitat

The proposed project includes creation of shallow bench habitat, which is a key habitat component for both CRLF and Sierra treefrog (*Pseudacris sierra*) tadpole and juvenile rearing and for SFGS basking and foraging. The bench habitat would also provide pond access and egress locations for target species and other native wildlife.

Shallow bench habitat is defined as submerged habitat, typically around a pond margin, with a low gradient (<10:1 slope) and a ponding depth of 10-20 inches. Bench width may vary from 2 to 10 feet or more. In natural ponds, or ponds within drainage networks, this habitat is a common feature at the pond inlet which is often created by alluvial deposits. This habitat is generally devoid of dense, tall stands of emergent vegetation and therefore maintains a warm and shallow aquatic environment but does have a cover of low emergent marsh or submergent marsh plants with intermittent unvegetated open water patches.

In areas where bench habitat already exists, the project has been designed to maintain water levels to provide appropriate ponding depth during the period of tadpole and juvenile development (March-August), and facilitate water drawdown later in the season (September-December) to prevent encroachment of tall emergent vegetation into the bench habitat.

2. Maintain at least 25% Open Water Habitat

Open water is important as escape habitat for CRLF and foraging habitat for SFGS. The existing open water habitat within the 1-acre pond currently provides low quality foraging habitat for SFGS because of siltation, vegetation encroachment, and detrital build-up. Research has shown that emergent vegetation generally won't establish on areas that are more than 3 feet deep. Therefore, the project will excavate the pond to a depth of between 3 to 7 feet, to slow growth of emergent vegetation and maintain ideal water temperature for species (USFWS 2002). In addition, construction of a system of sediment catchment basins will control pond sedimentation and improve quality of open water habitat through capture of large sediment size particles (i.e. sand) before they reach the pond.

3. Maintain 25-50% Cover of Emergent Vegetation

Emergent vegetation such as tules, cattails, bur-reed, or spikerush are essential habitat components for CRLF and Sierra tree frogs, as these species attach egg masses to emergent vegetation. In addition, emergent vegetation also supports growth of periphyton (algae and heterotrophic microbes) that forms the foundation of the aquatic food web and provides multiple food sources for tadpoles, juveniles, and adults. Dense stands of emergent vegetation can also be used for both foraging and cover by SFGS.

Although emergent vegetation is an important habitat component for target species, too much emergent vegetation can become problematic. Lack of management can lead to the development of nearly impenetrable stands of tules, cattails, and bur-reed around the pond margin and accelerated filling in of the pond by accumulated detritus. Dense emergent vegetation can also encroach on other important pond habitat components such as shallow bench habitat and open water habitat and can ring the entire pond, making access and egress for target species as well as other native amphibians and reptiles difficult. Finally, high levels of emergent vegetation can lead to high levels of detritus, in turn leading to reduced levels of dissolved oxygen. It is generally agreed that allowing cattle unrestricted access to ponds can result in degraded aquatic and wetland habitat for CRLF and SFGS due to excess vegetation removal and trampling. Therefore, management of emergent vegetation must take into account issues of both too much and too little emergent vegetation. The management objective for emergent vegetation cover is 25% to 50% of the entire pond area.

Livestock will be allowed to enter restricted areas within the pond area and will be controlled with fencing to provide long term vegetation management. Controlled livestock will control establishment of emergent vegetation (i.e. willows, cattails, etc.) along specific portions of the pond margins to strive for less than 50% vegetation cover in the entire pond.

4. Protect Pond Water Quality

The proposed project addresses water quality concerns to manage and maintain a healthy pond ecosystem. These concerns include sediment loading, nutrient loading, and the introduction of pathogens. Sediment and nutrient loading accelerates loss of water depth and allows for encroachment of emergent vegetation into open water which in turn, can lead to "choking" of the pond and decreased availability of dissolved oxygen. These conditions lead to amphibian egg and tadpole mortality through asphyxiation and can also disrupt CRLF and SFGS adult foraging. These water quality concerns will be managed through construction of a series of earthen berms at the head of the pond complex to catch sediment prior to entering the pond. Soil erosion treatments,

including mulching areas of bare soil and gullies, will also be carried out in upland areas within the pond's drainage to reduce sediment reaching the pond.

5. Control and/or Eradicate Invasive Species

The issue of invasive species can be divided into two separate components: 1) control/eradication of invasive species that predate on our target species and 2) control/eradication of weeds that occur in high densities in upland area around the pond. Predator species, specifically the invasive American bullfrog presents a major obstacle to recovery of CRLF and SFGS. Adult bullfrogs directly impact SFGS populations via predation on small or juvenile SFGS (USFWS 1985). In addition, bullfrogs can have an indirect impact by decimating CRLF and tree frog populations, a key prey item for SFGS.

Draining of the pond in the late summer or early fall can be effective for bullfrog control if the pond is isolated and draining can occur in two consecutive years. Draining must be completed such that no small pools that can be used as tadpole refugia remain. If draining does not work, the RCD may employ direct kill methods. Alternatively, an effective (and cost-effective) method for long-term control of bullfrogs is to manage aquatic systems for co-existence between bullfrogs and native species. This can be done by shifting the competitive balance away from bullfrogs and toward native species through eradication of nonnative fish, creation of complex habitats where micro-habitat segregation can occur, and managing for a high level of predaceous native macro-invertebrate production.

Within the Project Area, invasive Jubata grass (*Cortaderia jubata*) is the only weedy plant that currently appears to be causing significant negative impacts in the vicinity of the pond. Jubata grass is considered an A-1 (highest priority) wildland weed. It is an aggressive colonizer that it known to displace native species occurring in coastal scrub, coastal dunes, and other coastal habitats. Jubata grass typically invades eroded or disturbed soils. This invasive weed will be eradicated through manual, mechanical, chemical and/or grazing techniques.

6. Reduce Upland Woody Encroachment into Grassland

San Francisco garter snake and California red-legged frog require a matrix of habitat types. While shrubs and larger vegetation are vital for refugia, high densities of shrub habitat prevent movement, dispersion, fossorial mammal activity, and thermoregulation. The ideal composition of shrubs within upland habitat for San Francisco garter snake is 10 – 30% or 1 shrub per 20-30 square meters (USFWS 2006b). Shrub control will take place in selected areas to maintain ideal shrub cover. Shrub control can take the form of any mix of mowing, manual removal, chemical control, and grazing.

While native to the area, Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) would not historically inhabit the grasslands and ridges within the Project Area. These species do not provide ideal habitat for SFGS or their prey (CRLF). These two species of trees, with individuals up to 34-inch diameter at breast height, will be removed. The proposed project would result in removal of approximately 20-30 of these trees. The resulting wood chip byproduct from woody vegetation control/removal will be used for soil amendments and erosion control within the project.

A1.4. Project Design

Project activities consist of both upland habitat enhancement and aquatic habitat restoration activities. Specific activities associated with each of the project elements are detailed in Table 1 and depicted in Figures 4 and 5. Both habitat types will be managed and maintained in a manner that meets the biological and ecological goals of this project. Appendix A provides engineer drawings (65%) of the proposed project.

Table 1. Project Design Elements

Project Elements	Description of Proposed Activities	Acreage of Impact	Temporary Impact of Habitat Conversion	Habitat Type - Existing Conditions	Habitat Type - Post-Project Conditions
Pre-Project Activities & Site Preparation	Construct a temporary access road and staging area	Access road = 0.13 acre Staging area = 0.11 acre	Temporary	Annual Grassland	Upland (restored to pre-project conditions after construction complete)
	Install temporary fencing around sensitive resource areas to be avoided and install a turbidity curtain between the working area and the rest of the existing pond	These two temporary barriers would not result in ground disturbance beyond stakes placed in discrete locations	Temporary	Annual Grassland, Willow, and Open Water	Upland and Open Water
Sub-Total	0.24 acre				
Upland Habitat Enhancement Activities	Reduce woody encroachment of trees into grassland by cutting or girdling	2.6 acres	Habitat Conversion	Riparian Mixed Shrub, Annual Grasses and Forbs, Coyote Brush	Native grassland
	Reduce shrub cover to target 10-30% by manual, mechanical, chemical, and/or grazing techniques	7.7 acres	Habitat Conversion	Coyote Brush	Native grassland
	Reduce invasive weeds by manual, mechanical, chemical, and/or grazing techniques	1.8 acres	Habitat Conversion	Coyote Brush and Riparian Mixed Shrub	Native grassland
	Spread mulch from woody brush and tree control over areas of potential erosion, at 4-18” thick	2.4 acres	Temporary	Bare Ground, Gullies	Native grassland
Sub-Total	14.5 acres				
Aquatic Habitat	Excavate two shallow ponds	0.08 acre and 0.11 acre	Habitat Conversion	Tule-Cattail, Willow	Open Water

Project Elements	Description of Proposed Activities	Acreage of Impact	Temporary Impact of Habitat Conversion	Habitat Type - Existing Conditions	Habitat Type - Post-Project Conditions
Restoration Activities	Excavate a deep water pond	0.31 acre	Habitat Conversion	Open Water	Open Water
	Create a wetland bench on the north side of the deep water pond	0.18 acre	Habitat Conversion	Coyote Brush, Willow (Shrub)	Wetland (0.18 acre)
	Place fill to create a bench on the west side of the two new shallow ponds	0.52 acre	Habitat Conversion	Willow, Annual Grassland,	Native Grassland, Riparian
	Construct sediment retention berms to the north and between the two shallow ponds	0.13 acres	Habitat Conversion	Willow (Shrub)	Open Water
	Convert willow-dominated area to native grassland dominated area by use of manual, mechanical, and grazing methods	0.5 acre	Habitat Conversion	Willow	Native grassland
Sub-Total	1.83 acres				
Post Construction Activities	Plant and seed in areas of shrub and invasive control where desired species do not recruit naturally	To be determined based on post project conditions	Habitat Conversion	Coyote Brush, Annual Grasses and Forbs, Riparian Mixed Shrub	Native grassland
	Install livestock fencing to manage access and grazing	To be determined based on post project conditions	Habitat Conversion	Annual Grassland	Annual Grassland

Aquatic Habitat Restoration Activities

Under the proposed project, aquatic habitat would be expanded, enhanced and protected. Details about each component of aquatic habitat restoration activities are provided below.

- ***Aquatic Habitat Expansion (0.19 acres):*** Two new shallow ponds will be excavated along the northwest section of the existing pond. These new ponds would be seasonal and have depths of 10”-20” to provide shallow water habitat for CRLF and Sierra tree frogs, both food sources of SFGS.

- ***Aquatic Habitat Enhancement (0.49 acres):*** This component of the project would remove riparian tree species (mostly willows), and sediment to achieve a water depth of 10”-20” in the wetland bench (0.18 acres), and also excavate the deep water pond to a depth of 3-7’ (0.31 acres).

- ***Aquatic Habitat Protection (0.50 acres):*** The remaining 0.5 acre of existing pond habitat would remain unaltered and maintained for the 30-year period. The current conditions at this location contain a dense mix of tules and cattails, which help filter sediment from the drainage before entering Butano Creek.

Berms will be constructed from material removed from the pond and placed in the willowed area to the northeast of the pond. These constructed berms will function to slow the flow of water moving through the floodplain and allow sediment to fall out prior to the water reaching the pond. The berms will ultimately build up the elevation of the inlet channel, provide natural grade control to avoid headcutting and minimize future erosion in the gullies.

Upland Habitat Restoration Activities

The project will result in enhancement of approximately 61 acres of suitable upland habitat for SFGS. Of this 61 acres, 14.5 acres of have been selected for additional treatment that would include brush removal (approximately 12.1 acres), grassland restoration and soil rehabilitation (approximately 2.4 acres) to enhance SFGS basking habitat and minimize erosion (Figure 4).

Contractors will utilize wood chips from tree and brush removal activities for mulch, which will be spread across of upland to improve soil health, encourage revegetation of deep rooting native grasses and help minimize future erosion from these areas. This mulch will also be placed in existing gullies to provide soil cover and help decrease erosion and gully growth. Livestock Fencing will be installed to control livestock access to portions of the restored upland habitat.

Maintenance and Monitoring

Prior to construction, photo stations that target the pond and upland areas will be established and photos will be taken to document baseline conditions. Regular, frequent monitoring will occur during the initial phase of project implementation to determine whether the project aligns with specifications established in designs and permit conditions. For the first five years following implementation, bi-annual monitoring will be conducted in

the spring and fall using photo monitoring and rapid assessment sheets. For years six to 30 following implementation, monitoring will be conducted every other year. Results of monitoring results will inform the RCD as to whether sediment management, vegetation management or other actions are necessary to meet the project's established goals and objectives. All activities during the 30-year maintenance and monitoring period will comply with the measures in the Biological Opinion for the project. Maintenance activities may include invasive species control, management of woody encroachment into grassland areas, erosion control, seeding, augmentation of fencing, managing emergent vegetation for ideal cover, and other actions to maintain project goals for the benefit of SFGS and CRLF.

A1.5. Construction Work Sequence

Construction of the upland portion of the project may occur concurrently or separately from the aquatic and riparian portion of the project. Ideally, both upland and aquatic activities will be constructed simultaneously to reduce overall duration of construction activities. For the purpose of this assessment the construction estimate is 10 weeks.

The following provides a sequential list of the general steps that would occur during implementation of the proposed project. In addition to activities listed below, the RCD will implement all project-wide Best Management Practices (BMPs) provided in Table 2, all project specific avoidance and minimization measures described in this IS/MND, and all regulatory permit requirements.

- Material and equipment mobilized to the staging area.
- Project Areas surveyed and pond sampled by a qualified biologist to determine presence of special-status species in the work area. Individual California red-legged frog within the work area captured and relocated, as required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). If San Francisco garter snake is encountered, USFWS will be contacted for next steps.
- Temporary, orange barrier, fencing installed around sensitive resources to limit extent of disturbance.
- Corridors for travel of vehicles and heavy machinery from the access road to work areas established with vegetation in the new access corridors reduced in height (not removed) with weed wacker or mower (no additional ground disturbance required).
- Material and equipment mobilized to pond and upland areas. A biological monitor will proceed directly before the vehicle or machinery each morning when driving on newly created access roads within the Project Area to ensure the pathway is clear of all snakes, frogs, and observable wildlife.
- Woody vegetation patches slated for transition to grassland adjacent to pond removed (as necessary).
- Pond partially drained (as necessary) using a siphon or mechanical pump with intake hoses or pipes screened to prevent the entrapment of aquatic wildlife and water spread outside of the work area in a manner that avoid introduction of turbid water into Butano Creek. This work will be overseen by a

qualified biologist with a relocation plan. If SFGS is observed, work will stop until the snake leaves the vicinity.

- Pond excavated, as necessary, and sediment relocated to form sediment retention berms and bench habitat.
- Portions of the pond perimeter graded to appropriate side slope and pond footprint modified.
- Invasive species removal areas in upland treated by manual, mechanical, chemical, and/or grazing techniques (primary invasive jubata grass to be treated with herbicide).
- Woody encroachment reduced including target trees cut or girdled and target areas of shrubs removed.
- Woody material chipped onsite with chipper and spread over areas of potential erosion (4-18" thick) in upland.
- Disturbed areas around pond re-contoured and re-vegetated with a mix of native forbs, grasses, and shrubs, as appropriate.
- Livestock fencing installed.
- Construction equipment and temporary fence removed.

A1.6. Construction Equipment

Heavy equipment, including scrapers, excavator, backhoes, and haul trucks would be used to construct the aquatic habitat portion of the proposed project. Upland habitat construction activities would require chainsaws, chippers, masticator and smaller mechanical and manual equipment. Low ground pressure equipment would be used to transport exported material across the Project Area and wetland mats would be used to minimize soil compaction in work areas. Equipment and vehicles would be staged along existing access roads or dedicated staging areas. All equipment would be cleaned prior to arrival on-site to reduce the chances of non-native seeds or species being introduced by construction equipment.

A1.7. Construction and Maintenance Schedule

Construction of the project would occur between June 15 and October 31 during 2020 or 2021. Pond restoration activities will last approximately 8-10-weeks and upland restoration activities will last approximately 5-8 weeks. Work within the pond would be restricted to the time after CRLF have breed and tadpoles are likely to have metamorphosized and before seasonal rains begin (i.e. August 15 – October 31). Continued maintenance of restored habitat will continue bi-annually for five years and then approximately every other year for 30 years.

A1.8. Construction Personnel and Access

Approximately 4-10 construction workers will be onsite during restoration activities. Construction personnel will access to the Project Area from Stage Road and Pescadero Creek Road in Pescadero. The construction personnel

will stage personal vehicles at the designated staging area as depicted in Figure 2. Access within the Project Area to the project site would be limited to pre-established access routes/roads used for livestock management.

A1.9. Construction-Related Best Management Practices

Table 2 provides a list of construction related measures that will be applied to this project. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Table 3) provides an accounting of all measures required for the project.

Table 2. Construction-Related Best Management Practices

BMP No.	Name	BMP
BMP -1	Erosion Control and Construction-Related Turbidity	1. Sandbags or other erosion control measures will be employed to prevent runoff and construction-related turbidity. 2. Upland soils exposed during construction will be stabilized using native or non-invasive seed and, if necessary to control erosion, straw mulch or wood chips. 3. Erosion control fabric will consist of natural fibers that biodegrade over time. No plastic or other non-porous material will be used as part of a permanent erosion control approach. 4. Other erosion control measures shall be implemented as necessary to ensure that sediment or other contaminants do not reach surface water bodies for stockpiled or reused/disposed sediments.
BMP -2	Staging and Stockpiling of Materials	1. All construction equipment will be staged in upland areas, away from sensitive natural communities or habitats. 2. All construction-related items, including equipment, stockpiled material, temporary erosion control treatments, and trash will be removed within 72 hours of project completion. All residual soils and/or materials will be cleared from the project site. 3. Building materials and other construction-related materials, including chemicals, will not be stockpiled or stored where they could spill into water bodies or storm drains, or where they could cover aquatic or riparian vegetation.
BMP - 3	Spill Prevention and Response Plan	A Spill Prevention and Response Plan will be developed prior to the start of construction describing spill cleanup equipment and materials required to be maintained onsite; measures to be taken to contain a spill; and notification requirements in the event of a spill.
BMP - 4	Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance and Cleaning	1. All vehicles and equipment will be kept clean. Excessive build-up of oil or grease will be prevented. Vehicles should be free of exotic vegetation. 2. Vehicle and equipment maintenance activities will be conducted in a designated area to prevent inadvertent fluid spills from adversely impacting water quality. This area will be clearly designated with berms, sandbags, or other barriers. 3. Secondary containment, such as a drain pan or drop cloth, to catch spills or leaks will be used when removing or changing fluids. Fluids will be stored in appropriate containers with covers, and properly recycled or disposed of off-site. 4. Cracked batteries will be stored in a non-leaking secondary container and removed from the site. 5. Spill cleanup materials will be stockpiled where they are readily accessible. 6. Incoming vehicles and equipment will be checked for leaking oil and fluids (including delivery trucks and employee and subcontractor vehicles). Leaking vehicles or equipment will not be allowed on-site. 7. Vehicles and equipment will not be washed on-site. Vehicle and equipment washing will occur at an appropriate wash station.
BMP - 5	Refueling	1. All fueling sites shall be equipped with secondary containment and avoid a direct connection to underlying soil, surface water, or the storm drainage system. 2. For stationary equipment that must be fueled on-site, secondary containment such as a drain pan or drop cloth shall be provided in such a manner to prevent accidental spill of fuels to underlying soil, surface water, or the storm drainage system.
BMP -6	On-Site Hazardous	1. The products used and/or expected to be used and the end products that are produced and/or expected to be produced after their use will be inventoried.

BMP No.	Name	BMP
	Materials Management	2. As appropriate, containers will be properly labeled "Hazardous Waste" and properly recycled or disposed of off-site. 3. Contact of chemicals with precipitation will be minimized by storing chemicals in watertight containers or in a storage shed (completely enclosed), with appropriate secondary containment to prevent any spillage or leakage. 4. Quantities of equipment fuels and lubricants greater than 55 gallons shall be provided with secondary containment that is capable of containing 110 percent of the volume of primary container(s). 5. Petroleum products, chemicals, cement, fuels, lubricants, and non-storm drainage water or water contaminated with the aforementioned materials shall not be allowed to enter receiving waters or the storm drainage system. 6. Sanitation facilities (e.g., portable toilets) will be surrounded by a containment system and a direct connection to receiving water will be avoided. 7. Sanitation facilities will be regularly cleaned and/or replaced, and inspected regularly for leaks and spills. 8. Waste disposal containers will be covered when they are not in use, and a direct connection to the storm drainage system or receiving water will be avoided. 9. All trash that is brought to a project site during construction (e.g., plastic water bottles, plastic lunch bags) will be removed from the site daily.
BMP - 7	Fire Prevention	1. All earthmoving and portable equipment with internal combustion engines will be equipped with spark arrestors. 2. During the high fire danger period (April 1–December 1), work crews will have appropriate fire suppression equipment available at the work site. 3. On days when the fire danger is high, flammable materials will be kept at least 10 feet away from any equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame. 4. On days when the fire danger is high, portable tools powered by gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines will not be used within 25 feet of any flammable materials unless at least one round-point shovel or fire extinguisher is within immediate reach of the work crew (no more 25 feet away from the work area).
BMP - 8	BAAQMD Dust Control	1. The construction contractor shall reduce construction-related air pollutant emissions by implementing BAAQMD basic fugitive dust control measures, including: 2. All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and portions of unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day, or as necessary to minimize dust. 3. All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off site shall be covered. 4. All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed at least once per day, as necessary. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited. 5. All vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces shall be limited to 15 miles per hour. 6. A publically visible sign shall be conspicuously posted at the entrance to Butano Farms off Pescadero Creek Road with the telephone number and person to contact at the RCD regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action with 48 hours. The BAAQMD's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.
BMP - 9	Project Site Housekeeping	1. The work site will be maintained in a neat and orderly condition, and left in a neat, clean, and orderly condition when work is complete. 2. Materials or equipment left on the site overnight will be stored as inconspicuously as

BMP No.	Name	BMP
		possible, and will be neatly arranged.

A1.10. Potential Permits and Approvals from Public Agencies

A critical component of project planning is to understand the jurisdiction of multiple regulatory agencies and the types of approvals or permits that might be necessary to implement a project. The following is a list of potentially affected agencies and the corresponding type of approval that may be required.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): A Section 404 Clean Water Act (CWA) permit would be required for placement of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States.
- Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Construction activities that disturb one acre or more of land, and construction on smaller sites that are part of a larger project, must comply with a Construction General Permit that regulates storm water leaving construction sites (Section 402 of the CWA) . Site owners must notify the state, prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and monitor the effectiveness of the plan. Other permits required from the RWQCB include a Water Quality Certification in accordance with Section 401 of the CWA; and Waste Discharge Requirements in accordance with the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW): A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement, in accordance with Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code, would be required for work within the bed, channel or bank of jurisdictional waters.
- Native bird species that occur in the project site are protected by the California Fish and Game Code. Fish and Game Code §§3503, 2513, and 3800 (and other sections and subsections) protect native birds, including their nests and eggs, from all forms of take. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “take” by CDFW.
- California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) implementing regulations, as set forth in Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 800 et. seq., require federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and consult with stakeholders, including the SHPO, on potential effects to resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- California Coastal Commission, Central Coast District: A Coastal Development Permit would be required from the CCC for work within its retained jurisdiction (e.g., tidelands, submerged lands, public trust lands).

Figure 1. Project Location and Vicinity

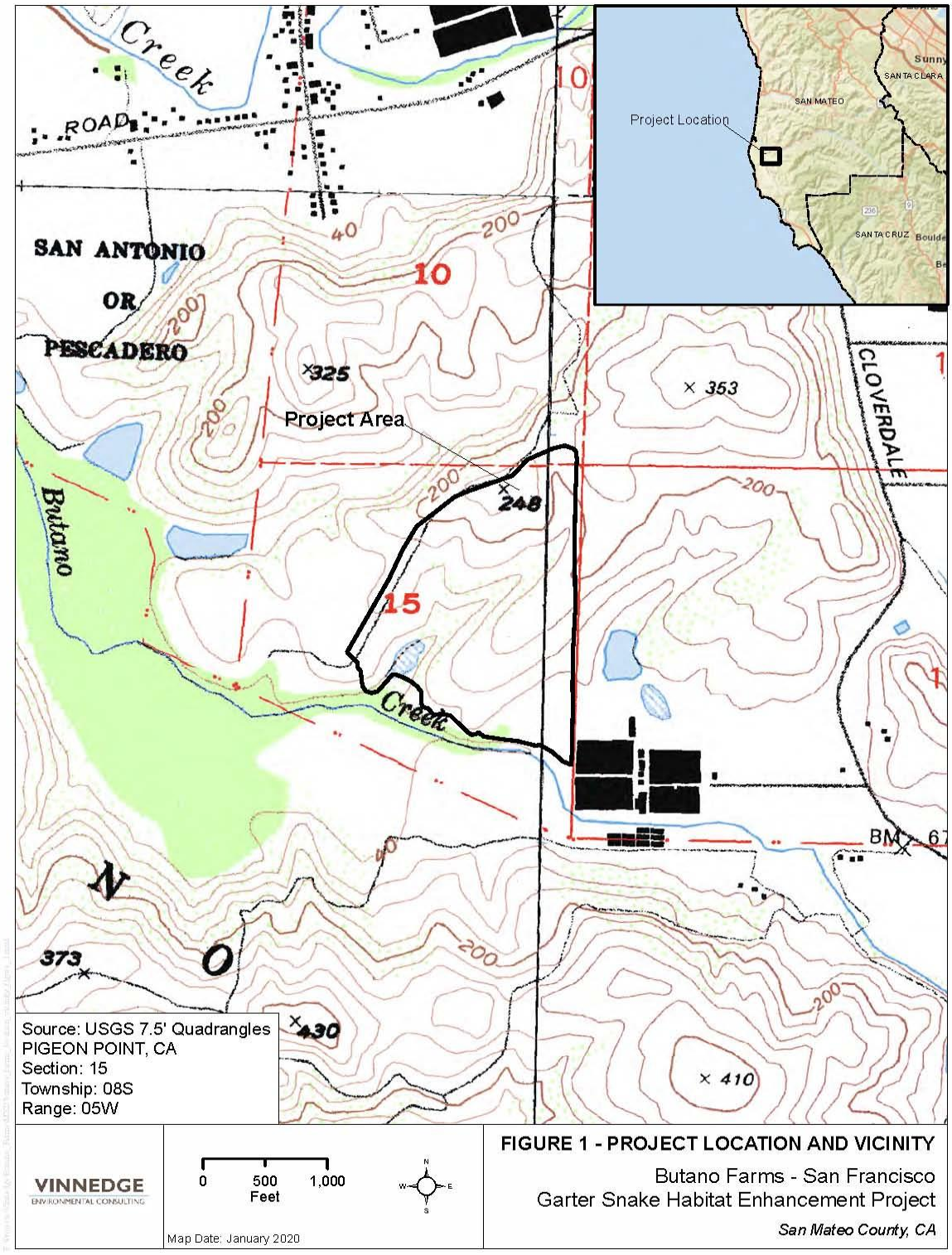


Figure 2. Project Area

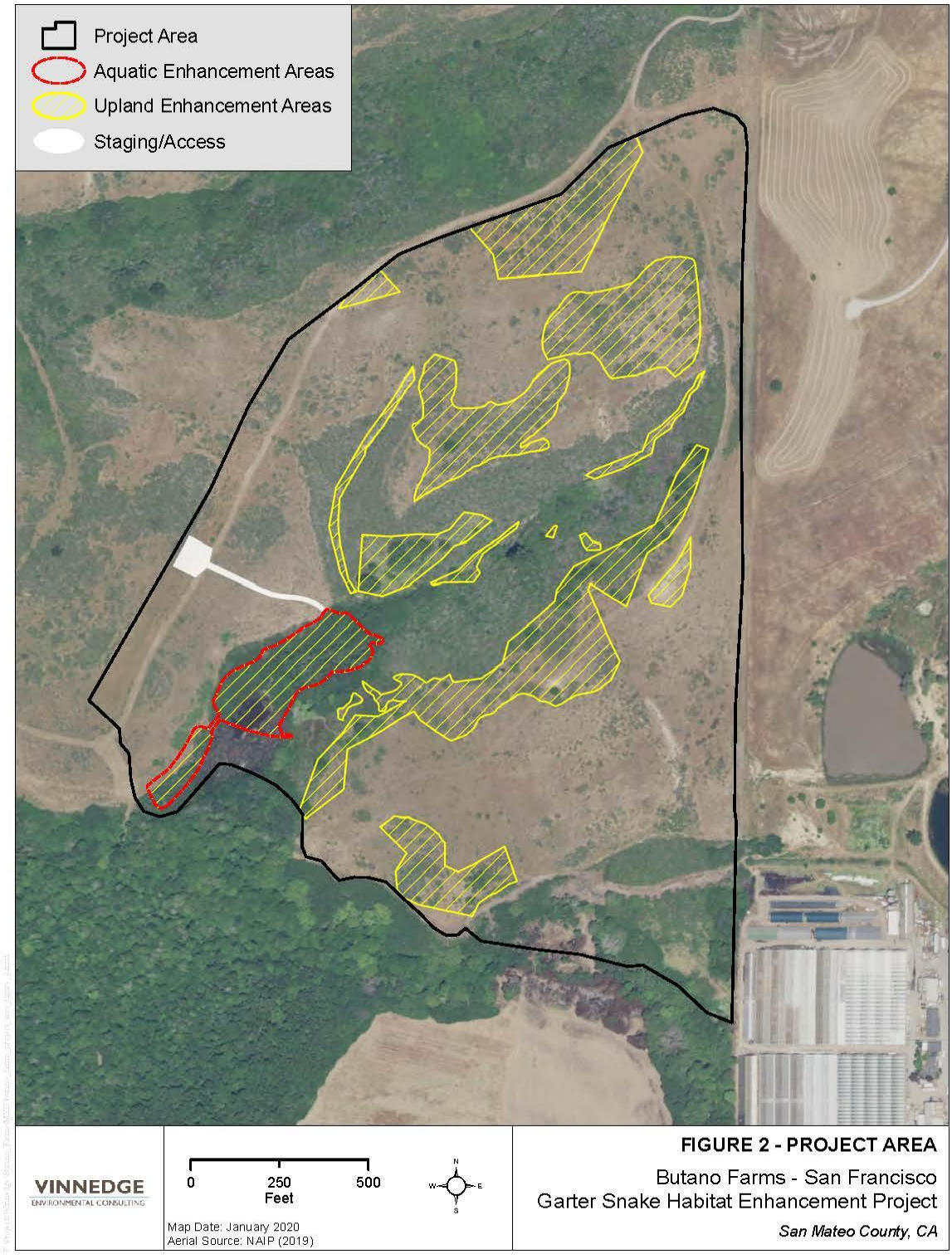


Figure 3. Existing Habitat

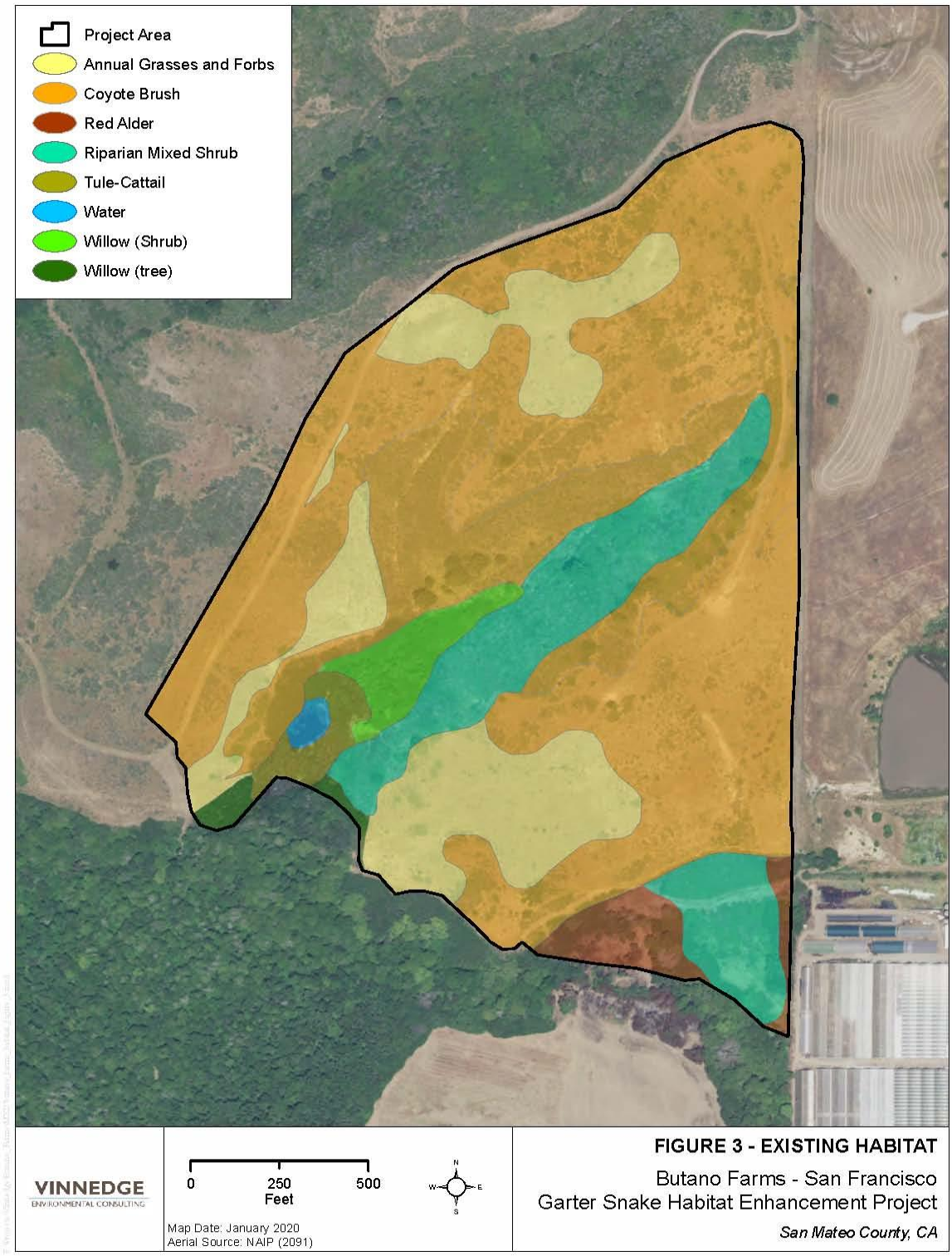


Figure 4. Upland Habitat Enhancement

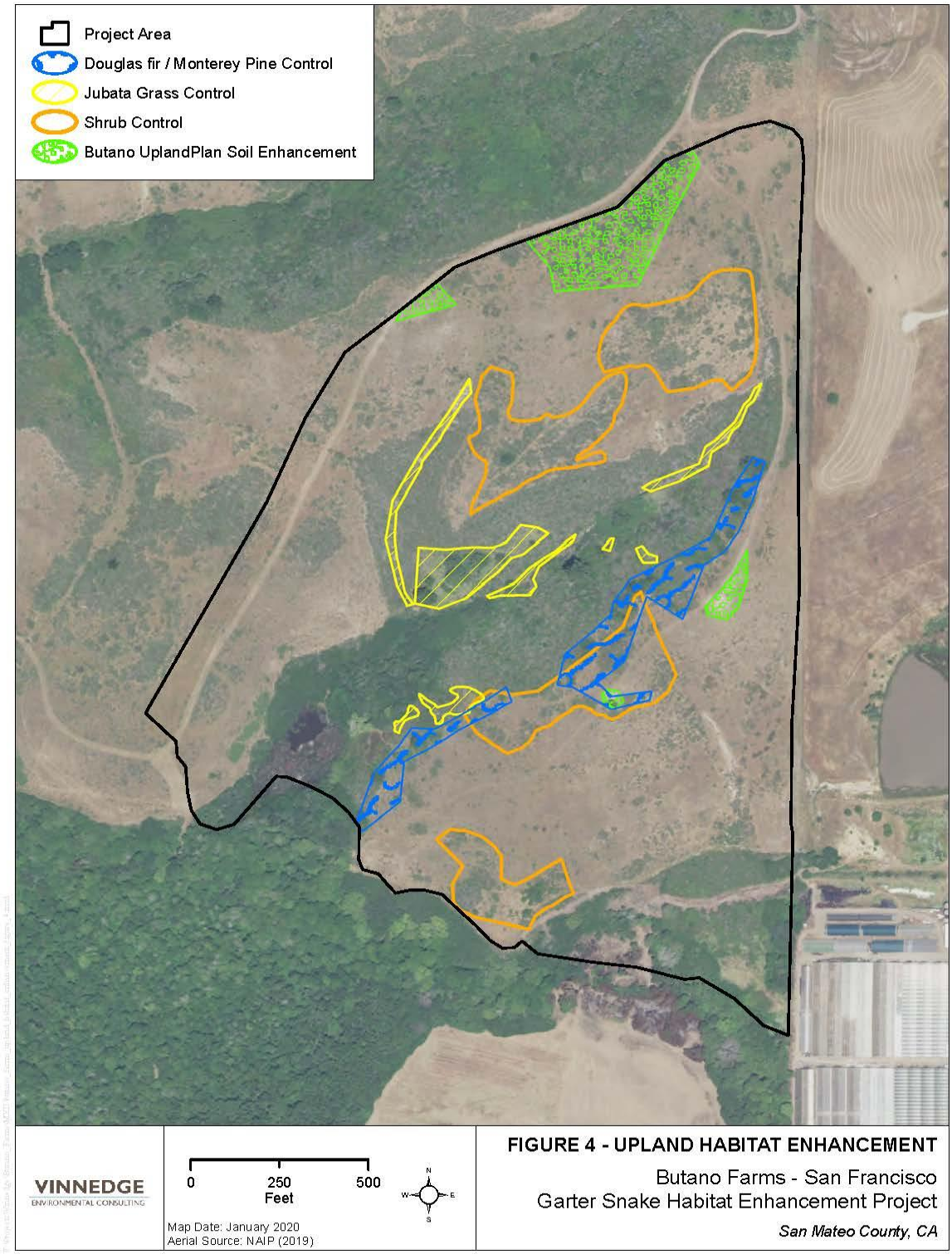
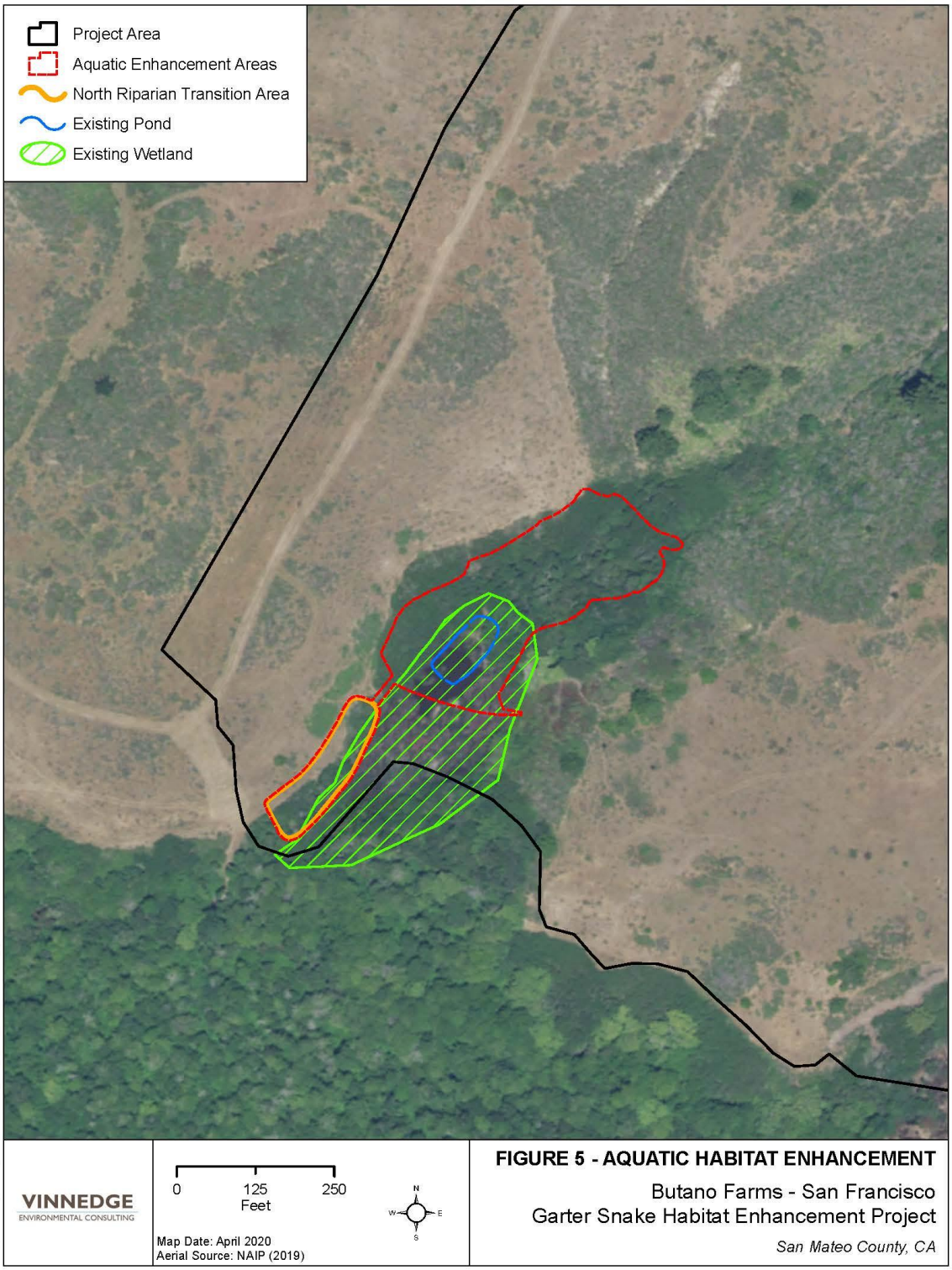


Figure 5. Aquatic Habitat Enhancement



B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

All of the following potential environmental impacts are evaluated in this Initial Study. The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the proposed program.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forest Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources / Tribal Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Geology / Soils	☐ Hazards / Hazardous Materials
☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning	☐ Mineral Resources
☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services
☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation	☐ Utilities / Service Systems
☐ Wildfire	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance	☒ None with Mitigation Incorporated

For the environmental issue areas where there is no potential for significant environmental impact, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from construction, operation, or maintenance of the proposed project. This finding can be made using the project description, environmental setting, or other information as supporting evidence, which is provided in the Environmental Checklist below. For those environmental issue areas where there is potential for significant environmental impact, mitigation measures have been identified in this document that would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

C. LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

[ ] I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

[X] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

[ ] I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

[ ] I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

[ ] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an **earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature	Date
Printed Name	Title

D. MITIGATION MONITORING & REPORTING PROGRAM

The purpose of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is to ensure that measures adopted to mitigate or avoid significant impacts of a project are implemented. The RCD views the MMRP as a working guide to facilitate not only the implementation of mitigation measures, but also the monitoring, compliance, and reporting activities of the RCD and any monitors it may designate. The table provides a single comprehensive list of impacts, mitigation measures, monitoring and reporting requirements, and timing of implementation. Therefore, the text are shown in final form in this chapter and not depicted in underline and strike-out format.

As defined in this MMRP, a minor project refinement should be strictly limited to minor changes that will not trigger other discretionary permit requirements, that does not increase the severity of an impact or create a new impact, and that clearly and strictly complies with the intent of the mitigation measure. A change to the project that has the potential for creating significant environmental effects will be evaluated to determine whether supplemental CEQA review is required. Any proposed deviation from the approved project and adopted mitigation measures, including correction of such deviation, shall be reported immediately to the RCD and for their review and approval.

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Rare Plant Surveys Rare plant surveys of the proposed disturbance areas will be conducted by a qualified botanist for the plant species that have the potential to occur within the project site. Surveys shall be done in accordance with CNPS's Botanical Survey Guidelines (CNPS 2001), CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (CDFW 2018), and USFWS's Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed and Candidate Plants (USFWS 1996). If present, special-status plant populations will be flagged and if possible avoided during construction. If the populations cannot be avoided during construction a mitigation plan will be developed for approval by the Department and CDFW which will include transplanting the plant population.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Botanist	Before construction.
Mitigation Measure BIO-2: CRLF Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Within two days of the start of work on a pond, the pond will be sampled by a qualified biologist to ensure that all frogs from that pond are in post-metamorphic stage and will be minimally affected by draining the pond. If the construction plans allow for existing open water and emergent vegetation areas to remain wetted and be isolated from construction activities, a qualified biologist will be on-site during draining of the work area to ensure that any remaining tadpoles or metamorphs are safely relocated to areas with standing water. • Draining of ponds to perform authorized work shall only occur during the part of the year when the tadpole life stage of CRLF has been completed and before the subsequent breeding season (i.e. between August 15 and November 1). • All biological monitors for the project shall be approved by USFWS prior to commencement of project activities. The biological monitors and qualified biologists shall have the responsibility and authority of stopping the proposed project if any crews or personnel are not complying with the provisions outlined in this IS/MND. • Biological monitor(s) and/or qualified biologists shall be on the project site while initial ground-disturbing activities (excavation) or pond draining activities take place. A Service-approved biologist will be on-call during all project activities in the event a San Francisco	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
garter snake or California red-legged frog is discovered, or for any other assistance relating to the avoidance and minimization measures. • Prior to project activities, a biological monitor shall clearly mark/flag or erect temporary construction fencing to designate the work area and to delineate the areas that shall be avoided. Flagging and or temporary construction fencing shall be removed immediately after the completion of construction work. • Dredge spoils shall be placed in a containment area away from the creek. The area where dredge spoils will be placed shall be surveyed for CRLF and SFGS. If burrows are present in this area, Permittee shall hand excavate burrows until the burrow terminates or until a maximum depth of 30 centimeters. If CRLF or SFGS are found, all work shall cease and Permittee shall notify CDFW and USFWS immediately. • Any vehicle parked on site for more than 15 minutes shall be inspected by the biological monitor before it is moved to ensure that CRLF and/or SFGS have not moved under the vehicle. Any parking areas shall be checked in advance by the biological monitor or qualified biologist. • If CRLF enters the work area, all work shall stop until the qualified biologist relocates the animal or it leaves on its own. Only the qualified biologist can handle and relocate CRLF. Any sightings and/or injuries of this species shall be immediately reported to the CDFW per instructions below: ○ CRLF Relocation. Prior to the onset of any project-related activities, the qualified biologist must identify appropriate areas to receive CRLF adults from the Project Areas. These areas must be in proximity to the capture site, contain suitable habitat, not be affected by project activities, and be free of exotic predatory species to the best of the approved biologist's knowledge. Translocation shall only be performed by the qualified biologist.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-3: SFGS Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of project activities, a focused survey for SFGS using agency approved protocol shall be conducted by a USFWS-approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If SFGS are found, the USFWS shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and proposed project shall	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
not begin until approved by the USFWS. • Activities that result in ground disturbance will occur May 1–October 30 (active season). Vegetation will be cut using to 3 inches in height. Once the ground is visible, a visual survey for SFGS will be conducted by the biologist prior to additional ground disturbance. If SFGS is found, USFWS will be notified immediate to determine the correct course of action. If work needs to occur during the inactive period (November 1– April 30) and is located in an area of known occupancy, flag and avoid any burrows by at least 10 feet wherever possible. If any burrows cannot be avoided by this distance, a biologist will inspect following activities to determine whether or not the burrow has been collapsed. If a burrow is collapsed, the biologist shall make efforts to open the burrow. • Prior to conducting non-native plant removal or treatments (e.g. spraying with herbicide, cutting, pulling, digging out), the permittee shall make every reasonable attempt to ensure that SFGS are not hidden within the plant or residual plant matter to be treated. • The USFWS approved biological monitor shall walk roads cleared for vehicle access each morning prior to vehicle traffic to ensure San Francisco garter snakes are not in the road. Vehicles shall not drive at speeds greater than 5 miles per hour within the project area and drivers shall observe the road for San Francisco garter snakes. If a San Francisco garter snake is found on the road, the vehicle operator shall stop, and the San Francisco garter snake shall be allowed to leave on its own volition.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Western Pond Turtle Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of construction, a focused survey for WPT shall be conducted by a CDFW approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If these species are found, the CDFW shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and construction activities shall not begin until approved by the CDFW. • In the event WPT are found in the project area, the RCD shall exercise measures to avoid direct injury to them as well as avoid areas where they are observed to occur. If a WPT is observed, it shall be left alone to move out of the area on its own. If it does not move on its own, it can be relocated by the biological monitor or the qualified biologist to at least	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
100-meters away from project location to a suitable habitat.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Nesting Bird Avoidance and Minimization Measures • To the extent feasible, vegetation removal activities shall not occur during the bird breeding season of February 15 through August 31. • If vegetation removal must occur during the breeding season the project site shall be surveyed by a qualified biologist to verify the presence or absence of nesting birds. • Preconstruction surveys will be conducted no more than two weeks prior to the start of work from February 15 – August 31. • If the survey indicates the potential presence of nesting birds, a buffer will be placed around the nest in which no work will be allowed until the young have successfully fledged. The size of the nest buffer will be determined by the biologist in consultation with the CDFW, and will be based to a large extent on the nesting species and its sensitivity to disturbance. The buffers may be increased or decreased, as appropriate, depending on the bird species and the level of disturbance anticipated near the nest.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure BIO-6: San Francisco Dusky Woodrat Avoidance and Minimization Measures • The removal of trees and large shrubs shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and shall be limited to those areas directly adjacent within the project footprint. • Tree removal or construction activities with potential to disturb suitable habitat for dusky-footed woodrat (riparian scrub) shall only occur after a biologist conducts a pre-construction survey for woodrat nests within the woody riparian habitats to be removed and adjacent riparian habitat. If any woodrat nest is identified outside the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance or cluster of entrances will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the next. No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active nests will be 50 feet, if possible. Exclusion zones will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or cluster of dens but does not prevent access to the nest. If a nest is identified within the disturbance footprint, then nest relocation procedure will be determined by the biologist, in	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
consultation with CDFW.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-7: American Badger Avoidance and Minimization Measure • Pre-construction surveys shall be conducted in any grassland habitat within the project footprint for active badger dens. If a badger den is identified within the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the den entrance(s). No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active dens will be at least 50 feet. Exclusion zones will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or entrance but does not prevent access to the den by a badger.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Open Water Protective Measures • The project applicant would implement the BMPs outlined in Table 2 to minimize stormwater runoff, erosion, and potential water quality impacts associated with construction activities. In addition, all contractors working in a capacity that could increase the potential for adverse water quality impacts shall receive training regarding the environmental sensitivity of the site and need to minimize impacts. Contractors shall be trained in implementation of stormwater BMPs for protection of water quality. • No debris, rubbish, creosote-treated wood, soil, silt, sand, cement, concrete, or washings thereof, or other construction related materials or wastes, oil or petroleum products or other organic or earthen material shall be allowed to enter into, or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into open water habitat and/or waters of the State. Any of these materials placed within or where they may enter waters shall be removed immediately. When operations are completed, any excess material shall be removed from the work area and any areas adjacent to the work area where such material may be washed into adjacent waters. • During construction the contractor shall not dump any litter or construction debris within the riparian/stream zone. All such debris and waste shall be picked up daily and properly disposed of at an appropriate site.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Wetland Ecologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
• Any excavation necessary shall be completed from outside of wetlands, where feasible, by using an excavator or backhoe tractor, thereby limiting the driving of heavy equipment across wetlands. • Prohibit vehicular and equipment refueling 100 feet from the edge of other wetlands, streams, or waterways. If refueling must be conducted closer to wetlands, construct a secondary containment area subject to review by the RCD and/or consulting biologist. Maintain spill prevention and cleanup equipment in refueling areas.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-9: Wetland Protective Measures • Prior to the start of construction within areas containing sensitive biological resources, the biological monitor should delineate and conspicuously flag all sensitive aquatic resources to prevent impacts to these resources. If required, setback or non-disturbance buffer zones around these resources should be established and monitored by a biologist. • Construction activities nearby or within aquatic habitats should be limited to the maximum extent feasible. • Any aquatic habitat that does not fall within the construction footprint should be flagged and avoided. • Work within waters should be conducted during the dry season, when water is not flowing, to the extent possible. • Worker environmental awareness training should be conducted for all construction crews and contractors. The education training should be conducted prior to starting work on the project and upon the arrival of any new worker. The training should include: locations of sensitive areas; possible fines for violations; environmental permits and regulatory compliance requirements including all relevant avoidance and mitigation measures, and required actions should sensitive species be encountered. Additional training should be conducted as needed, including morning "tailgate" sessions to update crews as they advance into sensitive areas for projects with multiple work areas. In addition, a record of all personnel trained during the project should be maintained for compliance verification.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Wetland Ecologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Conduct Identification Training and Stop Work if Archaeological Resources are Encountered During Construction or if Unique Paleontological or Geological Resources are Encountered During Construction • The construction contractor shall participate in a cultural and paleontological resource identification training session by a qualified archaeologist in order to be aware of the potential resources that might be uncovered. If archaeological or paleontological resources are encountered during project construction, work shall be temporarily halted in the vicinity of the discovered materials and construction contractor shall avoid altering these materials and their context until a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist has evaluated the resource. Recommendations on how to treat the resource may include evaluation, preservation in place, archaeological test excavation and/or archaeological data recovery, and a draft and final report documenting such activities.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Cultural Resource Specialist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Discovery of Human Remains • If at any time during site preparation, excavation, or other ground disturbance associated with the proposed project, human remains are discovered, the construction contractor shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and notify the RCD. The RCD shall notify the sheriff-coroner. If the coroner determines the remains are Native American, the coroner will contact the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission will identify the person or persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent makes recommendations regarding the treatment of the remains with appropriate dignity. Disturbance shall not resume until the significance of the human remains is determined and appropriate mitigations to preserve the resource on the site are established.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Cultural Resource Specialist	During Construction

Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program 1

E. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

AESTHETICS

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.				X
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.				X

Comments:

Dominant land uses within, and adjacent to, the Project Area include cattle pasturelands, agriculture, and open space. The 65-acre Project Area is not accessed by the general public and is currently grazed by approximately 20 head of cattle. Adjacent to and directly east of the Project Area is a cut flower operation with greenhouses and agricultural pond. Access to the Project Area is from Pescadero Creek Road in Pescadero. According to San Mateo County General Plan, Pescadero Creek Road is not designated as a State and County scenic road (San Mateo County 2013a).

Would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Project construction activities will not impact a scenic vista for users traveling on Pescadero Creek Road. **No Impact.**

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources because post-project conditions would be the same as or similar to pre-project conditions. Project implementation would result in restored upland and aquatic habitat features across a landscape that currently consists of a mixture of open water, annual grassland,

coastal scrub and riparian habitats. The upland habitat that will be enhanced is currently used for livestock grazing and grazing will continue to be grazed post construction. Post-project maintenance and monitoring activities would be the same as the existing maintenance and monitoring program. No impacts to scenic resources located within state scenic highways would occur as a result of the project. **No impact.**

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in degradation to the visual character or quality of public views from publicly accessible vantage points. The existing Project Area consists of open water, riparian, coastal scrub and annual grassland habitat. Project activities will degrade views during construction, which will last between 3 and 10 weeks. All areas temporarily disturbed during construction will either be returned to pre-project conditions or converted to native grassland habitat. **Less than significant.**

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a new source of nighttime lighting either during construction or post construction. No permanent lighting would be installed as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project would have no impact on visual resources from light and glare. **No impact.**

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code § 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Public Resources Code § 51104(g)?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.				X

Comments:

This section describes the environmental setting and any potential impacts on agricultural resources that would result from the project. Before Butano Farms was owned by POST, the property was used for farming flax, artichokes, peas, and a cow-calf grazing. Currently, the property is used for farming and cattle grazing. In addition to pasture and cropland, a portion of the larger Butano property is floodplain. This floodplain is intersected by Butano Creek, which was part of a flood plain reconnection project in 2017 near the project site.

Additional information about the Project Area and vicinity was obtained from review of the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program (FMMP), which identifies Butano Farms as two separate types as described below (DOC 2019).

1. **Grazing Land (G) - northern section of the property.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

2. **Other Land (X) - southern Section of the property.** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas

not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

Would the Project:

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

The Project Area does not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP of the California Resources Agency (DOC 2019). In addition, the project does not contain Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide or Farmland of Local Importance would be converted to a non-agricultural use as a result of project activities. **No impact.**

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The Project Area is owned by POST and not under a Williamson Act Contract. The Project Area is zoned Planned Agriculture District/Coastal Development District. Implementation of the project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract. **No impact.**

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code § 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Public Resources Code § 51104(g))?

The project is not located near land designated as Timber Resource and does not conflict with zoning for timberland. **No impact.**

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No forest land would be no lost or converted to non-forest use as a result of the proposed project. **No impact.**

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

The Project Area and surrounding area within a radius of 5 miles does not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance (DOC 2019). Dominant land uses within and adjacent to the Project Area include cattle pasturelands, agriculture, and open space. The Project Area is currently grazed and will continue to be used for grazing in perpetuity. Project activities would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. **No impact.**

AIR QUALITY

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.			X	
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.			X	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.			X	
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of			X	

Comments:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) currently focus much of their air pollutant control efforts on five major air pollutants: ozone, nitrogen dioxide (NO2), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and particulate matter (PM). These are the most prevalent air pollutants emitted nationwide and statewide, and they are known to be harmful to human health when their ambient levels exceed certain concentrations. Consequently, federal and state ambient air quality standards have been set for each of these pollutants (known as "criteria" air pollutants") at levels protective of human health, with an added margin of safety to afford additional protection to the young, the old and the infirm (i.e., sensitive receptors), who are more susceptible to their adverse health effects.

Ozone and suspended particulate matter (i.e., two types of the latter - particulate matter less than ten microns in diameter [PM10] and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter [PM2.5]) are of particular concern in the Bay Area, which is currently designated "nonattainment" for state and national ozone ambient air quality standards, for the state PM10 standards, and for state and national PM2.5 standards; it is "attainment" or "unclassified" with respect to all the other major air pollutants.

Many other chemical compounds, termed toxic air contaminants (TACs), emitted into the air are also regulated to limit their adverse impacts to human health and welfare. In California and in the Bay Area, the majority of the estimated carcinogenic/chronic health risks from TAC exposures have been attributed to relatively few TACs, the most important being particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines (DPM), which, according to the CARB, is responsible for about 70% of the cumulative cancer risk in California from all airborne TAC exposures.

The air quality analysis addressed in this Initial Study was performed using the methodologies and significance thresholds of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), as recommended in the 2017 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (Guidelines). The air pollutant impacts evaluated in the Items "a" and "b" discussions below

are from precursors to ozone formation (i.e., reactive organic compounds [ROG] and nitrogen oxides [NOx]) and small-diameter particulate matter (i.e., PM10 and PM2.5).

According to the Guidelines, any project would have a significant potential for obstructing air quality plan implementation or making a cumulatively considerable contribution to a regional air quality problem if its pollutant emissions would exceed any of the thresholds presented in Table AQ-1 during construction or operation.

Table AQ-1: CEQA Air Quality Significance Thresholds for Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions

		Operational	
Pollutant	**Construction Average Daily (lbs./day)**	**Average Daily (lbs./day)**	**Maximum Annual (tons/year)**
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	54	54	10
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x)	54	54	10
Inhalable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	82 (exhaust)	82	15
Fine Inhalable Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	54 (exhaust)	54	10
PM_{10}/$PM_{2.5}$ (Fugitive Dust)	BMPs[a]	N/A	N/A

Notes: BMPs = Best Management Practices
N/A = Not Applicable

[a] If BMPs for fugitive dust control are implemented during construction, the impacts of such residual emissions are considered to be less than significant.
Source: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines* (May 2017).

The Guidelines also establish a relevant zone of influence for an assessment of project-level and cumulative health risk from TAC exposure to an area within 1,000 feet of a project site. Project construction-related or project operational TAC impacts to sensitive receptors within the zone that exceed any of the following thresholds are considered significant:

- An excess cancer risk level of more than 10 in one million.
- A non-cancer hazard index greater than 1.0.
- An incremental increase of greater than 0.3 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3) for annual average PM2.5 concentrations.

Cumulative impacts from TACs emitted from freeways, state highways or high volume roadways (i.e., the latter defined as having traffic volumes of 10,000 vehicles or more per day or 1,000 trucks per day), and from all documented stationary sources within the zone to sensitive receptors within the zone that exceed any of the following thresholds are considered cumulatively significant:

- A combined excess cancer risk levels of more than 100 in one million.
- A combined non-cancer hazard index greater than 10.0.
- A combined incremental increase in annual average PM2.5 concentrations greater than 0.8 µg/m3.

Would the Project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

In the Bay Area, the current applicable regional air quality plan is the BAAQMD's 2017 Clean Air Plan: Spare the Air, Cool the Climate (2017 Plan), focuses on two closely-related goals: protecting public health and protecting the climate (the latter addressed in the Greenhouse Gas section below). The BAAQMD Plan defines an integrated, multipollutant control strategy to reduce emissions of particulate matter, TACs, ozone precursors and greenhouse gases (GHG) based on four key priorities:

- Reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and TACs from all key sources.
- Reduce emissions of "super-GHGs" such as methane, black carbon and fluorinated gases.
- Decrease demand for fossil fuels (i.e., gasoline, diesel and natural gas).
- Decarbonize the energy system.

The purpose of the proposed project is to restore habitat. Once the specified landscape and hydrographic changes are installed, the project would have no new operational air pollutant emissions. Thus, it would not affect the Bay Area's regional emission inventories.

Compliance with BAAQMD-approved CEQA thresholds of significance is another condition for determining project consistency with 2017 Plan control policies. The project would meet all BAAQMD CEQA emission thresholds (as addressed in the Item "b" discussion below; Appendix B). **Less than significant.**

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Construction activities would take place over about a 2-month period (August-September of 2020). It would generate temporary emissions of criteria pollutants in construction equipment exhaust and fugitive dust from equipment and material movement. The CEQA Air Quality Guidelines recommend quantification of construction-related exhaust emissions and comparison of those emissions to the CEQA significance thresholds. Thus, the CalEEMod model (California Emissions Estimator Model, Version 2016.3.2) was used for this purpose (see Appendix B for model results).

Table AQ-2 provides the estimated pollutant emissions from construction equipment, material delivery trucks and worker commute vehicles associated with each project phase. The average daily construction period emissions can be compared to the CEQA significance thresholds, either separately by phase or combined (since there would be substantial phase overlap during construction) as shown below. Daily emissions of each regulated air pollutant from project construction activities would be below the CEQA significance thresholds. **Less than significant.**

Table AQ-2: Project Construction Criteria Pollutant Emissions (Average Pounds per Work Day)

Project Phase	ROG	NOx	PM_{10} (Exhaust)	$PM_{2.5}$ (Exhaust)
Upland Vegetation and Erosion Control (2 weeks/10 work days)	0.1	0.8	< 0.1	< 0.1
Aquatic Habitat Restoration Activities (6 weeks/30 work days)	1.3	13.0	0.5	0.5
Pre-Project Activities and Site Preparation (6 weeks/30 work days)	0.7	6.6	0.3	0.3
Significance Thresholds	**54**	**54**	**82**	**54**
Significant Impact?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

However, fugitive dust resulting from earth movement and travel over unpaved ground could lead to local violations of ambient particulate standards unless adequate dust suppression measures are implemented. During construction, the RCD and their contractors will implement Best Management Practices #8 listed in Table 2; which provide BAAQMD approved measures for controlling fugitive dust. **Less than Significant.**

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Cancer risk is the lifetime probability of developing cancer from exposure to carcinogenic substances. Adverse health impacts unrelated to cancer are measured using a hazard index (HI), which is defined as the ratio of a project's incremental TAC exposure concentration to a published reference exposure level (REL) as determined by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. If the HI is greater than 1.0, then the impact is considered to be significant.

Ambient DPM produced by construction equipment could substantially affect sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the locus of construction activity if such emissions were strong enough and lasted long enough. However, the CEQA significance thresholds for TACs are based on assumptions of exposure duration of a year or longer (i.e., a year for chronic non-cancer health impacts, 70 years for cancer risk). Given that all project phases would be completed in at most 2 months, and that the closest residential receptors are in the town of Pescadero, which is more than 1000 feet from the active project work areas, the TAC exposure period for any residential receptors would be short in comparison to the exposure times needed to pose adverse health impacts. Also, no single sensitive local receptor would be within 1000 feet of any project work locus. Thus, project-related TAC health risks would be substantially below the CEQA health- risk significance thresholds and project-level TAC impacts for most project construction emissions would be less than significant. **Less than significant.**

d) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

CEQA odor criteria considers any project with the potential to frequently expose substantial populations to objectionable odors as causing a significant odor impact. Implementation of project activities would occur more

than 1000 feet from the nearest odor-sensitive receptors and project construction activities would last only 2 months. **Less than significant.**

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.		X		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service.		X		
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, and coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.		X		
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.			X	

Comments:

The proposed project provides mitigation for biological impacts associated with PG&E Line 101 Inline Inspection and Upgrade, and Lomita Park Station Rebuild Project in the City of Millbrae, San Mateo County. PG&E provided financial contribution to the RCD for management of land with emphasis on management for SFGS. The proposed restoration and enhancement activities have been permitted by USFWS in their Biological Opinion (No. 2013-0042S) dated October 2, 2018 (USFWS 2018). All conservation measures specific to this project and identified in the USFWS BO will be implemented during project construction. Restoration activities evaluated in this IS/MND will contribute to the overall enhancement of habitat for SFGS and CRLF within San Mateo County and objectives of this project align with recovery actions outlined in the San Francisco Garter Snake Recovery Plan that concludes restoration of upland, riparian, and aquatic habitat is needed to aid in the recovery of SFGS and CRLF (USFWS 1985).

Methods

For the purpose of this impact evaluation, biologists also reviewed the CDFW's California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) (CDFW 2019); USFWS' Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) Trust Resources Report for San Mateo County (USFWS 2019), the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2019), and the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory. Results of these searches are provided in Appendix C.

Mitigation measures for potential impacts during construction activities are derived, in part, from the avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts on covered species provided in the PG&E's Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) (ICF International 2016).

Information for vegetation communities and habitat types within the Project Area was gathered from a Vegetation Shapefile prepared by Midpeninsula Open Space District and Google Earth satellite maps. Existing condition descriptions are also derived from the Wetland Delineation Survey and Report and the 2018 Effects Analysis for Butano Farms SFGS Habitat Enhancement Project San Mateo County, California (San Mateo RCD 2018) and the Upland Enhancement and Monitoring Plan (San Mateo RCD 2019).

Existing Conditions

Vegetation Communities

Mixed Annual and Perennial Grassland

Stands of grassland are dominated by annual European grasses and, in select places, by low-lying California oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*). Though present, overall cover is poor due to compacted soils. Given proper management as suggested in the Conservation and Carbon Plan (San Mateo RCD 2018), these grasslands can be enhanced and expanded for the benefit of SFGS. Main concerns for these grasslands are overgrazing, compaction from roads, and tilling. In consideration of the main conservation concerns, and the fact that establishment of native perennial grasses can be difficult, preserving and enhancing existing stands is preferable.

Coastal Scrub

The Project Area is composed mostly of coyote brush-dominated coastal scrub. The woody vegetation is established on steeper slopes, but has encroached upon shallower, grass dominated areas. Coastal scrub takes up 10-75% of the grassland habitat, and upwards of 90% in the coastal scrub habitat (visual estimation based on aerial images).

Riparian Habitat

The riparian habitat in the Project Area is dominated by willows (*Salix sp.*) and red alders (*Alnus rubra*). These swaths of riparian habitat surround the pond, the two drainages, and Butano Creek.

Freshwater Wetland

The existing pond is approximately an acre in size with over half of the pond dominated by emergent wetland vegetation consisting of tule (*Schoenoplectus acutus*) and cattail (*Typha sp*.). As part of the project, 0.50 acres of the pond will be enhanced and expanded. Of this total, 0.25 acres of the pond will be enhanced for open water habitat through sediment removal and an additional 0.25 acres will be enhanced through a combination of riparian vegetation removal (e.g. willows) and grading/reshaping of the pond to include more shallow water habitat for SFGS and CRLF. Within the drainage area north-east of the pond, sediment control structures (berms or check dams) will be installed to reduce sediment accumulation within the pond. Eventually, the sediment buildup from the check dams is expected to aggrade into the existing gully feature and into the adjacent uplands, helping to reduce future gully formation and gully migration. Overall, ecological functionality of the pond and associated margin wetlands will be improved through implementation of this project and the associated actions to address existing erosion.

Invasive Species

Jubata grass

Jubata grass (*Cortaderia jubata*) is the highest priority weed species in the Project Area. It grows in large, dense patches within the Project Area. Jubata grass is considered an Invasive Plant of California's Wildlands A-1 (highest priority) species (Cal-IPC). It is an aggressive colonizer that is known to displace native species occurring in coastal scrub, coastal dunes, and other habitats utilized by California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake.

Jubata grass prefers disturbed and bare soils, growing within the gully systems in the Project Area. There is also nearly 1-acre patch of jubata in the middle of the Project Area. There is observational evidence that SFGS utilizes jubata grass. Care will be taken to maintain the basal jubata grass structure while preventing its spread through the rest of the property. Jubata grass will be controlled and eradicated where feasible, primarily targeting densely infested areas.

Douglas fir and Monterey pine

While native to the area, Monterey pine and Douglas fir would not historically occupy the grasslands habitat within the Project Area. Woody encroachment prevention is a high priority for the recovery of SFGS (USFWS 2006b). Thus, Douglas fir will be treated as a native invasive weed. There is a small stand (approximately 20-30) of Douglas fir along the south east ridge within the Project Area which does not provide ideal habitat for either San Francisco garter snake or prey species. These trees are estimated to be not more than 15-20 years old. While providing habitat for raptors and other tree nesting species, Douglas firs represent a threat to grassland-scrub matrix. Douglas fir up to 34-inch diameter at breast height will be removed. The resulting product from woody vegetation control can be used for soil amendments within the project.

American Bullfrog

American Bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) are an aggressive predator and competition for CRLF, as well as a competitor for SFGS. Their presence has been observed in the pond. Control of bullfrogs is dependent on pond management. Proposed project actions include seasonal pond draining and direct kill if necessary.

Other non-native invasive plants

There are other non-native invasive weeds within the property. While present, they are not a priority. Priorities of invasive species may change over time as described in the *Upland Enhancement and Monitoring Plan* (San Mateo RCD 2019). This Plan outlines the methods of removal, maintenance and monitoring for all non-native invasive plants present within the Project Area.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Waters and wetlands are considered sensitive habitat types and while they are defined differently according to the specific regulations and regulating agencies, the wetland features at the proposed project site would be considered a wetland under the following existing applicable state and federal laws:

- Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction through Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act. Site analysis indicates that the pond is both hydrologically and ecologically connected to the adjacent Water of the US, Butano Creek. As such, the pond is not considered to be an isolated water or wetland.

- California Coastal Commission jurisdiction through the California Coastal Act of 1976 and the federal Coastal Zone Management Act for state wetlands within the coastal zone. The existing pond and wetland/riparian habitats meet all three wetland criteria (plants, hydrology, and soils) and, as such, will be subject to regulation under the Coastal Act.

- State Water Resources Control Board and San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) through the 1969 Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act. The existing pond meets all three wetland criteria (plants, hydrology, and soils) and is ecologically and hydrologically connected to Butano Creek. As such, the pond and associated wetland/riparian margins will be regulated through the RWQCB.

Special-Status Species

Special-status plant and wildlife species are defined as those species listed as endangered, threatened, or proposed for listing under Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), as amended (Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Title 50, Section 17), and/or species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S. Code [USC] 703-712); the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d; June 8, 1940) as amended; Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (2001); California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 670.5); California Fish and Game Code (Sections 1901, 2062, 2067, 3511, 4700, 5050 and 5515); and/or Native Plant Protection Act of 1977. Special-status species also include locally rare species defined by CEQA guidelines 15125(c) and 15380, which may include species that are designated as sensitive, declining, rare, locally endemic or as having limited or restricted distribution by various federal, state and local agencies, organizations and watchlists. Their status is based on their rarity and endangerment throughout all or portions of their range.

Special-Status Plant Species

There are nine special-status plant species with potential to occur within the Project Area (Table BIO-1). All nine species vary in rarity (CNPS Rare Plan Rank 1B.1 to 4.3) and none have specific legal protections. Of these, two have been documented from within 1 mile of the Project Area: Coastal marsh milk vetch (*Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *pycnostoachyus*) and Choris' popcornflower (*Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. chorisianus*) (CDFW 2019, Appendix C). Coastal marsh milk vetch occurs in coastal dunes, coastal scrub, and coastal salt and streamsides of marshes and swamps. It occurs between 0-30 meters in elevation. Choris' popcornflower occurs on mesic sites in chaparral, coastal prairie, and coastal scrub and in grassy moist places, ephemeral drainages, coastal scrub, and chaparral. It occurs between 15-160 meters in elevation.

Table BIO-1. Sensitive and Locally Rare Plant Species with Potential to Occur in Project Area

Species Name	Common Name	Listing Status*
Astragalus pycnostachyus var. pycnostachyus	Marsh milk vetch	1B.2
Castilleja latifolia	Seaside paintbrush	4.3
Hosackia gracilis	Harlequin lotus	4.2
Microseris paludosa	Marsh scorzonella	1B.2
Pedicularis dudleyi	Dudley's lousewort	1B.2
Perideridia gairdneri ssp. gairdneri	Gairdner's yampah	4.2
Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. chorisianus	Choris's popcorn flower	1B.2
Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. hickmanii	Hickman's popcorn flower	4.2
Sidalcea malviflora ssp. purpurea	Purple checkerbloom	1B.2

*California Native Plant Society codes:

1A	Presumed extinct in California
1B	Rare or Endangered in California and elsewhere
2	Rare or Endangered in California, more common elsewhere
3	Plants for which we need more information - Review list
4	Plants of limited distribution - Watch list
.1	Seriously Endangered in California
.2	Fairly Endangered in California (20-80% occurrences Threatened)
.3	Not very Endangered in California (<20% of occurrences Threatened or no current threats known)

Special-Status Wildlife Species

There are 15 special-status wildlife species with potential to occur in or, in the case of fish, immediately adjacent to the Project Area (Table BIO-2). Of these, five have Federal and/or State legal protection and two have been documented within or adjacent to the Project Area.

Table BIO-2. Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur in Project Area

Common Name	Species Name	Listing Status*
Federal/State Listed, Proposed, Candidate and/or Fully Protected Species		
Central California Coast steelhead	*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*	FT
California red-legged frog	*Rana draytonii*	FT, CSC
San Francisco garter snake	*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*	FE, SE
White-tailed kite	*Elanus leucurus*	FP
Golden eagle	*Aquila chrysaetos*	FP
Tricolored blackbird	*Agelaius tricolor*	ST
Sensitive and Locally Rare Species		
Western pond turtle	*Actinemys marmorata*	CSC
Long-billed curlew	*Numenius americanus*	WL
Northern harrier	*Circus cyaneus*	CSC
Short-eared owl	*Asio flammeus*	CSC
Western burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*	CSC
Salt-marsh common yellowthroat	*Geothlypis trichas sinuosa*	CSC
Yellow warbler	*Dendroica petechia*	CSC
Dusky-footed woodrat	*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*	CSC
American badger	*Taxidea taxus*	CSC

* Federal and State listing codes:
FE Federally listed as Endangered
FT Federally listed as Threatened
SE State listed as Endangered
ST State listed as Threatened
CSC California Species of Special Concern
FP Fully Protected
CH Critical Habitat (Proposed or Final) is designated
WL Watch List

Federal/State Listed, Proposed, Candidate and/or Fully Protected Wildlife Species

Central California Coast Steelhead

The Central California Coast steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) is federally listed as threatened. This DPS covers "all naturally spawning anadromous populations of *O. mykiss* (steelhead) below natural and manmade impassable barriers in California streams from the Russian River (inclusive) to Aptos Creek (inclusive), and the drainages of San Francisco, San Pablo, and Suisun Bays eastward to Chipps Island at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers" (NMFS 2005). The San Mateo Hydrologic Unit includes the coastal streams in San Mateo County from San Pedro Creek near Pacifica to Butano Creek near Año Nuevo; the Santa Clara Hydrologic Unit includes South Bay creeks from San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto eastward to Coyote Creek (NMFS 2005, NMFS 2012). Critical habitat for the Central California Coast steelhead DPS was designated in 2005 and includes all river reaches and estuarine areas accessible to listed steelhead in coastal river basins from the Russian River in Sonoma County to Aptos Creek in Santa Cruz County (NMFS 2005).

Multiple sources have documented the presence of steelhead within the Pesacdero Creek watershed over the past decades (NMFS 2013, Nelson 2012). Steelhead are present in nearby Butano Creek but are not present in the existing pond within the project area.

California Red-legged Frog

CRLF is federally listed as threatened and is a California State Species of Special Concern. The 2002 recovery plan recommends protecting existing populations by restoring and creating habitat through improving quality and connectivity of aquatic and upland habitats as a recovery action (USFWS 2002). The USFWS-designated critical habitat for CRLF includes the Project Area (USFWS 2010; USFWS 2006a) (Appendix C).

California red-legged frog is a pond-dwelling amphibian that generally lives in the vicinity of permanent aquatic habitats including livestock ponds and pools in perennial streams (Jennings and Hayes 1994). Optimal habitat is characterized by dense, shrubby riparian vegetation associated with deep (>2.3 feet), still, or slow-moving water. CRLF historical range reached from California to Baja California and Mexico but has since reduced from 70 of its original range to 28 counties in California. Most of this reduction is from loss of habitat from urban encroachment, hydrological changes from water diversions, agriculture, and intensive livestock grazing.

The existing pond within the Project Area provides breeding habitat for CRLF and the species has been documented in the Project Area (CDFW 2019). CRLF egg masses were observed by RCD staff during a 2018 site visit.

San Francisco Garter Snake

SFGS is endemic to the San Francisco Peninsula and its range is highly restricted from Mori Point in Pacifica to just south of the Santa Cruz County line. Although the snake mostly occupies the grasslands of the Santa Cruz Mountains, including the Upper Crystal Springs Reservoir, the population also extends east to the San Francisco Airport. This snake is mostly found near aquatic features such as lakes, ponds, marshes, ephemeral ponds, and sloughs (USFWS 1985). Many of these aquatic features have been lost due to intense urbanization, habitat loss,

and degradation. Due to intensive habitat loss, the snake has been Federally endangered since 1967 and State endangered since 1971.

The Project Area lies within the 'Pescadero' population of SFGS which encompasses Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve and a series of natural and artificial ponds along Butano Creek. SFGS individuals have been found both upstream and downstream of the project site, but none have been found within the project site. Extensive surveys for SFGS were completed during the adjacent Butano Floodplain Restoration Project in 2017 and no individuals were observed. The Project Area provides suitable habitat for SFGS. The pond, although heavily vegetated, does provide habitat for prey and some basking space. There is plenty of vegetative cover and rodent burrows in the surrounding area for SFGS shelter. It is possible that SFGS could be encountered during project construction given suitable habitat and nearby occurrences.

Listed Birds

The Project Area contains suitable habitat for three listed and/or fully protected bird species. Both the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) are designated as fully protected under Section 3511 of the California Fish and Game Code. The golden eagle (nesting & wintering) is also designated as a California Species of Special Concern and is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d, 54 Stat. 250) as amended. The tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) is listed as threatened under the State Endangered Species Act.

There is no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagle or white-tailed kite within the Project Area; however, the upland grassland habitat provides suitable foraging habitat for both species. During the non-breeding season, the golden eagle inhabits open habitats such as grasslands, savannahs, scrub and oak woodlands. White-tailed kites typically nest in trees near a water source and may occur in suburban areas with adjacent open areas with abundant prey. Suitable foraging and nesting habitat for tricolored blackbird is present in emergent vegetation within aquatic and riparian habitats. None of these three listed species have been documented from the Project Area or within 1 mile of the Project Area (CDFW 2019).

Sensitive and Locally Rare Wildlife Species

Western Pond Turtle

Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), a California Species of Special Concern, inhabits a broad range of aquatic habitats including ponds, slow-moving streams, and man-made canals and reservoirs. The highest densities are found in suitable aquatic sites that also have available aquatic and shoreline basking areas such as downed logs. Hatchlings (i.e. individuals through their first year of activity) require shallow water habitat with relatively dense submergent or short emergent vegetation in which to forage. Turtles use upland grasslands in the vicinity of aquatic habitats for egg-laying, hibernation, and aestivation. Though pond turtles have not been observed in the Project Area, the pond and associated upland habitat provide suitable habitat for this species.

Special-Status and Migratory Birds

Migratory birds (including eggs and chicks) are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712) administered by the USFWS (Division of Migratory Bird Management), which makes it unlawful, unless expressly authorized by permit pursuant to federal regulations, to "pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, attempt to take, capture or kill, offer for sale, sell, offer to purchase, purchase, deliver for shipment, ship, cause to be

shipped, deliver for transportation, transport, cause to be transported, carry, or cause to be carried by any means whatever, receive for shipment, transportation or carriage, or export at any time, or in any manner, any migratory bird, or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird." Most bird species occurring within California fall under the protection of the MBTA except those species that belong to the families not listed in any of the four treaties, such as European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Nesting birds are also protected under California Fish and Game Code §3503, which prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of the nest or eggs of any bird.

The structural complexity of riparian and freshwater wetland habitats in the Project Area provide optimal nesting habitat and foraging conditions for many special-status and migratory bird species. Some of the bird species with the potential to occur in the study area include long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*), saltmarsh common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas sinuosa*), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) and yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechial*). The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S.C. 703-712; MBTA) and the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503 prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of the nest or eggs of any bird; Section 3503.5 prohibits the take, possession, or needless destruction of any nests, eggs or birds in the orders Falconiformes (new world vultures, hawks, eagles, ospreys and falcons, among others) or Strigiformes (owls); Section 3511 prohibits the take or possession of fully protected birds; and Section 3513 prohibits the take or possession of any migratory nongame bird or part thereof as designated in the MBTA.

San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat

Dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*) is a California Species of Special Concern. Dusky-footed woodrats are generally found in dense chaparral, oak and riparian woodland, and mixed conifer forest habitats that have a well-developed understory. They favor brushy habitat or woodland with a live oak component. They are highly arboreal, and thick-leaved trees and shrubs are important habitat components for the species (Williams et al. 1992). No woodrat nests have been observed within the Project Area, however, multiple woodrat nests have been documented from the adjacent Butano Creek riparian corridor (CDFW 2019). The Project Area does not provide ideal habitat for woodrat nests.

American Badger

American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) inhabits open areas with friable soils within woodland, grassland, savannah and desert habitats. Badgers have not been documented from the study area, though suitable habitat for this species is present within the upland habitat.

Would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW and USFWS?

Special-Status Plants

Impact BIO-1: Construction of the proposed project could impact special-status plants if they occur within the project site. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be implemented to identify and potentially reduce impacts to special-status species plants, should they occur within the project site. Post construction, the project site would be returned to pre-construction conditions or better, which would improve conditions for special-status plant species, should they occur in the study area. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Rare Plant Surveys

- Rare plant surveys of the proposed disturbance areas will be conducted by a qualified botanist for the plant species that have the potential to occur within the project site. Surveys shall be done in accordance with CNPS's Botanical Survey Guidelines (CNPS 2001), CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (CDFW 2018), and USFWS's Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed and Candidate Plants (USFWS 1996). If present, special-status plant populations will be flagged and if possible avoided during construction. If the populations cannot be avoided during construction a mitigation plan will be developed for approval by the Department and CDFW which will include transplanting the plant population.

Special-Status Wildlife

Impact BIO-2: Construction of the proposed project would temporarily disturb CRLF within the Project Area and temporarily impact suitable aquatic and upland habitat. There may be further indirect effects due to construction activities, noise and vibration causing individuals to leave the area, leaving them more susceptible to predation. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: CRLF Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- Within two days of the start of work on a pond, the pond will be sampled by a qualified biologist to ensure that all frogs from that pond are in post-metamorphic stage and will be minimally affected by draining the pond. If the construction plans allow for existing open water and emergent vegetation areas to remain wetted and be isolated from construction activities, a qualified biologist will be on-site during draining of the work area to ensure that any remaining tadpoles or metamorphs are safely relocated to areas with standing water.

- Draining of ponds to perform authorized work shall only occur during the part of the year when the tadpole life stage of CRLF has been completed and before the subsequent breeding season (i.e. between August 15 and November 1).

- All biological monitors for the project shall be approved by USFWS prior to commencement of project activities. The biological monitors and qualified biologists shall have the responsibility and authority of stopping the proposed project if any crews or personnel are not complying with the provisions outlined in this IS/MND.

- Biological monitor(s) and/or qualified biologists shall be on the project site while initial ground-disturbing activities (excavation) or pond draining activities take place. A Service-approved biologist will be on-call during all project activities in the event a San Francisco garter snake or California red-legged frog is discovered, or for any other assistance relating to the avoidance and minimization measures.

- Prior to project activities, a biological monitor shall clearly mark/flag or erect temporary construction fencing to designate the work area and to delineate the areas that shall be avoided. Flagging and or temporary construction fencing shall be removed immediately after the completion of construction work.

- Dredge spoils shall be placed in a containment area away from the creek. The area where dredge spoils will be placed shall be surveyed for CRLF and SFGS. If burrows are present in this area, Permittee shall hand excavate burrows until the burrow terminates or until a maximum depth of 30 centimeters. If CRLF or SFGS are found, all work shall cease and Permittee shall notify CDFW and USFWS immediately.

- Any vehicle parked on site for more than 15 minutes shall be inspected by the biological monitor before it is moved to ensure that CRLF and/or SFGS have not moved under the vehicle. Any parking areas shall be checked in advance by the biological monitor or qualified biologist.

- If CRLF enters the work area, all work shall stop until the qualified biologist relocates the animal or it leaves on its own. Only the qualified biologist can handle and relocate CRLF. Any sightings and/or injuries of this species shall be immediately reported to the CDFW per instructions below:

    - CRLF Relocation. Prior to the onset of any project-related activities, the qualified biologist must identify appropriate areas to receive CRLF adults from the Project Areas. These areas must be in proximity to the capture site, contain suitable habitat, not be affected by project activities, and be free of exotic predatory species to the best of the approved biologist's knowledge. Translocation shall only be performed by the qualified biologist.

Impact BIO-3: Construction of the proposed project would temporarily disturb SFGS within the Project Area and temporarily impact suitable aquatic and upland habitat. There may be further indirect effects due to construction activities, noise and vibration causing individuals to leave the area, leaving them more susceptible to predation. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: SFGS Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of project activities, a focused survey for SFGS using agency approved protocol shall be conducted by a USFWS-approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If SFGS are found, the USFWS shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and proposed project shall not begin until approved by the USFWS.

- Activities that result in ground disturbance will occur May 1–October 30 (active season). Vegetation will be cut using to 3 inches in height. Once the ground is visible, a visual survey for SFGS will be conducted by the biologist prior to additional ground disturbance. If SFGS is found, USFWS will be notified immediate to determine the correct course of action. If work needs to occur during the inactive period (November 1– April 30) and is located in an area of known occupancy, flag and avoid any burrows by at least 10 feet wherever possible. If any burrows cannot be avoided by this distance, a biologist will inspect following activities to determine whether or not the burrow has been collapsed. If a burrow is collapsed, the biologist shall make efforts to open the burrow.

- Prior to conducting non-native plant removal or treatments (e.g. spraying with herbicide, cutting, pulling, digging out), the permittee shall make every reasonable attempt to ensure that SFGS are not hidden within the plant or residual plant matter to be treated.

- The USFWS approved biological monitor shall walk roads cleared for vehicle access each morning prior to vehicle traffic to ensure San Francisco garter snakes are not in the road. Vehicles shall not drive at speeds greater than 5 miles per hour within the project area and drivers shall observe the road for San Francisco garter snakes. If a San Francisco garter snake is found on the road, the vehicle operator shall stop, and the San Francisco garter snake shall be allowed to leave on its own volition.

Impact BIO-4: Construction of the proposed project would temporarily disturb Western pond turtle (WPT), if found within the Project Area. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Western Pond Turtle Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of construction, a focused survey for WPT shall be conducted by a CDFW approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If these species are found, the CDFW shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and construction activities shall not begin until approved by the CDFW.

- In the event WPT are found in the project area, the RCD shall exercise measures to avoid direct injury to them as well as avoid areas where they are observed to occur. If a WPT is observed, it shall be left alone to move out of the area on its own. If it does not move on its own, it can be relocated by the biological monitor or the qualified biologist to at least 100-meters away from project location to a suitable habitat.

Impact BIO-5: Several species of birds use the Project Area for foraging, roosting and nesting and wintering. Implementation of the project could result in temporary impacts on special-status birds including burrowing owl, as well as nesting birds protected by CFGC §3503 and birds protected by the MBTA. Potential construction-related impacts may include temporary changes in foraging patterns or territories, noise disturbance, nest abandonment, etc. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-5 would reduce this impact. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Nesting Bird Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- To the extent feasible, vegetation removal activities shall not occur during the bird breeding season of February 15 through August 31.

- If vegetation removal must occur during the breeding season the project site shall be surveyed by a qualified biologist to verify the presence or absence of nesting birds.

- Preconstruction surveys will be conducted no more than two weeks prior to the start of work from February 15 – August 31.

- If the survey indicates the potential presence of nesting birds, a buffer will be placed around the nest in which no work will be allowed until the young have successfully fledged. The size of the nest buffer will be determined by the biologist in consultation with the CDFW, and will be based to a large extent on the nesting species and its sensitivity to disturbance. The buffers may be increased or decreased, as appropriate, depending on the bird species and the level of disturbance anticipated near the nest.

Impact BIO-6: Construction of the proposed project could impact special-status San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, if present. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-6: San Francisco Dusky-footed Woodrat Avoidance and Minimization Measures

The following standard avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented to minimize potential impacts on dusky- footed woodrat nests, if present within the Project Area:

- The removal of trees and large shrubs shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and shall be limited to those areas directly adjacent within the project footprint.

- Tree removal or construction activities with potential to disturb suitable habitat for dusky-footed woodrat (riparian scrub) shall only occur after a biologist conducts a pre-construction survey for woodrat nests within the woody riparian habitats to be removed and adjacent riparian habitat. If any woodrat nest is identified outside the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance or cluster of entrances will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the next. No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active nests will be 50 feet, if possible. Exclusion zones will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or cluster of dens but does not prevent access to the nest. If a nest is identified within the disturbance footprint, then nest relocation procedure will be determined by the biologist, in consultation with CDFW.

Impact BIO-7: Construction of the proposed project could impact special-status American badger, if present. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-7: American Badger Avoidance and Minimization Measure

- Pre-construction surveys shall be conducted in any grassland habitat within the project footprint for active badger dens. If a badger den is identified within the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the den entrance(s). No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active dens will be at least 50 feet. Exclusion zones

will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or entrance but does not prevent access to the den by a badger.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?

Riparian and wetland habitats are subject to the San Mateo County grading ordinance and State and Federal regulations under Section 1601-1603 of the CFGC and Section 404 of the Federal CWA. The mixed riparian corridor found along Butano Creek is considered a sensitive habitat by the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program (LCP) (San Mateo County 1998) and the County of San Mateo General Plan. Riparian habitat is recognized as a significant and limited resource due to the reduction of this habitat type of the last hundred years from urban and agricultural development.

Implementation of the proposed restoration activities would result in direct impacts and temporary disturbance to sensitive natural communities within the Project Area. Project activities would result in temporary disturbance to open water habitat, and permanent conversion of 12.6 acres of existing riparian, scrub and invasive grassland habitat to native grassland habitat. Approximately 7.7 acres of upland habitat will be temporarily disturbed during upland enhancement activities. Riparian (willow) and grassland habitat will also be temporarily disturbed during habitat enhancement activities.

The long-term effect of the project on natural communities would be beneficial as post construction conditions would more closely reflect historic habitat conditions that may have been present within the watershed. Disturbance to stream and riparian habitat is regulated by CDFW under CFGC 1600 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA). The RCD would prepare a permit application and comply with all protective measures outlined in the LSAA for the project.

Short-term construction related impacts on natural communities would be avoided and minimized through implementation of measures outlined in the project permits, combined with implementation of BMPs provided in Table 2. In addition, Mitigation Measures BIO-8 and BIO-9 as described below would reduce the impact to less than significant. **Less than significant with mitigation**.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, and coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Implementation of the project would result in direct impacts to 0.31 acres of open water habitat, which is federally protected and regulated by USACE and RWQCB. Temporary disturbance to open water habitat will be minimized through implementation of BMPs identified in Table 2 and with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-8 as described below. In addition to the measures listed in this IS/MND the RCD will obtain the appropriate regulatory permits through consultation with USACE, RWQCB and CDFW. All regulatory permits will contain appropriate minimization measures to reduce and/or avoid impacts to sensitive natural communities and federally protected aquatic habitat. The applicant will provide relevant information about the project site(s) to the appropriate regulatory agencies. The applicant will abide by all requirements contained in the Section 404/401 permit to ensure that there will not be a net loss of wetland function or values.

Impact BIO-8: Construction activities in open water may result in direct effects on open water habitat as a result of increased sedimentation rates and/or turbidity concentrations if fine sediment is mobilized within, or discharged to this resource. Increased sedimentation and turbidity may also adversely affect water quality and substrate composition. Temporary increases in turbidity levels would be minimized through installation of a turbidity curtain and implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-8. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Open Water Protective Measures

- The project applicant would implement the BMPs outlined in Table 2 to minimize stormwater runoff, erosion, and potential water quality impacts associated with construction activities. In addition, all contractors working in a capacity that could increase the potential for adverse water quality impacts shall receive training regarding the environmental sensitivity of the site and need to minimize impacts. Contractors shall be trained in implementation of stormwater BMPs for protection of water quality.

- No debris, rubbish, creosote-treated wood, soil, silt, sand, cement, concrete, or washings thereof, or other construction related materials or wastes, oil or petroleum products or other organic or earthen material shall be allowed to enter into, or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into open water habitat and/or waters of the State. Any of these materials placed within or where they may enter waters shall be removed immediately. When operations are completed, any excess material shall be removed from the work area and any areas adjacent to the work area where such material may be washed into adjacent waters.

- During construction the contractor shall not dump any litter or construction debris within the riparian/stream zone. All such debris and waste shall be picked up daily and properly disposed of at an appropriate site.

- Any excavation necessary shall be completed from outside of wetlands, where feasible, by using an excavator or backhoe tractor, thereby limiting the driving of heavy equipment across wetlands.

- Prohibit vehicular and equipment refueling 100 feet from the edge of other wetlands, streams, or waterways. If refueling must be conducted closer to wetlands, construct a secondary containment area subject to review by the RCD and/or consulting biologist. Maintain spill prevention and cleanup equipment in refueling areas.

Impact BIO-9: Disturbance to seasonal wetland and freshwater marsh habitat during proposed project activities would improve ecological functionality of the pond and associated margin wetlands. Temporal loss of wetland habitat during construction will be avoided and minimized through implementation of BMPs described in Table 2, implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-8 as described above, and implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-9 as described below. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure BIO-9: Wetland Protective Measures

- Prior to the start of construction within areas containing sensitive biological resources, the biological monitor should delineate and conspicuously flag all sensitive aquatic resources to prevent impacts to

these resources. If required, setback or non-disturbance buffer zones around these resources should be established and monitored by a biologist.

- Construction activities nearby or within aquatic habitats should be limited to the maximum extent feasible.
- Any aquatic habitat that does not fall within the construction footprint should be flagged and avoided.
- Work within waters should be conducted during the dry season, when water is not flowing, to the extent possible.
- Worker environmental awareness training should be conducted for all construction crews and contractors. The education training should be conducted prior to starting work on the project and upon the arrival of any new worker. The training should include: locations of sensitive areas; possible fines for violations; environmental permits and regulatory compliance requirements including all relevant avoidance and mitigation measures, and required actions should sensitive species be encountered. Additional training should be conducted as needed, including morning "tailgate" sessions to update crews as they advance into sensitive areas for projects with multiple work areas. In addition, a record of all personnel trained during the project should be maintained for compliance verification.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project would result in improved conditions for the movement of native fish and wildlife species over the long term. The enhancement and restoration of wetland and upland habitat would have no effect on fish passage through the adjacent Butano Creek, nor would project activities interfere with movement of wildlife through the creek system. The proposed project would expand wetland habitat, which would have a beneficial effect on movement of SFGS and CRLF and improved conditions for other native wildlife species. Temporary disturbance to movement of native or resident species during implementation of restoration and enhancement activities would have minimal impact given the proportion of available suitable habitat in the immediate vicinity of project site. **Less than significant**.

The Project Area is actively grazed and maintained for agricultural uses. On-going maintenance activities proposed under this project would not change compared to the existing operations and use of the Project Area. Operation of the project would not interfere with the movements or migrations of fish or wildlife or impede use of a known wildlife nursery site because there would be no change to baseline operating conditions. **Less than significant.**

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

The proposed project is consistent with all local policies and/or ordinances. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9 are derived, in part, from PG&E's Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Habitat Conservation Plan (ICF 2017). The RCD will comply with the appropriate HCP measures provided in the PG&E HCP. These measures

have been fully vetted by appropriate conservation and regulatory agencies for project impacts on covered species. **Less than significant.**

CULTURAL RESOURCES / TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5.				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5.		X		
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.		X		
d) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either: 1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe, that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k), or 2) a resource determined by a lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code § 5024.1 (c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				X

Comments:

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a project would have an adverse impact on a significant cultural resource (Public Resources Code § 21084, 21084.1, 21083.2). A resource can be a precontact or historic structure, object, site, or district, and is considered significant if:

- It is listed in or has been determined eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR);
- It is included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Public Resources Code 5020.1(k);

- It has been identified as a significant in an historical resources survey, as defined in Public Resources Code 5024.1(g); or

- It is determined to be historically significant by the CEQA lead agency [CCR Title 14, §15064.5(a)].

The CRHR eligibility criteria are used to determine significance. A significant resource must meet one of the four criteria, as follows:

- The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns or California's history and cultural heritage;

- The resource is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

- The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

- The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

If a significant resource would be impacted, the project applicant must determine whether there is substantial evidence in the administrative record to support a finding of significant effect (§ 21080(e)). CEQA requires examination of mitigation measures or feasible project alternatives that would avoid or minimize any impacts or potential impacts.

Effective July 1, 2015, Assembly Bill 52 amended CEQA to mandate consultation with California Native American tribes during the CEQA process to determine whether or not the proposed project may have a significant impact on a Tribal Cultural Resource, and that this consideration be made separately from cultural and paleontological resources. Section 21073 of the Public Resources Code defines California Native American tribes as "a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004." This includes both federally and non–federally recognized tribes. Section 21074(a) of the Public Resource Code defines Tribal Cultural Resources for the purpose of CEQA as:

- Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (geographically defined in terms of the size and scope), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are any of the following:

- Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR; and/or

- Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of § 5020.1; and/or

- A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of § 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Because criteria listed above also meet the definition of a Historical Resource under CEQA, a Tribal Cultural Resource may also require additional consideration as a Historical Resource. Tribal Cultural Resources may or may not exhibit archaeological, cultural, or physical indicators.

AB 52 requires that CEQA lead agencies carry out consultation with tribes at the commencement of the CEQA process to identify Tribal Cultural Resources. Furthermore, because a significant effect on a Tribal Cultural Resource is considered a significant impact on the environment under CEQA, consultation is required to develop appropriate avoidance, impact minimization, and mitigation measures. Consultation is concluded when either the lead agency and tribes agree to appropriate mitigation measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, or when a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached (21080.3.2[b], whereby the lead agency uses its best judgement in requiring mitigation measures that avoid or minimize impact to the greatest extent feasible.

Methodology

On January 7, 2016 a record search of the database at the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at Sonoma State University (NWIC File # 15-0821) was completed to determine if archaeological or historic resources are present within and adjacent to the Project area. An archaeological survey was conducted within and adjacent to Project Area by Mark Hylkema, RPA in July 2016 and again in February 2020 (Hylkema 2016; Hylkema 2020). The Area of Potential Effect included the entire project site, staging and access areas. Hylkema determined that two archaeological resources are present outside the Project area, approximately 100 meters south of Butano Creek. Hylkema prepared a Historic Properties Survey Report in support of the proposed project (Hylkema 2020). He concluded that although two significant ancestral Native American archaeological sites were found to exist with about 100 meters southwest of the project Area of Potential Effect (sites SMA-184 and SMA-185), neither are currently threatened or in any way involved with the proposed project. Furthermore, both sites are protected by an existing Environmentally Sensitive Area established on behalf of POST during a prior stream restoration project (Hylkema 2016).

In compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, Hylkema prepared an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) that included the analytical findings derived from minor subsurface archaeological testing, delineated site boundaries, and established the significance of these cultural resources (Hylkema 2015). As mentioned above, these two existing resources will not be impacted by the proposed project activities.

Additional archival research included examination of the library and project files. Sources of information included but were not limited to the current listings of properties on the National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, and California Points of Historical Interest.

Would the Project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5.

Neither the literature review nor the archaeological survey found evidence of ancestral Native American cultural resources or historic archaeological resources within the project Area of Potential Effect (Hylkema 2020). Therefore, it is concluded that the project as proposed will not impact or otherwise affect any historical resources. **No Impact.**

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5.

Impact CUL-1: There are no known archeological resources that would be impacted by project activities (Hylkema 2020). Because the project involves excavation and dirt moving activities there is a chance that archaeological resources may be discovered during project activities. For this reason, the RCD will provide training to all construction personnel on cultural resources identification. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Conduct Identification Training and Stop Work if Archaeological Resources are Encountered During Construction

- The construction contractor shall participate in a cultural and paleontological resource identification training session by a qualified archaeologist in order to be aware of the potential resources that might be uncovered. If archaeological or paleontological resources are encountered during project construction, work shall be temporarily halted in the vicinity of the discovered materials and construction contractor shall avoid altering these materials and their context until a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist has evaluated the resource. Recommendations on how to treat the resource may include evaluation, preservation in place, archaeological test excavation and/or archaeological data recovery, and a draft and final report documenting such activities.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Impact CUL-2: Excavation during project construction may disturb unrecorded Native American remains. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would reduce this potential impact. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Stop Work if Human Remains are Discovered During Construction

If at any time during site preparation, excavation, or other ground disturbance associated with the proposed project, human remains are discovered, the construction contractor shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and notify the RCD. The RCD shall notify the sheriff-coroner. If the coroner determines the remains are Native American, the coroner will contact the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission will identify the person or persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent makes recommendations regarding the treatment of the remains with appropriate dignity. Disturbance shall not resume until the significance of the human remains is determined and appropriate mitigations to preserve the resource on the site are established.

e) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either:

1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe, that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k), or

2) a resource determined by a lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code § 5024.1 (c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

CEQA analyses must consider "tribal cultural values, as well as scientific and archaeological values when determining impacts and mitigation." Tribal Cultural Resources are defined as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe" that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources or local registers of historical resources.

The RCD is prepared to consult with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area that the proposed project is within. To date, no tribe has contacted San Mateo RCD or POST. No other comments have been received as of the date of this report. **No Impact**.

ENERGY

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?				X
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X

Comments:

In 2018 former Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 100 committing California to obtaining 60% of its electric energy from carbon-free sources and 100% of electric energy coming from renewable sources by the year 2045. The former governor also signed an executive order establishing a target for the State to be carbon-neutral by 2045.

Would the Program:

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

During project construction, energy would be consumed to produce and transport construction materials. Energy used for the restoration activities would be a one-time, non-recoverable energy cost. Although measurable, the energy used for project construction would not require significant additional capacity nor significantly increase peak- or base-period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.

Operation and maintenance activities include management and removal of invasive species, which may require use of electric or gas powered small machinery. The upland habitat that will be enhanced during Project activities are also currently used for livestock grazing and grazing will continue in a manner that is consistent with and an important component of meeting the biological and ecological goals of this Project. Management and maintenance of the Project Area after enhancement activities would not significantly increase energy use compared to baseline conditions. **Less than significant**.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The proposed project consists of enhancing habitat for wildlife and is consistent with State goals for decreasing dependence on non-renewable sources of energy. Enhancing the Project Area under both options would not conflict with existing state or local plans for renewable energy. **No impact.**

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. ii) Strong seismic ground shaking. iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. iv) Landslides.				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water.				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		

Comments:

The 65-acre Project Area is located within the Central Coast subregion near the boundary of the San Francisco Bay Area subregion of the California Floristic Province in the Butano Creek watershed, which is part of the

Pescadero Creek watershed. The elevation ranges from 21 ft. to 425 ft. and like other central California coastal locations, the area experiences a maritime, Mediterranean climate characterized by cool, wet winters and mild, dry summers.

Before Butano Farms was owned by POST, the property was used for farming flax, artichokes, peas, and a cow-calf grazing. Currently, the property is used for farming and cattle grazing. In addition to pasture and cropland, a large portion of the Butano property is floodplain.

Soils within the Project Area consist of Tierra, Botella, Gazos, and Lobitos soils over Purisima Formation geology. The property has undergone chemical reactions from the ocean, sun exposure from south facing slopes, and various farm management practices in the past. The Conservation & Carbon Plan prepared for this analysis explains that the properties of the underlying geology in the area is prone to gullying.

Baseline monitoring of soil carbon conducted in 2015, supplemented with data from the NRCS Web Soil Survey, indicated that soil carbon levels range from 1.2 to 3.2% (in the 0-10 cm depth) and 1.2 to 2.2% in the 10-40 cm depth. The highest levels of soil carbon are in the eastern portions of Lemonade and northern section of Western Restoration pastures. The lowest soil carbon occurs at the easternmost portion of Eastern Restoration pasture, and the Fields.

Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death due to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

The nearest active fault to the project site is the San Gregorio fault zone. The California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zoning Act mandates that the California Geological Survey identify rupture hazard zones near active fault lines. These rupture hazard zones, published on CGS maps, represent areas of substantial risk of surface rupture. According to these maps, the project site is not within or immediately adjacent to the CGS rupture hazard zones. In addition, proposed project would not expose people or habitable structures to potential substantial adverse effects due to rupture of a known earthquake fault, seismic groundshaking, liquefaction, or landslides because the project implementation features have been designed to Federal and State building standards. This reduces all potential hazards from seismic groundshaking, liquefaction or landslides. N**o impact.**

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

Proposed project activities include the following restoration actions aimed at enhancing both aquatic and upland habitat, as well as improving the quality of the soil:

- Excavate existing pond to increase the depth and area of open water;
- Remove selected patches of woody vegetation adjacent to the pond and grade a shallow open bench in transition areas between the open water and the adjacent uplands;
- Reduce erosion and sediment transport through creation of a sediment collection forebay upstream of the existing pond; and

- Restore grassland habitat within the pond's watershed through modifications to grazing regime, reduction of woody encroachment, treatment of invasive plants, application of soil amendments, and seeding with native grasses.

To further minimize on-going bank erosion along the pond edges caused by cattle, the proposed project will create areas for cattle to access the pond (drinking water source), or alternative water systems, which will distribute cattle across the landscape and reduce direct impacts to the pond. In addition, mulching will be utilized as a standard practice for improving land surfaces.

Construction activities involving soil disturbance during the excavation of the existing pond and the removal of selected patches of woody vegetation may as excavation, stockpiling, and grading could result in increased erosion. However, the overall purpose of the project is to reduce erosion through soil enhancement, therefore the minimal erosion that might occur will be off-set by the proposed enhanced soil measures and grassland maintenance.

Prior to construction, photo monitoring of the pond and upland areas will be completed to establish a baseline condition. Regular, frequent monitoring will occur regularly during the initial phase of project implementation to determine whether the project aligns with specifications established in designs and permit conditions. For the first five years following implementation, bi-annual monitoring will be conducted in the spring and fall and the attached photo monitoring and rapid assessment sheets. From six to 30 years following implementation monitoring will be conducted every other year. Monitoring results will allow the RCD to determine whether sediment management, vegetation management or other actions are necessary to meet the project's established goals. Due to the nature of the restoration-based project and implementation of these enhancement measures, impact to soil erosion or loss of topsoil is expected. **Less than significant**.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

As the project focuses on enhancement measures and improvements as opposed to a development project, the proposed project would not affect the stability of the geologic unit or soil or result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. **Less than significant.**

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 181-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.

The project is not located on expansive soils. The restoration of upland habitat and the establishment of wetland habitat would not result in any significant adverse short- or long-term impacts related to geology, soils or seismicity and there would be no substantial risk to life or property. **Less than significant.**

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water.

No septic tanks are proposed for the proposed project. **No impact.**

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

As described in the cultural resources section, no cultural resources were found within the Project Area. However, given that the Project Area is currently an undeveloped and undisturbed parcel of land, there is the possibility that unique paleontological and/or geologic features could be accidentally discovered and/or directly or indirectly destroyed during ground-disturbing activities associated with restoration activities. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2 as described under Cultural Resources will reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources that may be discovered. In addition, compliance with federal and State laws provide protection of paleontological resources at the site by requiring construction activities to cease in the event of discovery of paleontological resources. **Less than significant with mitigation.**

GREENHOUSE GAS

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

Comments:

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are referred to as greenhouse gases (GHGs) because they capture heat radiated from the sun as it is reflected back into the atmosphere, much like a greenhouse does. The accumulation of GHGs has been implicated as the driving force for global climate change. The primary GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O), ozone, and water vapor. While the presence of the primary GHGs in the atmosphere are naturally occurring, they are also emitted from human activities, accelerating the rate at which these compounds occur within earth's atmosphere.

There is international scientific consensus that human-caused increases in GHGs have and would continue to contribute to global warming. Potential global warming impacts in California may include, but are not limited to, loss in snow pack, sea level rise, more extreme heat days per year, more high ozone days, more large forest fires, and more drought years. Secondary effects are likely to include a global rise in sea level, impacts to agriculture, changes in disease vectors, and changes in habitat and biodiversity. California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill No. 32; California Health and Safety Code Division 25.5, Sections 38500, et seq., or AB 32), which requires CARB to design and implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures, such that statewide GHG emissions will be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020.

The BAAQMD is the primary agency responsible for air quality regulation in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin. As part of that role, the BAAQMD has prepared *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* (May 2017) that provide CEQA thresholds of significance for operational GHG emissions from land use projects (i.e., 1,100 metric tons of CO2e per year, which is also considered the definition of a cumulatively considerable contribution to the global GHG burden and, therefore, of a significant cumulative impact), but has not defined thresholds for project construction GHG emissions. The Guidelines methodology and thresholds of significance have been used in this Initial Study's analysis of potential GHG impacts associated with the Project.

Would the Project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

The CalEEMod model (Version 2016.3.2) was used to quantify GHG emissions associated with proposed project construction activities (Appendix B). The estimated construction GHG emissions would be 49.9 metric tons of

CO2e (for which there is no BAAQMD CEQA significance threshold). There would be no new operational GHG emissions after Project construction is complete. **Less than significant.**

b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Since there would be no permanent net new GHG contributed by the proposed project, it would be consistent with the GHG reduction targets adopted by the State of California. The project does not conflict with any plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions nor conflict with any BAAQMD or State policies to reduce GHG emissions. **No impact.**

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List," prepared by the California Integrated Waste Management Board) and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project Area.				X
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.			X	
g) Expose people or structures either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.				X

Would the Project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

The proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. No routine transportation or disposals of hazardous materials are proposed. However, during construction, fuel would be used at the project site and re-fueling may occur within the limits of the staging areas. Implementation of the project-wide BMPs (Table 2) by the construction contractor would ensure impacts from hazardous materials are **less than significant**.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Construction activities would involve the use of certain potentially hazardous materials such as fuels as described above. These materials would be used according to manufacturer's specifications and would be contained within vessels engineered for safe storage. Storage of large quantities of these materials at the construction site is not anticipated. The RCD would require their construction contractor to prepare a Health and Safety Plan that includes a project-specific contingency plan for hazardous materials and waste operations before construction activities can begin. Preparation and implementation of the Health and Safety Plan would ensure impacts from hazardous materials releases are controlled. **Less than significant**.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

The proposed project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest school, Pescadero High School, is approximately .56 mile northeast of the project site. At this distance, any accidental emissions of hazardous materials would not be expected to pose a threat. **No impact**.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List," prepared by the California Integrated Waste Management Board) and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

The proposed project is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5, which is DTSC's Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese List) (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2019) and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The closest State Response Site is at Los Altos Cleaners in Lost Altos off of Highway 280, approximately 25 miles east of the project site (EnviroStor website 2019).

As described under b) above, the RCD will require their construction contractor prepare and submit a Health and Safety Plan, with specific provisions to protect both workers and the public during construction. **No impact.**

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project Area?

The proposed project is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The Half Moon Bay Airport is located 20 miles north of the project location. The closest private airstrip is the Bonny Doon Village Airport, which is located approximately 13 miles south of the project site. The project site is not shown in the San Mateo County's Safety Compatibility Zones due to the distance between the project site and existing airports. There would be no airport-related safety hazard. **No impact.**

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The proposed project would not conflict with implementation of the County of San Mateo Emergency Operations Plan (San Mateo County 2015). The San Mateo County Fire Department headquarters is located 1.2 miles NW of the project site, on Pescadero Creek Road. The proposed project would not be expected to interfere with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. **Less than significant.**

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

According to San Mateo County's Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map located on the County website, the project site is located in an area designated as "Other Moderate". This area is less susceptible to fire because of the surrounding vegetation and often, the increased response times of firefighting agencies. The project would not alter the existing level of wildfire risk and therefore would not expose people or structures to increased fire hazards. **No impact.**

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality.			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would				
i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.			X	
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.				X
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.			X	
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows.			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.				X

Comments:

A long-term goal of the proposed project is to minimize on-going erosion and siltation of the aquatic habitat within the Project Area. The Project Area is adjacent to the Butano Creek Floodplain Restoration Project site, a recently competed San Mateo RCD, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and POST habitat enhancement project that reconnected 100 acres of historic floodplain to the Butano Creek channel. Butano Creek is south of the Project area and generally flows east to west from the Santa Cruz Mountains to Pescadero Marsh – which is approximately 1.1 mile west-northwest of the Project – and then to the Pacific Ocean, which is approximately 2 miles west of the Project area. San Mateo County is currently drafting a county-wide flood emergency preparedness and response program, in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services. When complete, the plan will include public outreach and training, upgrade and expansion of the flood warning system, and the creation of updated and new planning documents that address site-specific and county-wide flood hazards (San Mateo County 2019).

Would the Project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

The proposed project would not contribute a substantial source of waste discharge into any waters within the Project Area. Pond excavation and in-water construction activities would be conducted using equipment staged in upland areas (i.e., no heavy equipment would enter channels), construction equipment could release contaminants such as oil, grease, and fuel into adjacent water bodies, which could degrade water quality and potentially violate water quality standards for specific chemicals, dissolved oxygen, oil and grease, suspended sediment or toxicity. This impact would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of the BMPs provided in Table 2. **Less than significant.**

Pescadero Creek is listed on the impaired waters list for sedimentation and the proposed project will ultimately result in improved water quality conditions by reducing erosion and sedimentation. No water quality standards or waste discharge requirements would be violated. Therefore, this project would have a beneficial effect on water quality. **Less than significant.**

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

The proposed project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. **No impact.**

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

The proposed project would reduce transport of eroded upland sediment into the existing 1 acre pond and adjacent Butano Creek through creation of a forebay and sediment catchment basins. This system will capture large sediment size particles (i.e. sand) before they reach the pond and adjacent aquatic habitat. In upland

areas within the drainage area, the project includes soil management practices like prescribed grazing, mulching and seeding or planting; all of which will improve soil health and further reduce erosion rates.

During construction, siltation and erosion will be avoided through implementation of BMPs listed in Table 2. Thus, implementation of the project will reduce erosion throughout the Project Area and will ultimately result in a beneficial effect on water quality within the watershed. **Less than significant.**

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Implementation of the proposed project would improve the drainage pattern throughout the site with a series of benches and berms that will minimize sediment flowing downstream into the existing pond and adjacent Pescadero Creek. The proposed project would improve existing drainage patterns of the site and it would not increase the rate or amount of surface water runoff. The project would have a beneficial effect on drainage and function of the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite. **Less than significant.**

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

The proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water that could exceed the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems. Implement the BMPs provided in Table 2 would guide the management and operation of construction activities to control and minimize the potential contribution of pollutants to stormwater runoff. The use of standard erosion control techniques during project construction activities would reduce the potential for any water quality impacts. **Less than significant**.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

The project would not place any structures that would impede or redirect flood flows. As described in *ii* above, flows into Pescadero Creek would be minimized through creation of a series of benches and berms that will reduce sediment flowing from upland areas downstream into the existing pond. **Less than significant.**

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Although the proposed project is located within the 100-year floodplain as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the project does not risk release of pollutant due to project inundation because the Project Area consists of native habitats (FEMA 1997). The enhancement activities considered in this analysis would not expose users to pollutants in the event of a flood. Tsunamis are triggered in a body of water by a sudden movement, such as a large-scale slump or slide, which is often caused by earthquakes, movement of the oceans crust, or large explosions. Tsunamis have extremely long wave periods and wavelengths and can travel at great speeds. The potential of a tsunami to cause great damage to coastal communities depends on coastline orientation, coastline shape, and local bathymetry (Ingmanson and Wallace 1995). The proposed project would

not expose people to inundation by Tsunami waves, nor would a tsunami pose a significant threat to the proposed infrastructure. **No impact**.

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community.				X
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.			X	

Comments:

The proposed project is consistent with San Mateo County's General Plan Policies for Vegetative, Water Fish and Wildlife Resources (San Mateo County 2013a). These policies describe the goals and policies regarding the development, management, and preservation of San Mateo County's natural resources, including areas required for plant and animal habitat or for ecological and scientific study. Butano Farms is part of the larger Cloverdale Coastal Ranch and is managed in accordance with several other management plans and programs. Implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with the conservation goals set forth under County policies and Cloverdale Coastal Ranch management plans.

Would the Project:

a) Physically divide an established community.

The project site currently consists of grazed agricultural lands and wildlife habitat. There are no neighborhoods adjacent to the Project Area. **No impact**.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

The guidelines of the Coastal Act and San Mateo County Local Coastal Plan commonly promote public beach access, the protection of the coastal aesthetic, coastal-dependent land uses centered on recreation and the visitor experience, and restoration and ongoing maintenance of sensitive species habitats (e.g., coastal wetlands and marine waters) (San Mateo County 2013b). The project does not interfere with beach access or involve recreational access. Therefore, the project would not be expected to conflict with any Coastal Act or San Mateo County LCP policy pertaining to access or recreation.

The proposed project would follow the existing aesthetic and would not degrade the quality of this State scenic resource. The project would not be expected to conflict with any Coastal Act or San Mateo County LCP policy pertaining to scenic or visual resources. Additional information on the proposed project's impact on scenic and visual resources is available in the Aesthetics subsection of this document.

The project site contains valuable habitat for a protected species (SFGS and CRLF) and therefore has limited land uses according to the Coastal Act. Land uses and actions typically permitted within sensitive habitat and wetland areas include coastal and resource-dependent uses, scientific research, and restoration and maintenance of natural physical resources (e.g. fish and wildlife). The purpose of the project is to maintain and improve the existing wildlife habitat. For these reasons, the project would not conflict with Coastal Act or policies pertaining to land uses within or adjacent to sensitive habitats and wetlands. Further discussion on the project's short-term impact on sensitive species and their habitats is available in the Biological Resources and Hydrology and Water Quality subsections of this document.

Implementation of the proposed project would not require land use plan or general plan amendments (San Mateo County 2013). For these reasons, the project would not conflict with any other local land use policies or ordinances. **Less than significant**.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.				X

Comments:

The California Geological Survey provides objective economic-geologic expertise to assist in the protection and development of mineral resources through the land-use planning process. This effort is mandated by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975. The proposed project is not located in an area known to contain minerals that would be of value to the region or residents of the state (California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology 2020).

Would the Project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.

There are no mines, mineral plants, oil, gas, or geothermal wells located at the project site. According to the *Generalized Mineral Land Classification Map of the Monterey Bay*, the proposed project site is not within a mineral resource zone. There are no significant mineral deposits present and it is not judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence. Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of a known mineral resource. **No impact.**

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.

Locally important mineral resources are not delineated in any local land use plans for the project area, including the San Mateo General Plan. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. **No impact.**

NOISE

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.			X	
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.			X	
c) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the Project Area to excessive noise levels.				X

Comments:

Sound is created when vibrating objects produce pressure variations that move rapidly outward into the surrounding air. The more powerful the pressure variations, the louder the sound perceived by a listener. The decibel (dB) is the standard measure of loudness relative to the human threshold of perception. Noise is a sound or series of sounds that are intrusive, objectionable or disruptive to daily life. Many factors influence how a sound is perceived and whether it is considered disturbing to a listener; these include the physical characteristics of sound (e.g., loudness, pitch, duration, etc.) and other factors relating to the situation of the listener (e.g., the time of day when it occurs, the acuity of a listener's hearing, the activity of the listener during exposure, etc.). Environmental noise has many documented undesirable effects on human health and welfare, either psychological (e.g., annoyance and speech interference) or physiological (e.g., hearing impairment and sleep disturbance).

Just as vibrating objects radiate sound through the air, if they are in contact with the ground, they also radiate acoustical energy through the ground. If such an object is massive enough and/or close enough to an observer, the ground vibrations can be perceptible and, if the vibrations are strong enough, they can cause annoyance to the observer and, if still stronger, damage to buildings. Annoyance and structural damage correlate strongly with the velocity produced by the vibration source at receptor locations. The vibration metric most commonly used to correlate vibration levels with human annoyance and structural damage is the vibration decibel (VdB).

Environmental Setting

The project site is located in a rural, unincorporated area of San Mateo County about 0.75 miles southeast of the town of Pescadero. The predominant land uses around the project site, agricultural and open space, are not

noise-sensitive. The closest noise-sensitive uses (residential) are in the town of Pescadero, and there is a school (Pescadero High School) about 0.75 miles to the northwest.

Regulatory Setting

The San Mateo County General Plan contains the following noise control goals, objectives and definitions

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

16.1 Strive Toward a Livable Noise Environment

- Strive toward an environment for all residents of San Mateo County which is free from unnecessary, annoying, and injurious noise.

16.2 Reduce Noise Impacts Through Noise/Land Use Compatibility and Noise Mitigation

- Reduce noise impacts within San Mateo County through measures which promote noise/land use compatibility and noise mitigation.

16.3 Promote Protection of Noise Sensitive Land Uses and Noise Reduction in Quiet Areas and Noise Impact Areas

- Promote measures which: (1) protect noise sensitive land uses, (2) preserve and protect existing quiet areas, especially those which contain noise sensitive land uses, and (3) promote noise compatibility in Noise Impact Areas (i.e., defined as areas experiencing noise levels of 60 dB CNEL[1] or greater).

Noise emissions within the County of San Mateo are also regulated by the County Code, Chapter 4.88 – Noise Control:

330 - Exterior noise standards.

- It is unlawful for any person at any location within the unincorporated area of the County to create any noise, or to allow the creation of any noise on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person which causes the exterior noise level when measured at any single or multiple family residence, school, hospital, church, public library situated in either the incorporated or unincorporated area to exceed the noise level standards as set forth in NOISE Table-I following:

[1] CNEL, the Community Noise Equivalent Level, is a 24–hour average sound level with a 5 dB "penalty" added to sound levels occurring in the evening between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., and a 10 dB penalty added to sound levels occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Table NOISE-I. Receiving Land Use: Single or Multiple Family Residence, School, Hospital, Church, or Public Library Properties

NOISE LEVEL STANDARDS, dB			
Category	Cumulative Number of Minutes in any one-hour time period	Daytime 7 A.M.—10 P.M.	Nighttime 10 P.M.—7 A.M.
1	30	55	50
2	15	60	55
3	5	65	60
4	1	70	65
5	0	75	70

The County Code contains the following exemption for construction noise (Section 4.88.360):

The following activities shall be exempted from the provisions of this chapter:

- Noise sources associated with demolition, construction, repair, remodeling, or grading of any real property, provided said activities do not take place between the hours of 6:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. weekdays, 5:00 P.M. and 9:00 A.M. on Saturdays or at any time on Sundays, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Would the Project:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) was used to estimate the noise levels at various distances from the locus of construction work produced by the project working group consisting of a dump truck, a dozer, an excavator, and a front-end loader, with results as displayed **NOISE Table-2**.

Table NOISE-2. RCNM Modeled Project Construction Noise Levels

Distance from Area of Construction Activity (feet)	Average Construction Daytime Noise Level L_{eq} (dBA)	Maximum Construction Daytime Noise Level Lmax (dBA)
50	82	82
100	76	76
200	70	70
400	64	64
800	58	58
1600	52	52

At distances of 1200 feet and greater, the noise levels produced by the project working group would fall below the levels deemed significant under the County standards established in the County Code (see NOISE Table-1 above). Further, project working hours will be with the limits established by the County Code for construction activity. **Less than Significant.**

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

There are no standards in the San Mateo General Plan or County Code for avoiding/reducing annoyance or structural damage from vibration impacts. It is most common for government agencies to rely on assessment methodologies, impact standards and vibration-reduction strategies developed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (FTA 2006). According to the FTA, limiting vibration levels to 94 VdB or less would avoid structural damage to wood and masonry buildings (which are typical of most residential uses), while limiting vibration levels to 80 VdB or less at residential buildings would avoid significant annoyance to the occupants.

The most vibration-intensive piece of construction equipment is a pile driver, which can introduce a substantial potential for annoyance at sensitive receptors within 1000 feet; other types of construction equipment are far less vibration-intensive. Yet all construction equipment has the potential for causing annoyance and/or structural damage if the construction activity is too close to vibration-sensitive receptors. But the project site is about 4000 feet from the nearest local vibration-sensitive receptor. According to FTA vibration screening methodology, this would be far outside the range where there would be a substantial potential for on-going annoyance or structural damage from project construction vibration**. Less than significant**.

c) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the Project Area to excessive noise levels?

The proposed project is not located within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The closest major airport to the project site is San Jose International Airport, about 25 miles to the east. **Less than significant.**

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.				X

Would the Project:

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project would not induce any population growth in the area because the project does not propose any physical or regulatory change that would remove a restriction to or encourage population growth in an area. **No impact**.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project would not displace any existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. **No impact**.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:				
i) Fire protection.				X
ii) Police protection.				X
iii) Schools.				X
iv) Parks.				X
v) Other public facilities.				X

Would the Project:

a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services: i) fire protection; ii) police protection; iii) schools; iv) parks; or v) other public facilities?

The proposed project would enhance habitat for protected wildlife species. No physical or environmental impacts associated with the provision of new or altered governmental facilities would result. **No impact**.

RECREATION

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.				X
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.				X

Comments:

The Project Area currently does not have any recreational facilities or public access facilities and will not in the future. The Butano Farms Project Area is grazed and will continue to be grazed for the long term. Public access is not conducive to the ecological goals of the project.

Would the Project:

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

The Project Area does not provide recreational access or facilities to the public. **No impact.**

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The Project Area does not currently provide recreational access or facilities not does the project include construction of such facilities. **No impact.**

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3 (b)?			X	
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	

Would the Project:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Traffic generating construction activities related to project construction would consist of daily arrival and departure of construction workers at the site and trucks hauling equipment and materials to and from the project site for approximately 10 weeks during the summer and fall. Once on the site, construction equipment and vehicles would have no adverse impact on traffic circulation systems. This temporary increase in traffic would not result in any exceedance of the capacity of existing circulation systems as designated in any general plan or ordinance. **Less than significant.**

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?

In July 2020 CEQA Guidelines require project proponents to evaluate impacts based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and § 15064.3 sets for the criteria and methodology for evaluating these impacts. The proposed project would generate inherently low vehicles miles traveled (VMT) for potential increase in visitors accessing the improved Project Area post-construction and short term increases of VMT during construction activities. Impacts associated with construction-related emissions have been evaluated and mitigated in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas subsections of this document and therefore does not require additional transportation evaluation or analyses. Proposed construction hours would be between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to be consistent with local municipal codes. The RCD would obtain all necessary local road encroachment permits prior to construction and would comply with all the applicable conditions of approval. The project is consistent with SB 743. **Less than significant.**

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

The proposed project would not change the design or alignment of nearby roadways and would not introduce vehicles that are not already travelling on area roads. Construction-generated traffic to and from the site would be temporary. The number of construction trucks on the project site would be very limited and existing access roads and roadways can sufficiently handle the minor increase in traffic associated with project construction. **Less than significant.**

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Similar to c) above, the construction contractor would establish methods for maintaining traffic flow and minimizing disruption to emergency vehicle access to land uses within the vicinity of the Project Area. . **Less than significant**.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water or wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.				X
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?				X
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.				X
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.				X
e) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.				X

Would the Project:

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water or wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The proposed project would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water or wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. It would be the responsibility of the construction contractor to obtain water that would be used for dust control during construction activities. The contractor would obtain water from an off-site source and truck it to the Project Area. **No impact.**

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

The proposed Program does not require water entitlements. **No impact.**

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The proposed project would not require wastewater treatment and therefore would have no impact on wastewater demands or providers. **No impact.**

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

The proposed project would not generate solid waste. While construction workers may generate solid waste, it would not be in excess or of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure. **No impact.**

e) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The proposed project and project contractor would be required to comply with all pertinent regulations regarding the disposal of solid waste generated by construction activities. **No impact**.

WILDFIRE

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Is the project located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones? If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?			X	
c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				X
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?			X	

Would the Project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The proposed project would not conflict with implementation of San Mateo County Emergency Operations Plan (San Mateo County 2015). No impact to an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation Plan would occur from project implementation. **No impact.**

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Modifications to the landscape as proposed will not increase risk of wildfire and the proposed project is not located in an area designated by the County of San Mateo as a high severity Fire Hazard Area. The project design

incorporates all applicable fire safety code requirements and includes fire protection devices as required by the local fire agency (San Mateo County 2015). **Less than significant.**

c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Implementation of the proposed project will not result in new roads, trails, or utilities being installed and therefore, will not result in new infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risk or result in on-going impacts to the environment. **No impact.**

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Implementation of the project will not result in post-fire slope instability or increase risk of downstream flooding or risk of landslides. Project activities would improve long-term conditions for Butano Creek and downstream Pescadero Marsh by creating a system of berms and wetlands aimed at decreasing large flows and minimizing sediment entering Butano Creek. **Less than significant.**

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Environmental Factors and Focused Questions for Determination of Environmental Impact	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to 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?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

Would the Project:

a) Does the project have the potential to 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?

Implementation of the proposed project would benefit the quality of the environment; improve habitat for SFGS and CRLF as well as other upland and aquatic species within the vicinity of Butano Farms. None of the activities proposed under the project would eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory. Temporary impacts associated with construction during proposed activities would be short term and localized. Furthermore, all potentially significant impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the mitigation measures described in the resource sections of this IS/MND and through implementation of measures required by regulatory agencies during the permitting phase of the project. No long-term adverse impacts were identified and construction and operation of the proposed project would not permanently degrade the quality of the environment. **Less than significant.**

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

CEQA Guidelines (§ 15355[b]) define cumulative impacts as those resulting from closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects. CEQA Guidelines (§ 15125[a]) also define the analytical baseline as the conditions on the ground at the time that the Initial Study is prepared. Impacts of past projects are generally considered as part of these baseline conditions.

Restoration and enhancement activities associated with the proposed project could potentially contribute to cumulative impacts in conjunction with other projects in the vicinity of Butano Farms Project Area if the projects were to occur in the same location and at the same time. It is unlikely the propose project would result in significant cumulative impacts due to the short duration of proposed project (10 weeks) and the fact that post construction there would be no change to operation of the Project Area. Further, any public projects scheduled for the region at the same time would be held to the same environmental impact evaluation and compliance regulations as the proposed project. Finally, all temporary (construction-generated) impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, and paleontological resources, would be fully mitigated through measures identified in this IS/MND. **Less than significant.**

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

In general, construction sites present many hazards that have the potential to adversely affect human beings either through impaired air quality, construction noise and vibration or traffic impacts. These hazards are temporary, lasting only for the duration of project construction activities (approximately 50 work days). To mitigate for the potential short-term impacts which may cause some substantial adverse effects on human

beings, the RCD has committed to BMPs listed in Table 2 and implementation of all resource-specific mitigation measures. As a result of this evaluation, there were determined to be no potentially significant effects to human beings. The proposed project would improve habitat conditions for SFGS. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project would have adverse effects to human beings. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance. **Less than significant.**

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LIST OF PREPARERS

LEAD AGENCY

San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

INITIAL STUDY AUTHORS

Author	Affiliation	Role
Brook Vinnedge	Principal and Wildlife Biologist, Vinnedge Environmental Consulting	Project Manager and Primary Author of IS/MND
Matt Fremont	Fremont Environmental Consulting	GIS Specialist, Figures and Graphics, Agriculture, Geology & Soils, Land Use Section Author
Mark Hylkema	Independent Cultural Resource Specialist	Cultural Resources Impact Evaluation
Geoffrey Hornek	Independent Environmental Scientist and Engineer	Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, Transportation and Traffic Impact Assessments
Laura Garwood	Independent Editor	Word Processing and Editing

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Rare Plant Surveys Rare plant surveys of the proposed disturbance areas will be conducted by a qualified botanist for the plant species that have the potential to occur within the project site. Surveys shall be done in accordance with CNPS's Botanical Survey Guidelines (CNPS 2001), CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (CDFW 2018), and USFWS's Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed and Candidate Plants (USFWS 1996). If present, special-status plant populations will be flagged and if possible avoided during construction. If the populations cannot be avoided during construction a mitigation plan will be developed for approval by the Department and CDFW which will include transplanting the plant population.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Botanist	Before construction.
Mitigation Measure BIO-2: CRLF Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Within two days of the start of work on a pond, the pond will be sampled by a qualified biologist to ensure that all frogs from that pond are in post-metamorphic stage and will be minimally affected by draining the pond. If the construction plans allow for existing open water and emergent vegetation areas to remain wetted and be isolated from construction activities, a qualified biologist will be on-site during draining of the work area to ensure that any remaining tadpoles or metamorphs are safely relocated to areas with standing water. • Draining of ponds to perform authorized work shall only occur during the part of the year when the tadpole life stage of CRLF has been completed and before the subsequent breeding season (i.e. between August 15 and November 1). • All biological monitors for the project shall be approved by USFWS prior to commencement of project activities. The biological monitors and qualified biologists shall have the responsibility and authority of stopping the proposed project if any crews or	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
personnel are not complying with the provisions outlined in this IS/MND. • Biological monitor(s) and/or qualified biologists shall be on the project site while initial ground-disturbing activities (excavation) or pond draining activities take place. A Service-approved biologist will be on-call during all project activities in the event a San Francisco garter snake or California red-legged frog is discovered, or for any other assistance relating to the avoidance and minimization measures. • Prior to project activities, a biological monitor shall clearly mark/flag or erect temporary construction fencing to designate the work area and to delineate the areas that shall be avoided. Flagging and or temporary construction fencing shall be removed immediately after the completion of construction work. • Dredge spoils shall be placed in a containment area away from the creek. The area where dredge spoils will be placed shall be surveyed for CRLF and SFGS. If burrows are present in this area, Permittee shall hand excavate burrows until the burrow terminates or until a maximum depth of 30 centimeters. If CRLF or SFGS are found, all work shall cease and Permittee shall notify CDFW and USFWS immediately. • Any vehicle parked on site for more than 15 minutes shall be inspected by the biological monitor before it is moved to ensure that CRLF and/or SFGS have not moved under the vehicle. Any parking areas shall be checked in advance by the biological monitor or qualified biologist. • If CRLF enters the work area, all work shall stop until the qualified biologist relocates the animal or it leaves on its own. Only the qualified biologist can handle and relocate CRLF. Any sightings and/or injuries of this species shall be immediately reported to the CDFW per instructions below: o <u>CRLF Relocation</u>. Prior to the onset of any project-related activities, the qualified biologist must identify appropriate areas to receive CRLF adults from the Project Areas. These areas must be in proximity to the capture site, contain suitable			

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
habitat, not be affected by project activities, and be free of exotic predatory species to the best of the approved biologist's knowledge. Translocation shall only be performed by the qualified biologist.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-3: SFGS Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of project activities, a focused survey for SFGS using agency approved protocol shall be conducted by a USFWS-approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If SFGS are found, the USFWS shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and proposed project shall not begin until approved by the USFWS. • Activities that result in ground disturbance will occur May 1–October 30 (active season). Vegetation will be cut using to 3 inches in height. Once the ground is visible, a visual survey for SFGS will be conducted by the biologist prior to additional ground disturbance. If SFGS is found, USFWS will be notified immediate to determine the correct course of action. If work needs to occur during the inactive period (November 1– April 30) and is located in an area of known occupancy, flag and avoid any burrows by at least 10 feet wherever possible. If any burrows cannot be avoided by this distance, a biologist will inspect following activities to determine whether or not the burrow has been collapsed. If a burrow is collapsed, the biologist shall make efforts to open the burrow. • Prior to conducting non-native plant removal or treatments (e.g. spraying with herbicide, cutting, pulling, digging out), the permittee shall make every reasonable attempt to ensure that SFGS are not hidden within the plant or residual plant matter to be treated. • The USFWS approved biological monitor shall walk roads cleared for vehicle access each morning prior to vehicle traffic to ensure San Francisco garter snakes are not in the road. Vehicles shall not drive at speeds greater than 5 miles per hour within the project area and drivers shall observe the road for San Francisco garter snakes. If a San Francisco	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
garter snake is found on the road, the vehicle operator shall stop, and the San Francisco garter snake shall be allowed to leave on its own volition.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Western Pond Turtle Avoidance and Minimization Measures • Prior to and within 48 hours of the planned start of construction, a focused survey for WPT shall be conducted by a CDFW approved biological monitor to determine if they are in the area. If these species are found, the CDFW shall be notified immediately to determine the correct course of action and construction activities shall not begin until approved by the CDFW. • In the event WPT are found in the project area, the RCD shall exercise measures to avoid direct injury to them as well as avoid areas where they are observed to occur. If a WPT is observed, it shall be left alone to move out of the area on its own. If it does not move on its own, it can be relocated by the biological monitor or the qualified biologist to at least 100-meters away from project location to a suitable habitat.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Nesting Bird Avoidance and Minimization Measures • To the extent feasible, vegetation removal activities shall not occur during the bird breeding season of February 15 through August 31. • If vegetation removal must occur during the breeding season the project site shall be surveyed by a qualified biologist to verify the presence or absence of nesting birds. • Preconstruction surveys will be conducted no more than two weeks prior to the start of work from February 15 – August 31. • If the survey indicates the potential presence of nesting birds, a buffer will be placed around the nest in which no work will be allowed until the young have successfully fledged. The size of the nest buffer will be determined by the biologist in consultation with the CDFW, and will be based to a large extent on the nesting species and its sensitivity to disturbance. The buffers may be increased or decreased, as appropriate,	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
depending on the bird species and the level of disturbance anticipated near the nest.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-6: San Francisco Dusky Woodrat Avoidance and Minimization Measures • The removal of trees and large shrubs shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and shall be limited to those areas directly adjacent within the project footprint. • Tree removal or construction activities with potential to disturb suitable habitat for dusky-footed woodrat (riparian scrub) shall only occur after a biologist conducts a pre-construction survey for woodrat nests within the woody riparian habitats to be removed and adjacent riparian habitat. If any woodrat nest is identified outside the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance or cluster of entrances will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the next. No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active nests will be 50 feet, if possible. Exclusion zones will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or cluster of dens but does not prevent access to the nest. If a nest is identified within the disturbance footprint, then nest relocation procedure will be determined by the biologist, in consultation with CDFW.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure BIO-7: American Badger Avoidance and Minimization Measure • Pre-construction surveys shall be conducted in any grassland habitat within the project footprint for active badger dens. If a badger den is identified within the proposed disturbance footprint, exclusion zones around each den entrance will be demarcated. The configuration of exclusion zones should be circular, with a radius measured outward from the den entrance(s). No construction activities will occur within the exclusion zones. Exclusion zone radii for active dens will be at least 50 feet. Exclusion zones will be demarcated with staking and flagging that encircles each den or entrance but does not	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Biologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
prevent access to the den by a badger.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Open Water Protective Measures • The project applicant would implement the BMPs outlined in Table 2 to minimize stormwater runoff, erosion, and potential water quality impacts associated with construction activities. In addition, all contractors working in a capacity that could increase the potential for adverse water quality impacts shall receive training regarding the environmental sensitivity of the site and need to minimize impacts. Contractors shall be trained in implementation of stormwater BMPs for protection of water quality. • No debris, rubbish, creosote-treated wood, soil, silt, sand, cement, concrete, or washings thereof, or other construction related materials or wastes, oil or petroleum products or other organic or earthen material shall be allowed to enter into, or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall or runoff into open water habitat and/or waters of the State. Any of these materials placed within or where they may enter waters shall be removed immediately. When operations are completed, any excess material shall be removed from the work area and any areas adjacent to the work area where such material may be washed into adjacent waters. • During construction the contractor shall not dump any litter or construction debris within the riparian/stream zone. All such debris and waste shall be picked up daily and properly disposed of at an appropriate site. • Any excavation necessary shall be completed from outside of wetlands, where feasible, by using an excavator or backhoe tractor, thereby limiting the driving of heavy equipment across wetlands. • Prohibit vehicular and equipment refueling 100 feet from the edge of other wetlands, streams, or waterways. If refueling must be conducted closer to wetlands, construct a secondary containment area subject to review by the RCD and/or consulting biologist.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Wetland Ecologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
Maintain spill prevention and cleanup equipment in refueling areas.			
Mitigation Measure BIO-9: Wetland Protective Measures • Prior to the start of construction within areas containing sensitive biological resources, the biological monitor should delineate and conspicuously flag all sensitive aquatic resources to prevent impacts to these resources. If required, setback or non-disturbance buffer zones around these resources should be established and monitored by a biologist. • Construction activities nearby or within aquatic habitats should be limited to the maximum extent feasible. • Any aquatic habitat that does not fall within the construction footprint should be flagged and avoided. • Work within waters should be conducted during the dry season, when water is not flowing, to the extent possible. • Worker environmental awareness training should be conducted for all construction crews and contractors. The education training should be conducted prior to starting work on the project and upon the arrival of any new worker. The training should include: locations of sensitive areas; possible fines for violations; environmental permits and regulatory compliance requirements including all relevant avoidance and mitigation measures, and required actions should sensitive species be encountered. Additional training should be conducted as needed, including morning "tailgate" sessions to update crews as they advance into sensitive areas for projects with multiple work areas. In addition, a record of all personnel trained during the project should be maintained for compliance verification.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Wetland Ecologist	Before and During Construction

Mitigation	Implementing Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Mitigation Timing
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Conduct Identification Training and Stop Work if Archaeological Resources are Encountered During Construction or if Unique Paleontological or Geological Resources are Encountered During Construction • The construction contractor shall participate in a cultural and paleontological resource identification training session by a qualified archaeologist in order to be aware of the potential resources that might be uncovered. If archaeological or paleontological resources are encountered during project construction, work shall be temporarily halted in the vicinity of the discovered materials and construction contractor shall avoid altering these materials and their context until a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist has evaluated the resource. Recommendations on how to treat the resource may include evaluation, preservation in place, archaeological test excavation and/or archaeological data recovery, and a draft and final report documenting such activities.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Cultural Resource Specialist	Before and During Construction
Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Discovery of Human Remains • If at any time during site preparation, excavation, or other ground disturbance associated with the proposed project, human remains are discovered, the construction contractor shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and notify the RCD. The RCD shall notify the sheriff-coroner. If the coroner determines the remains are Native American, the coroner will contact the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission will identify the person or persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent makes recommendations regarding the treatment of the remains with appropriate dignity. Disturbance shall not resume until the significance of the human remains is determined and appropriate mitigations to preserve the resource on the site are established.	Project Applicant & Construction Contractor	Qualified Cultural Resource Specialist	During Construction