



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

**SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report in Compliance with Title 14, section 15082(a) of the California Code of Regulations**

The purpose of the attached Notice of Preparation ("NOP") is to solicit comments on the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") prepared by the County when considering any permits that your agency must issue, or other approval for the project.

In accordance with Title 14, section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations, a response to this NOP is required within 30 days of receipt. Your response at a minimum should identify:

- 1) The significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that your agency will need to have explored in the draft EIR; and
- 2) Whether your agency will be a responsible agency or trustee agency for the project.

Per Title 14, section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations, a generalized list of concerns not related to the specific project does not meet the requirements for a response.

If no response or request for a time extension is received within the 30-day review period, we will conclude that your agency has no response to make.

For questions or for additional information, please contact the staff identified on the attached NOP. Our office hours are Monday through Thursday, 7:30a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We are closed on Fridays.

Sincerely,  
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING  
Richard J. Bruckner

Mr. Kim K. Szalay, Principal Planner  
Special Projects Section

Enclosures: NOP, Initial Study, Expanded Project Description  
SZD:KKS

CC.012914



**Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning**

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



**Richard J. Bruckner**  
Director

## **NorthLake**

**Project No. R2015-00408-(5)**

**Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. TR073336**

**Conditional Use Permit No. 201500019**

**Environmental Review No. 201500030**

### **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

### **EXPANDED PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **INITIAL STUDY**

Prepared By:

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Special Projects Section  
320 W. Temple Street, Room 1362  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Attn: Mr. Kim Szalay

March 24, 2015



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

## NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

**DATE:** March 24, 2015

**TO:** State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report in Compliance with Title 14, section 15082(a) of the California Code of Regulations

The County of Los Angeles ("County") is the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") for the proposed project identified below. The County has prepared this Notice of Preparation ("NOP") to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the project and to identify its potential environmental effects pursuant to State requirements.

**AGENCIES:** The County requests your agency's views on the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, in accordance with Title 14, section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by the County when considering any permits that your agency must issue, or other approval for the project.

**ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES:** The County requests your comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.

**PROJECT, PERMITS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** Northlake Project; Project No. R2015-00408-(5); Permit Case Numbers: Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. TR073336; Conditional Use Permit No. 201500019; Environmental Review No. 201500030.

**PROJECT APPLICANT:** NorthLake Associates, LLC, 1999 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 2850, Los Angeles, CA 90067

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The 1,330-acre project site is located between Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway) to the west and Castaic Lake to the east. The Angeles National Forest is in the vicinity of the project site to the west, north, and east. The unincorporated community of Castaic is located to the south.

CC.012914

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The NorthLake Specific Plan site comprises approximately 1,330 acres of undeveloped land in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The proposed project involves implementation of the previously approved NorthLake Specific Plan; specifically, the proposed project would involve development of up to 345 acres of residential uses (3,150 units), 4.4 acres of commercial uses (67,000 square feet), 17.5 acres of industrial uses (305,000 square feet), 880.3 acres of parks and open space (including manufactured slopes), and public facility uses if required including potential middle school, library, and fire department facilities that will support project residents.

Collectively, the Project is defined as the entire 1,330-acre Specific Plan site including the 737-acre VTTM No. TR073336 area and associated External Map Improvements (Phase 1), and the remaining property for Phase 2 to be developed at a future time.

### **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT**

Based on a preliminary review of the proposed project consistent with section 15060 of the CEQA Guidelines, the County has determined that an EIR should be prepared for this proposed project. In addition, consistent with section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the County has identified the following probable environmental effects of the project, which will be addressed in the EIR for this project:

- Air Quality
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Services Systems

The County has determined that there is not a likelihood of potentially significant effects related to the following environmental topics:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing

The County proposes that the EIR indicate the reasons why these effects were determined not to be significant and are therefore not addressed in detail in the EIR.

**NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING:** The County will conduct a public scoping meeting for the purpose of soliciting oral and written comments from interested parties as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR.

All interested parties are invited to attend the scoping meeting to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the EIR. The scoping meetings will include a brief presentation of the project to be addressed in the EIR and will provide attendees with an opportunity to provide input to the scope of the EIR. The Scoping Meeting will be held on April 8, 2015 from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. or when testimony is completed, whichever comes first, at the following location:

NorthLake Hills Elementary School  
32545 Ridge Route Road  
Castaic, CA 91384

Translation in other languages can be made available at the meeting upon request. Please submit translation requests at least seven business days in advance of each scheduled meeting to [kszalay@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:kszalay@planning.lacounty.gov)

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** The County has determined to make this NOP available for public review and comment pursuant to Title 14, section 15082(b) of the California Code of Regulations. The comment period for the NOP begins on March 24, 2015 and ends on April 22, 2015.

Any comments provided should identify specific topics of environmental concern and your reason for suggesting the study of these topics in the EIR.

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The NOP and Initial Study are available for public review during regular business hours at the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning address listed above and the following locations:

- **Castaic Library**, 27971 Sloan Canyon Road, Castaic, CA 91384
- **Stevenson Ranch Library**, 25950 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381
- **San Fernando Library**, 217 North Maclay Avenue, San Fernando, CA 91340

The public is also encouraged to visit the Department of Regional Planning's website to review the initial study at <http://planning.lacounty.gov/case/view/tr073336/>.

Thank you for your participation in the environmental review of this project.

Please direct all written comments to the following address:

Mr. Kim K. Szalay  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Special Projects Section  
320 West Temple Street, Room 1362  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Tel: (213) 974-4876  
Fax: (213) 626-0434  
[specialprojects@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:specialprojects@planning.lacounty.gov)

All written responses will be included as Appendices in the Draft EIR and their contents considered in accordance with State and County environmental guidelines.

Signature of Lead Agency Representative

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K.K. Szalay".

Date 3/17/15

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## ATTACHMENT A

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### EXPANDED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

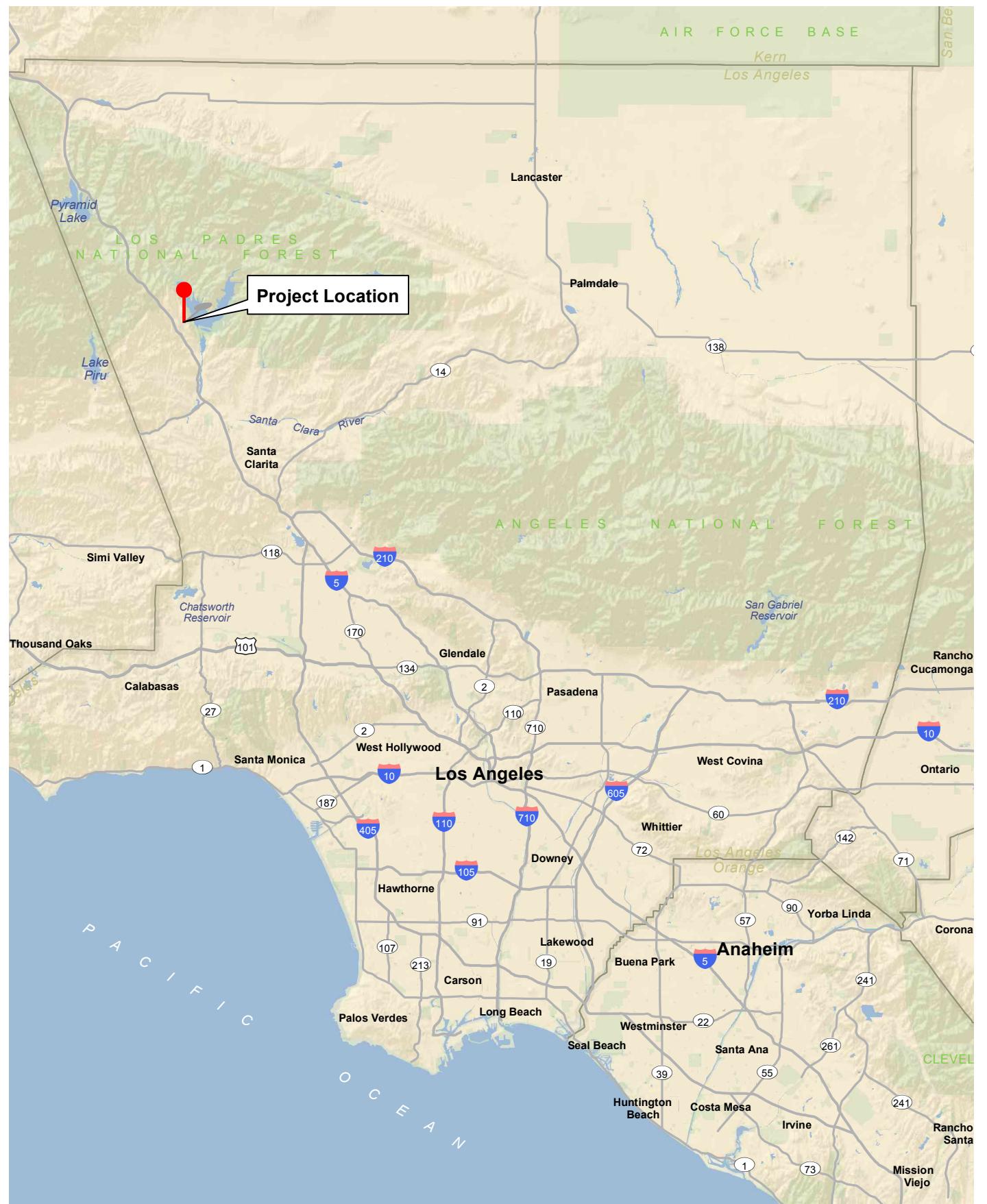
In 1992, the County adopted the *NorthLake Specific Plan*. This Specific Plan established land use designations and development standards for an approximate 1,330-acre area in Grasshopper Canyon that previously was limited to non-urban/agricultural zoned development. In conjunction with consideration of the Specific Plan project, the NorthLake Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (SP EIR) (SCH No. 1988071329) was certified in 1992 as a Program EIR. Further, the One Valley One Vision Final Program EIR, which evaluated the SCVAP 2012, was certified in 2012. The SCVAP 2012, which includes the NorthLake Specific Plan, was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 27, 2012.

The NorthLake Specific Plan site comprises approximately 1,330 acres of undeveloped land in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The proposed project involves implementation of the previously approved Specific Plan.

#### **2. PROJECT LOCATION**

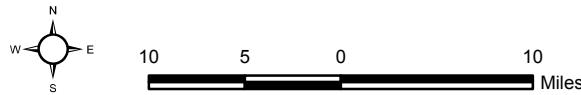
As shown in **Figure A-1**, the 1,330-acre project site is located east of Interstate 5 (I-5), California in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

As shown in **Figure A-2**, the project site is located west of Castaic Lake and north of the community of Castaic. The Angeles National Forest is in the vicinity of the project site to the west, north, and east and the town of Castaic is located to the south.

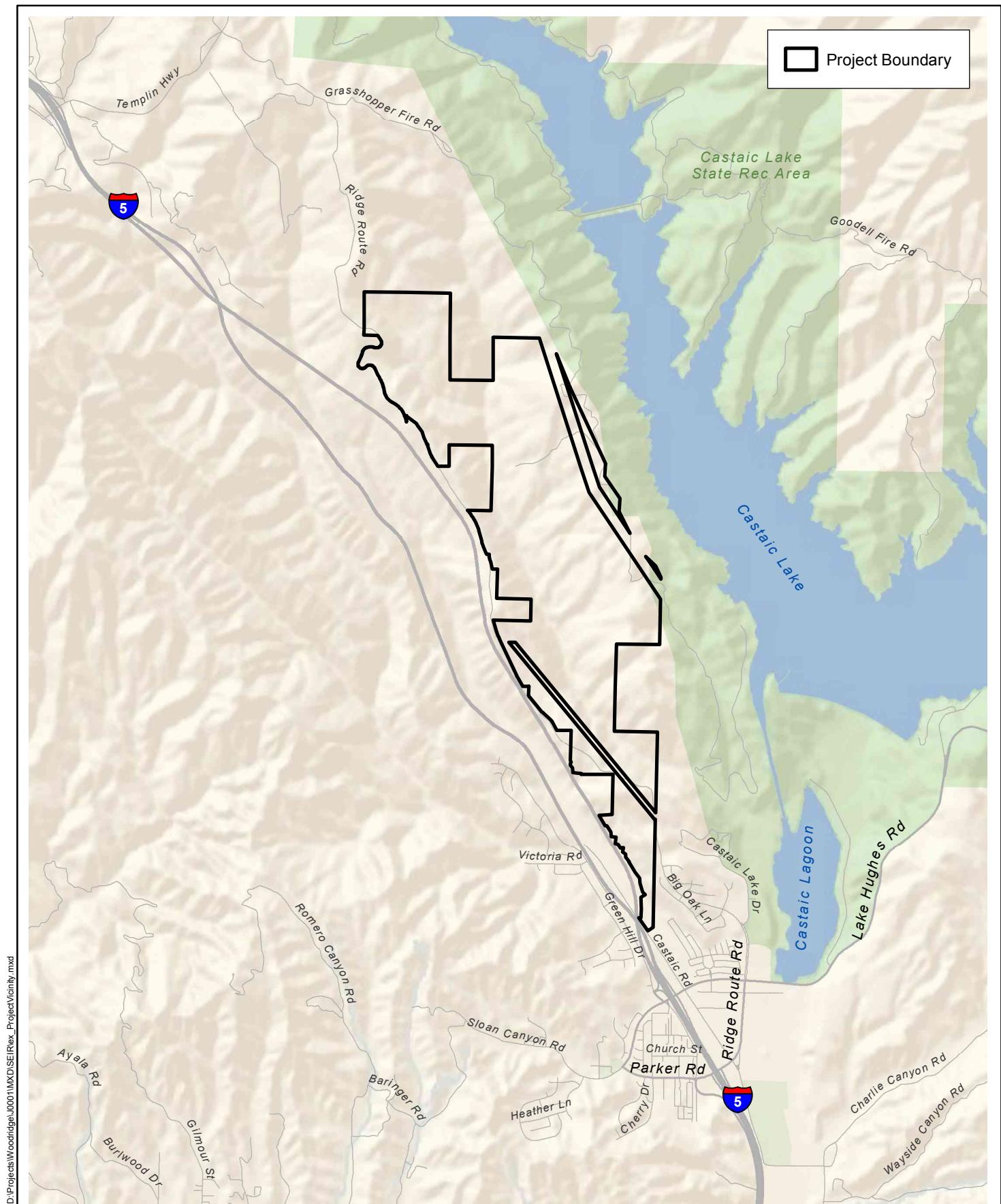


## Regional Location

## *NorthLake Specific Plan Project*



**Figure A-1**



**Project Vicinity Map**

*NorthLake Specific Plan Project*



**Figure A-2**

**Bonterra**  
**PSOMAS**

### 3. PROJECT BACKGROUND

#### a. Existing Conditions

The project site exists as undeveloped, naturally vegetated land with limited ranch roads throughout the site. On-site vegetation is predominately characterized by limited riparian vegetation, sage scrub, and grassland areas that have been used for cattle grazing. The topography of Specific Plan area consists of a steeply sloping ridgeline that runs northwest to southeast along the western boundary of the site adjacent to I-5. The eastern portion of the project site is characterized by gently rolling topography. To the east of Grasshopper Canyon, slopes gradually rise to a ridge on the site's easterly boundary. An intermittent stream, that is a United States Geologic Survey (USGS)-designated "blueline" watercourse, runs through Grasshopper Canyon. Intermittent drainages convey seasonal runoff to Castaic Lagoon, south of Castaic Lake. The main tributary in this area begins well to the north of the Specific Plan area at a point generally parallel with the northern reach of Castaic Lake, and continues in a southeast direction through Grasshopper Canyon, eventually reaching the northwestern edge of Castaic Lagoon. Elevations on the site range from approximately 2,300 feet above mean sea level (msl) along the ridge lines to approximately 1,250 feet above msl within Grasshopper Canyon in the southern portion of the site.

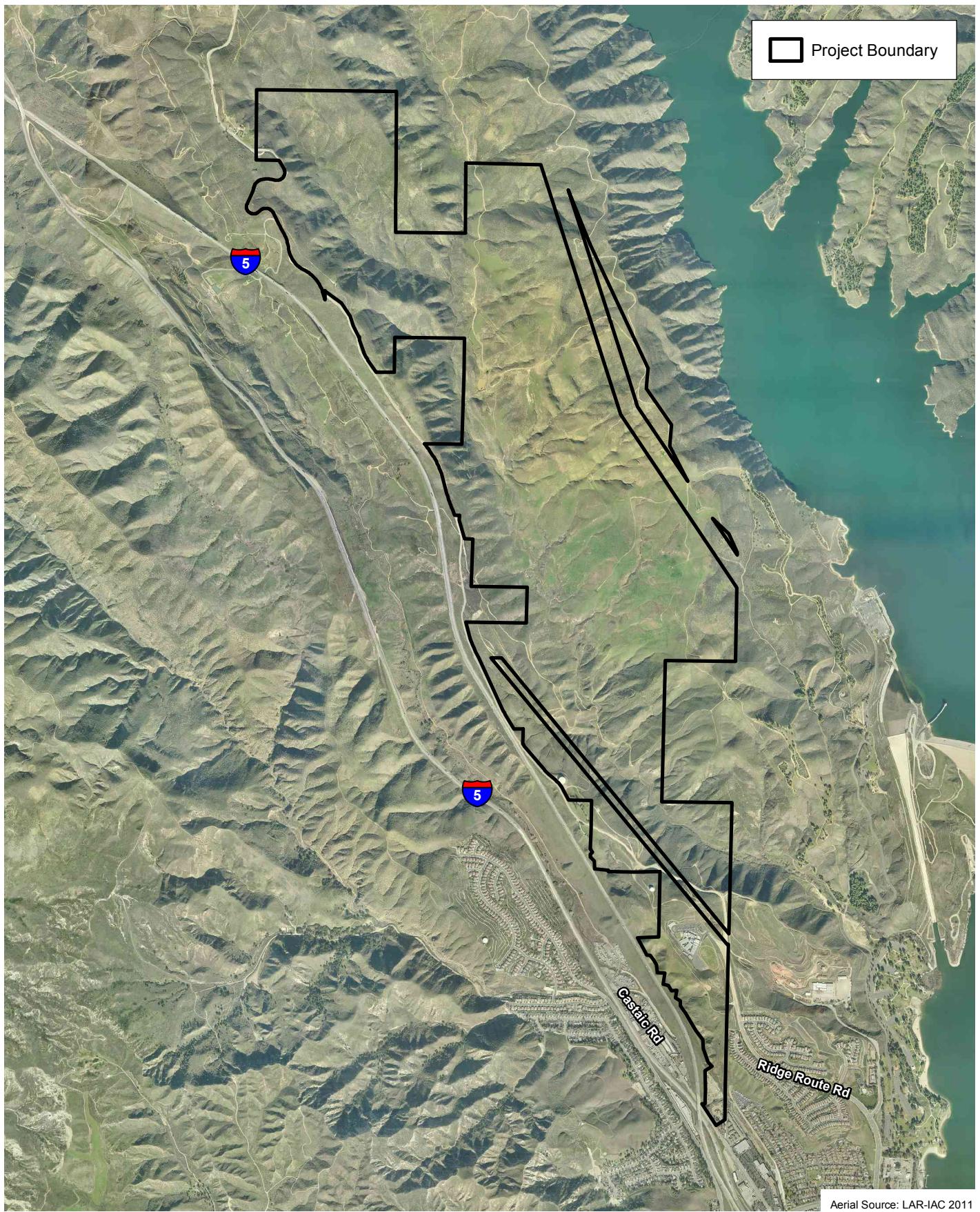
#### b. Surrounding Land Uses

As shown on **Figure A-3**, the Specific Plan site is surrounded by undeveloped land to the north and east, and urban development on the south and west. Existing land uses to the south include a single-family residential subdivision. A brick yard is immediately east of the southern portion of the Specific Plan area, and the community of Castaic, which is comprised primarily of freeway, commercial, and residential uses, lies further to the south. The I-5 freeway runs along the entire western margin of the Specific Plan site, and land west of the freeway is under development as a residential community with some commercial. Immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan boundary along the west side of Ridge Route Road is a single family residence. North and east of the project site are undeveloped national forest and state recreational areas with topography and vegetation characteristics similar to that of the project site. The Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) is directly adjacent to the eastern edge of the project site; the Angeles National Forest surrounds the Castaic Lake SRA to the east, north, and northwest.

#### c. Existing Land Use and Zoning Designations

**General plan/Area Plan designation:** SP - NorthLake Specific Plan

**Zoning:** SP- Specific Plan (exempt from Castaic Area Community Standards District)



**Project Boundary**  
NorthLake Specific Plan Project



**Figure A-3**

#### **d. Other Relevant Plans**

*Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision 2012 (SCVAP 2012)*

*County of Los Angeles General Plan*

*2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS): Towards a Sustainable Future*

*South Coast Air Quality Management Plan*

### **4. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

#### **a. Proposed Land Uses and Improvements**

##### **(1) Residential and Other Land Use Components**

As shown on **Figure A-4**, the proposed project will involve development of up to 345 acres of residential uses (3,150 units), including a mix of single family, single family active adult, and multi-family dwelling units. The proposed project will also involve development of up to 4.4 acres of commercial uses (67,000 square feet) and 17.5 acres of industrial uses (305,000 square feet) which will be located near the I-5 freeway. The proposed residential and non-residential uses are separated from each other in order to protect the residential nature of each neighborhood. Collectively, the project is defined as the entire 1,330-acre Specific Plan site including the 737-acre VTTM No. TR073336 area and associated External Map Improvements (Phase 1), and the remaining property for Phase 2 to be developed at a future time.

##### **(2) Public Facilities**

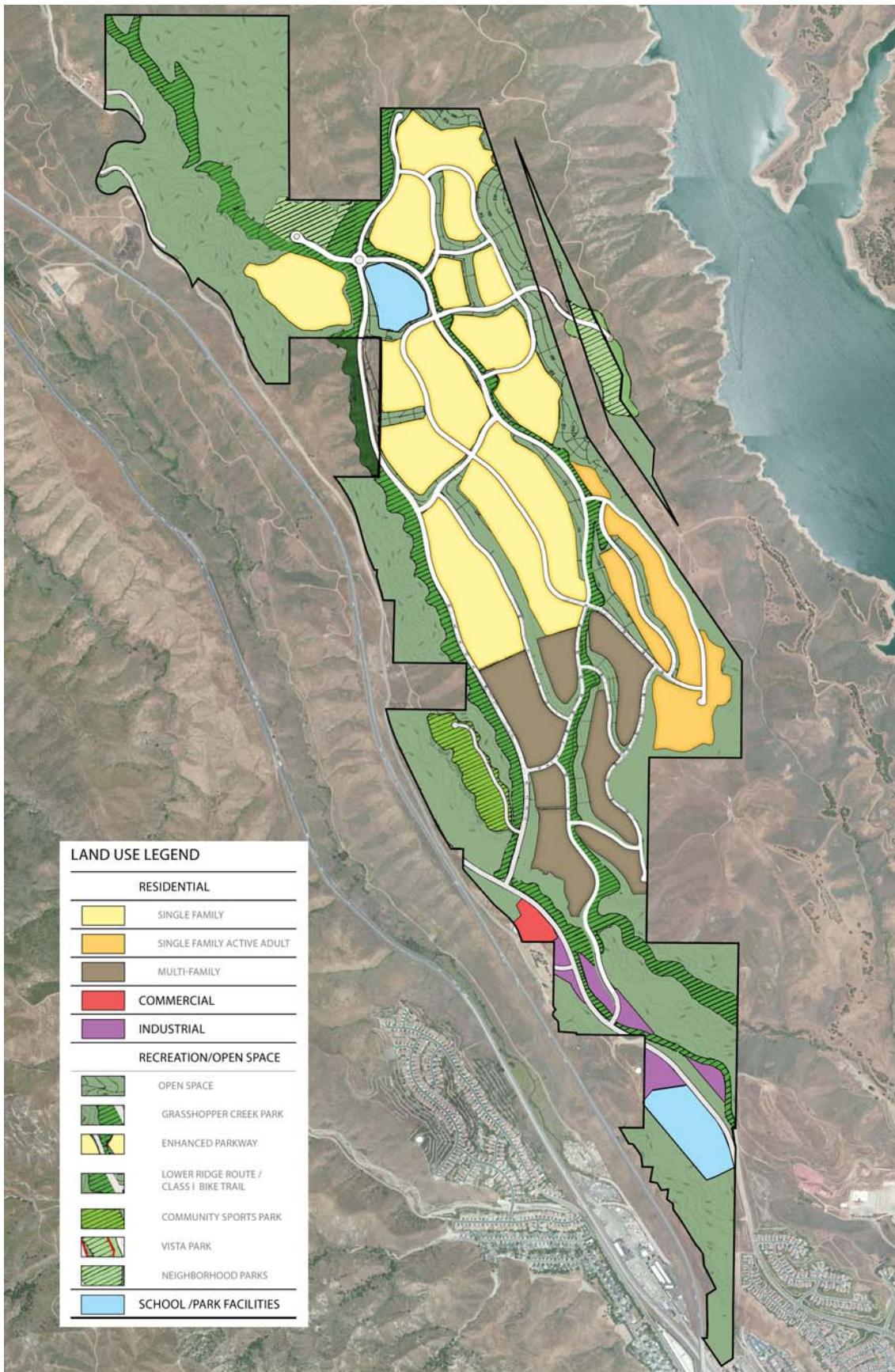
The proposed project will involve development of public facility uses if required including potential middle school, library, and fire department facilities that will support project residents.

##### **(3) Open Space Areas**

The proposed project will include up to 880.3 acres of parks and open space; within these areas, approximately 166.9 acres would be designated as parkland and other recreational facilities, including parks, enhanced parkways, trails, a sports park, and neighborhood parks.

##### **(4) Trails**

As noted above, the project will develop approximately 166.9 acres with recreational uses, including trails. The proposed project does not include any formal trail systems; however, project development will preserve the existing Castaic Lake SRA trail system located east of the project site.



D:\Projects\Woodridge\J0001\Graphics\SEIR\ex\_LandUsePlan.ai

Source: Placeworks 2015

# NorthLake Land Use Plan

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*NorthLake Specific Plan Project*



**Figure A-4**

(03/18/15 JAZ) H:\Projects\Woodri (WCP)\J001\Graphics\SEIR\FigA4\_LandUsePlan.pdf

**BonTerra**  
PSOMAS

## **(5) Drainage, Flood Control, and Water Quality Improvements**

The proposed project will comply with the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requiring preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and identifying Best Management Practices (BMPs) for temporary erosion controls. Additionally, the proposed project would incorporate water quality management BMPs, site-design BMPs, and drainage infrastructure to manage surface runoff. Additionally, the proposed project will comply with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development (LID) Ordinance by minimizing impervious surface area and promoting infiltration, in order to reduce the flow and velocity of stormwater runoff throughout the watershed.

## **(6) Potable Water, Recycled Water, and Wastewater**

The proposed project will involve the establishment of the necessary trunk lines and connections to provide water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, and telephone service to the proposed development.

## **(7) Site Access and Circulation**

Regional access to the Specific Plan area is provided by I-5 and site access is provided via the Parker Road and Lake Hughes Road exits from I-5. Local access to the project site is provided by Ridge Route Road, which traverses northerly along the western edge of the project site. The proposed development provides for the establishment of an interconnecting internal roadway system.

### **b. Construction**

Consistent with prior approval, project implementation would involve site grading that would fill in a portion of Grasshopper Creek Canyon to enable development in this area.

### **c. Sustainability Features and Principles**

The proposed project will comply with the Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code (L.A. County Code Title 31) which provides the County with local control and regulation of the CALGreen Code, and which requires that new buildings be environmentally responsible by reducing water consumption, employing building commissioning to increase building system efficiencies, diverting construction waste from landfills, and installing low pollutant-emitting finish materials. Additionally, the project will comply with the Los Angeles County LID Ordinance, as discussed previously.

# Environmental Checklist Form (Initial Study)

County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning



**Project title:** NorthLake

**Lead agency name and address:** Los Angeles County, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Contact Person and phone number:** Mr. Kim Szalay, Principal Planner, Special Projects Section; (213) 974-4876; ksyalay@planning.lacounty.gov

**Project sponsor's name and address:** Mr. John Arvin, Woodridge Capital Partners, LLC, 1999 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 2850, Los Angeles, CA 90067

**Project location:** The 1,330-acre project site is located between Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway) to the west and Castaic Lake to the east. The Angeles National Forest is in the vicinity of the project site to the west, north, and east. The town of Castaic is located to the south.

**Assessors Parcel Numbers:** Site: 2865-003-013, 2865-003-035, 2865-003-908, 2865-036-001, 2865-036-002, 2865-036-003, 3244-003-018, 3244-004-024, 3244-004-051, 3244-004-052, 3244-004-053, 3244-004-906, 3244-012-013, 3244-012-045, 3244-012-046, 3244-012-048, 3244-012-049, 3244-012-050, 3244-012-054, 3244-012-056, 3244-012-057, 3244-012-058, 3244-012-059, 3244-012-904, 3244-013-001, 3244-013-002, 3244-013-004, 3244-013-005, 3244-013-010, 3244-014-015, 3244-014-021, 3244-014-022, 3244-014-038, 3244-014-044, 3244-014-045, 3244-014-050, 3244-014-053, 3244-014-062, 3244-014-063, 3244-014-067, 3244-014-068, 3244-014-902, 3244-014-906, 3244-015-018, 3247-010-049, 3247-010-050, 3247-017-019, 3247-040-008, 3247-040-009, 3247-040-013, 3247-041-007, 3247-041-008, 3247-041-009, 3247-041-010, 3247-041-012, 3247-041-015, 3247-041-018, 3247-041-020, 3247-041-021, 3247-041-022, and 3247-041-023. External Map Improvements: 3247-017-900; 3247-041-012

**USGS Quads:** Whitaker Peak and Warm Springs Mountain 7.5-minute quadrangle maps (Sections 02, 03, 10, 11, 14, 23, Township 5 N, Range 17 W)

**Gross Acreage:** 1,330 acres

**General plan designation:** Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision, 2012 (SCVAP 2012): SP - NorthLake Specific Plan

**Community/Area wide Plan designation:** SCVAP 2012: SP - NorthLake Specific Plan

**Zoning:** SP- Specific Plan (exempt from Castaic Area Community Standards District)

**Description of project:** In 1992, the County adopted the *NorthLake Specific Plan*. This Specific Plan established land use designations and development standards for an approximate 1,330-acre area in Grasshopper Canyon that previously was limited to non-urban/agricultural zoned development. In conjunction with consideration of the Specific Plan project, the NorthLake Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (SP EIR) (SCH No. 1988071329) was certified in 1992 as a Program EIR. Further, the One Valley One Vision Final Program EIR, which evaluated the SCVAP 2012, was certified in 2012. The SCVAP

2012, which includes the NorthLake Specific Plan, was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 27, 2012.

The NorthLake Specific Plan site comprises approximately 1,330 acres of undeveloped land in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The proposed project involves implementation of the previously approved Specific Plan; specifically, the proposed project would involve development of up to 345 acres of residential uses (3,150 units), 4.4 acres of commercial uses (67,000 square feet), 17.5 acres of industrial uses (305,000 square feet), 880.3 acres of parks and open space, and public facility uses if required including potential middle school, library, and fire department facilities that will support project residents.

As part of the project, External Map Improvements, including connection to existing utilities and relocation of existing utility lines, drainage facilities, and other infrastructure would occur outside of area specified as VTTM No. 73336. These improvements would be defined further, and fully addressed, as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

To implement the project, the project Applicant has requested approval of: (1) VTTM No. TR073336 to subdivide 737 acres into a total of 407 lots; and (2) Conditional Use Permit No. 201500019 to authorize: (a) Northlake Specific Plan site plan review; (b) grading exceeding 100,000 cubic yards; (c) construction of water tanks and water supply infrastructure; and (d) development within a Hillside Management Area as areas of the site contain slopes of 25 percent or greater.

Collectively, the Project is defined as the entire 1,330-acre Specific Plan site including the 737-acre VTTM No. TR073336 area and associated External Map Improvements (Phase 1), and the remaining property for Phase 2 to be developed at a future time.

The proposed project has been designed to remediate potential geologic and flood hazards, and the residential and non-residential uses are separated from each other in order to protect the residential nature of each neighborhood. The proposed development provides for the establishment of an interconnecting internal roadway system. The Project will involve the establishment of the necessary trunk lines and connections to provide water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, and telephone service to the proposed development. Consistent with prior approval, project implementation would involve site grading that would fill in a portion of Grasshopper Creek Canyon to enable development in this area.

Project grading would require the relocation of some existing on-site easements, pipelines, and utilities to accommodate the proposed cut depths and site plan configuration. Extension of all utilities and some services to the project site will also be necessary to accommodate project implementation. To facilitate the provision of utilities and services, annexation to the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District, the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District, and Newhall County Water District will be required. Other incidental approvals have been issued (i.e., 404 Permit, 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement, and 401 Certification) to authorize development that will affect resources under regulatory agency control; however, these approvals have expired and would need to be reissued based on updated analysis. Additionally, annexation to the appropriate service and financing districts, such as the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County, will be required as appropriate.

The following reports and/or studies are applicable to development of the project site and are hereby incorporated by reference:

- *Final Program EIR for the County of Los Angeles' Proposed Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, One Valley One Vision 2012*, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, January 2012SCVAP 2012.

- *NorthLake Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report*, SCH No. 1988071329, County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, certified in 1992 (NorthLake 1992 EIR).

**Surrounding land uses and setting:** The project site is located in northern unincorporated Los Angeles County and is bordered to the west by the I-5 freeway. The Castaic community and portions of the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area are located south and southeast of the project site and undeveloped lands are located to the east and north. A few scattered single-family residences are also located north of the site.

The project site exists as undeveloped, naturally vegetated land with limited ranch roads throughout the site. On-site vegetation is predominately characterized by limited riparian vegetation, sage scrub, and grassland areas that have been used for cattle grazing. The site is dominated by Grasshopper Canyon, which is a north-south-trending valley located between the two prominent ridgelines to the east and west. Between the two ridgelines, one of which is located to the northwest and designated a Primary Ridgeline, Grasshopper Canyon varies from a heavily incised drainage to areas of more gentle, rolling terrain.

**Other public agencies whose approval may be required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**

Public Agency	Possible Action Required
County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County	Annexation into Sanitation District; Will Serve letter
Los Angeles Local Agency Formation Commission	Annexation into Sanitation District; possible extension of Newhall County Water District service area
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region	Section 401 certification or, alternatively, waste discharge requirements (WDRs); construction de-watering permits
Department of Water Resources	EP (Encroachment Permit)
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Streambed Alteration Agreement per Fish & Game Code Section 1601 et seq., and, Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit(s) authorizing impacts to listed plant and animal species, if applicable
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 permit under the federal Clean Water Act
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Provide authorization or concurrence under the federal Endangered Species Act
South Coast Air Quality Management District	Various permits that may need to be secured by future businesses for the operation of any on-site stationary sources subject to permitting requirements (e.g., Rule 1146 – Emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen from Industrial, Institutional, and Commercial Boilers, Steam Generators, and Process Heaters)
California Department of Transportation	Approval of state highway improvements; Traffic Mitigation Agreement with Project Applicant
Newhall County Water District	Water supply assessment and verification
City of Santa Clarita	Encroachment permits to construct off-site roadway improvement, if applicable.
<b>Note:</b> This table is not intended to provide the complete and final listing of all or expected future actions required to implement the Project, but rather identifies those actions that are known at this time to be required in the future.	

**Major projects in the area:**

<i>Project/ Case No.</i>	<i>Description and Status</i>	<i>Size (acres)</i>	<i>Type (land use)</i>
TR 52729	Pending	80	SF Residential
TR 72680	Pending	89.60	SF Residential
TR 47807	Approved	199.1	SF Residential
PM 067785	Pending	79.6	SF Residential
TR 52729	Pending	80	SF Residential
TR 42537	Approved		
TR 53933	Approved	47.25	SF Residential, Commercial, Open Space
TR 53822	Pending	1,162	SF Residential, Open Space, Park, Water Tanks
TR 51644	Approved	1,265	Residential Planned Development
TR 53189	Pending	185.5	SF Residential, Open Space
TR 52584	Approved	430.4	SF Residential
TR 060257	Pending	154.9	Residential, Open Space
TR 060665	Pending	134.2	Residential
TR 062000	Pending	154.9	Residential, Open Space
TR 060030	Approved	116.6	Residential
PM 18108	Pending	588.32	Industrial, Commercial, Retail, Open Space
Source: LA County DRP 2009			

## **Reviewing Agencies:**

### *Responsible Agencies*

- None  
 Regional Water Quality Control Board:  
 Los Angeles Region  
 Lahontan Region  
 Coastal Commission  
 Army Corps of Engineers  
 USFWS  
 SCAQMD  
 Castaic Union School District  
 William S. Hart Union High School District

### *Special Reviewing Agencies*

- None  
 Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
 National Parks  
 National Forest  
 Edwards Air Force Base  
 Resource Conservation District of Santa Monica Mountains Area  
 California Dept of Water Resources  
 Newhall County Water District  
 DOC DOGGR  
 DTSC  
 SCAG  
 NAHC (Courtesy Notification)  
 SCOPE (Courtesy Notification)

### *Regional Significance*

- None  
 SCAG Criteria  
 Air Quality  
 Water Resources  
 Santa Monica Mtns. Area  
 LAFCO

### *Trustee Agencies*

- None  
 State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
 State Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
 State Lands Commission  
 University of California (Natural Land and Water Reserves System)  
 California Department of Transportation

### *County Reviewing Agencies*

- DPW:  
 - Land Development Division (Grading & Drainage)  
 - Geotechnical & Materials Engineering Division  
 - Watershed Management Division (NPDES)  
 - Traffic and Lighting Division  
 - Environmental Programs Division  
 - Waterworks Division  
 - Sewer Maintenance Division

- Fire Department  
 - Forestry, Environmental Division  
 - Planning Division  
 - Land Development Unit  
 - Health Hazmat  
 Sanitation District  
 Public Health/Environmental Health Division: Land Use Program (OWTS), Drinking Water Program (Private Wells), Toxics Epidemiology Program (Noise)  
 Sheriff Department  
 Parks and Recreation  
 County of Los Angeles Public Library  
 Castaic Area Town Council

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions    | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture/Forest              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Services                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings<br>of Significance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils        |   |   |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Department.)

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.
- 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 (Prepared by)

Signature (Approved by)

3/8/15  
Date

3/10/15  
Date

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources the Lead Department cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the Lead Department has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level. (Mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced.)
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA processes, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15063(c)(3)(D).) In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of, and adequately analyzed in, an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 7) The explanation of each issue should identify: the significance threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question, and; mitigation measures identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance. Sources of thresholds include the County General Plan, other County planning documents, and County ordinances. Some thresholds are unique to geographical locations.
- 8) Climate Change Impacts: When determining whether a project's impacts are significant, the analysis should consider, when relevant, the effects of future climate change on : 1) worsening hazardous conditions that pose risks to the project's inhabitants and structures (e.g., floods and wildfires), and 2) worsening the project's impacts on the environment (e.g., impacts on special status species and public health).

## 1. AESTHETICS

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
	<i>Less Than Significant</i>			
<b>Would the project:</b>				

Would the project:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site currently exists as undeveloped, naturally vegetated land with limited ranch roads throughout the site. On-site vegetation is predominately characterized with limited riparian vegetation, sage scrub, and grassland areas that have been used for cattle grazing. The site is dominated by Grasshopper Canyon, which is a north-south trending valley located between the two prominent ridgelines to the east and west. As shown on Exhibit CO-7 of the SCVAP 2012, a portion of the western ridgeline is considered to be a “significant ridgeline”. It should be noted that this designation was not in place at the time the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was approved. Because Grasshopper Canyon is at a lower elevation than the surrounding ridgelines, the majority of the project site is generally not visible from the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) or from Interstate 5 (I-5).

As discussed in the SCVAP 2012, development has the potential to impair scenic resources if not carefully planned and controlled. The *NorthLake Specific Plan* was designed to place development below the majority of existing ridgelines so that the natural topography would screen views of the development from most surrounding areas (particularly from the east) and therefore minimize visual impacts to adjacent recreational uses. Project development would occur primarily in the canyon area and on moderate slopes below ridgeline elevations to reduce potential visual impacts. The extreme southern ridgeline edge located at or below the designated significant ridgeline discussed previously, would be graded at or below the designated ridgeline boundary in an area where elevations are inconsistent. The *NorthLake Specific Plan*, as previously approved and currently entitled prior to the primary ridgeline designation, depicts conceptual grading plans for this area. The designation of a significant ridgeline is part of the Castaic Community Standards District (CSD) ordinance which was adopted after the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was approved. The *NorthLake Specific Plan* is specifically exempt from the Castaic CSD which contains the Castaic CSD ridgeline regulations. Therefore potential impacts to the ridgeline located within the *NorthLake Specific Plan* area would not be considered significant. However, the Project would be consistent with ridgeline policies of the SCVAP 2012.

Overall, the project site would change from an undeveloped span of rolling terrain to a developed, urban condition. This change was acknowledged in the approval of the 1992 Specific Plan. However, due to the location of the project, which is primarily within the canyon, intervening topography would prevent views from scenic vantage points from being significantly affected. The changes resulting from the project site would largely be visible only from areas from the project site itself. This finding is consistent with the analysis provided in the NorthLake 1992 EIR and supported by Figures 4.7-1 and 4.7-2 of the NorthLake 1992 EIR. Although limited, any project areas visible from I-5 would be developed to aesthetically blend with the surrounding visual elements, as determined through the approved design guidelines in the *NorthLake Specific Plan*.

The proposed project would conform to the *NorthLake Specific Plan*'s design guidelines, including requirements for grading, circulation, landscape, architecture, and signage. Specific statements and guidelines would be applied related to community features; streetscapes; appropriate building mass and scale; and parameters for architectural design of residential and commercial structures. According to the *NorthLake Specific Plan*,

adherence to the grading guidelines would minimize conflict within the constraints of existing topography while allowing for livable, attractive areas.

As discussed, project construction would include mass grading; re-contouring slopes; introducing residential and industrial structures; building streets; and constructing other appurtenant development associated with a new community. However, compliance with the design guidelines set forth in the *NorthLake Specific Plan* would ensure that development of the project would not result in a significant impact on a scenic vista.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Be visible from or obstruct views from a regional riding or hiking trail?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation operates the Los Angeles County System of Riding and Hiking trails. The countywide trails system is a network of existing and proposed multiple-use trails planned for a wide range of uses such as hiking, jogging, walking, mountain biking, and equestrian activity. The system has been developed in conjunction with trails provided by other federal and State agencies. The closest County trail to the project site is the Castaic Lake SRA trail system. While these trails have not been formally incorporated into Los Angeles County's trail system, they are used and recognized as such. According to the Los Angeles County Riding and Hiking Trails Map, the trail system is over seven miles in length with multiple levels of difficulty.

Project construction would include mass grading; re-contouring slopes; introducing residential and industrial structures; building streets; and constructing other appurtenant development associated with a new community. Due to the location of the Castaic Lake SRA trail system, the project will be visible from the trail; however, compliance with the design guidelines set forth in the *NorthLake Specific Plan* would ensure that development of the project would not result in a significant impact on a scenic vista. Additionally, because the project would be located in a canyon, it would not obstruct distant views from the trails. Therefore, impacts related to visibility from or obstruction of views from a regional riding or hiking trail would be less than significant.

Additionally, there is evidence of other "informal" or unofficial trails that traverse the project site that likely veer off of portions of the Castaic Lake SRA trail system. Though current use of these trails within the boundaries of the project site is prohibited (i.e., users are trespassing on private property), monitoring and enforcement to keep users off these ad-hoc trails has not been practiced. Development of the project site would preclude future use of these trails. However, because these unofficial trails are not designated as regional riding or hiking trails, no impact would occur related to visibility from or obstruction of views from these trails.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**No Impact.** The proposed project site is adjacent to I-5, which is a State of California Eligible State Scenic Highway from its intersection with I-210 north to its intersection with State Route (SR) 126. This eligible portion of I-5 is located near the City of Santa Clarita (approximately five miles south of the project site) and with no views of the project site. SR-126 is also designated as a State of California Eligible State Scenic Highway, but is not officially designated. The project site is located north of the SR-126 and is not visible from any portion of the SR-126. Since there are no State scenic highways located near the project site,

implementation of the proposed project would not affect scenic resources along a State scenic highway. According to the County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element (1974), Lake Hughes Road between Old Ridge Route and Elizabeth Lake Road is considered to be a Second Priority Route – Proposed for Further Study; however, views of the project site are extremely limited due to intervening topography and elevation differences. Additionally, because this is not a formal designation, no impact would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- d) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Consistent with the findings of the NorthLake 1992 EIR, the proposed project would involve substantial grading and removal of existing vegetation. Removing such vegetation and replacing it with mixed-use development would alter the visual character of the project site. However, because of the project site's canyon location, there would be minimal visual impacts from surrounding land uses, including motorists along I-5 and recreational users at the Castaic Lake SRA. Project development would occur primarily in the canyon area and on moderate slopes below ridgeline elevations to reduce potential visual impacts. As discussed previously, the existing major ridgelines would remain intact in their existing natural condition, unaffected by the proposed project. Open space is integrated within the design of the *NorthLake Specific Plan* and would preserve ridgelines and hillsides; protect sensitive environmental resources; provide view amenities; accommodate the greenbelt trail; and separate residential neighborhood enclaves. Further, the project would comply with all established design guidelines set forth in the previously approved *NorthLake Specific Plan*. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Create a new source of substantial shadows, light, or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would create new sources of light and glare during construction. Limited lighting would be necessary in active construction areas for security reasons. Because of the depth of the canyon, and requirements for shielding night lighting, light and glare effects from construction activities are not expected to affect drivers on I-5 or visitors to the Castaic Lake SRA. During construction activities, lighting may be required, which could be visible from the Castaic Lake SRA; however, construction lighting would be temporary and limited in nature. Overall, construction-generated light and glare would be considered less than significant.

Operation of the proposed project would introduce new light sources into the area. New light sources are anticipated to occur from the illumination of on-site structures such as signage, interior and exterior lighting, and street and vehicle lights. New permanent light sources would be introduced with the proposed project where none currently exist. Light "spill" occurs when light shines beyond the intended area and illuminates an unintended area. Lighting associated with the proposed project would be confined to the project boundaries, and proposed lighting would be shielded or directed downwards to minimize light spillover. All development would conform to the lighting design guidelines set forth in the *NorthLake Specific Plan*; therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.

Glare, a function of candlepower, may be caused directly by a lamp or indirectly from the reflection of surrounding surfaces within the field of view. The presence of glare is frequently a subjective issue. When

glare is excessive, it can cause discomfort, reduction of visibility, and even momentary loss of vision. However, no potential sources of glare are proposed with the project. No impact would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## **2. AGRICULTURE / FOREST**

*In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.*

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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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?

**No Impact.** The California Department of Conservation (DOC) and the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts translate soil survey data into an “Important Farmland Series” of maps for the state’s agricultural counties by using the United States Soil Conservation Service soil classifications. These classifications of the DOC’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) focus only on those lands that have been recently farmed. Land not recently farmed is not shown on the Important Farmland Series of maps. According to Figure 3.5-1, Farmland Designations within the OVOV Planning Area, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the project site is designated as “Grazing Land”. This is not included in the definition of Important Farmland (land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance); therefore, the conversion of grazing land is not a significant impact. As also noted in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the only Williamson Act contracted lands in Los Angeles County are located on Catalina Island and do not impact the project site. The proposed project would not change the environment in a manner that would result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, with a designated Agricultural Opportunity Area, or with a Williamson Act contract?

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 2(a) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**No Impact.** The project site is not zoned as forest land as defined by Section 1220(g) of the *California Public Resources Code*, as timberland as defined by Section 4526 of the *California Public Resources Code*, or as timberland zoned for timberland production as defined by Section 51104(g) of the *California Public Resources Code*. The existing zoning for the project site is SP (Specific Plan). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause the rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for timberland production. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures would be required.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 2(c) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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 or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 2(c) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

### 3. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

Potentially Significant Impact	Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant	No Impact

Would the project:

- a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans of either the South Coast AQMD (SCAQMD) or the Antelope Valley AQMD (AVAQMD)?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project would generate short-term, construction-related and long-term air emissions that have the potential to affect local and regional air quality. According to the 1992 NorthLake Specific Plan EIR, the project would conflict with the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in effect at that time; therefore a significant and unavoidable impact was identified. Because regulations have changed since the time the previous NorthLake Specific Plan EIR was certified, an updated air quality analysis will be conducted to determine if the mobile and stationary air emissions associated with the project would violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. The air quality analysis will also determine whether the potential mobile and stationary air emissions associated with the project could result in exposure of sensitive receptors to significant concentrations of air pollutants. Further evaluation in the Draft Supplemental EIR is also required to determine if this project will conflict with the currently adopted AQMP. The SCVAP 2012 EIR also addressed air quality, however, the analysis was done at a program level and concluded that the SCVAP would potentially result in significant and unavoidable air quality impacts. As previously stated, an updated air quality analysis will be conducted; however, applicable mitigation from the SCVAP 2012 EIR, identified below, will be restated and new mitigation measures will be identified as appropriate.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 3(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR and mitigation measures will be identified, as appropriate.

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

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 3(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR and mitigation measures will be identified, as appropriate.

- d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 3(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR and mitigation measures will be identified, as appropriate.

- e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed commercial, industrial, and residential land uses are not expected to create unusual or objectionable odors. Some odors may be associated with the operation of diesel engines during site preparation. However, these odors are typical of urbanized environments and would be subject to construction and air quality regulations, including proper maintenance of machinery, in order to minimize engine emissions. These emissions are also of short duration and odors are quickly dispersed into the atmosphere. Any future on-site commercial uses that may emit steam (such as restaurants) are required to secure appropriate permits from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Compliance with SCAQMD rules and permit requirements would ensure that no objectionable odors would be created. Proposed residential uses would not generate objectionable odors.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for biological resources; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

#### **Construction**

**SCVAP 3.3-1:** Prior to implementing project approval, applicants shall develop a Construction Traffic Emission Management Plan to minimize emissions from vehicles including, but not limited to, scheduling truck deliveries to avoid peak hour traffic conditions, consolidating truck deliveries, and prohibiting truck idling in excess of 5 minutes.

**SCVAP 3.3-2:** Prior to grading permit issuance, applicants shall develop a Construction Emission Management Plan to minimize construction-related emissions. The Construction Emission Management Plan shall require the use of Best Available Control Measures, as specified in Table 1 of SCAQMD's Rule 403. If

potentially significant impacts are identified after the implementation of the SCAQMD recommended Best Available Control Measures, the Construction Emission Management Plan shall include the following additional elements:

- Use of water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. When wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour the operators shall increase watering frequency.
- Active sites shall be watered at least three times daily during dry weather.
- Increase watering frequency during construction or use non-toxic chemical stabilizers if it would provide higher control efficiencies.
- Suspend grading and excavation activities during windy periods (i.e., surface winds in excess of 25 miles per hour).
- Suspend the use of all construction equipment during first-stage smog alerts.
- Application of non-toxic chemical soil stabilizers or apply water to form and maintain a crust on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days).
- Application of non-toxic binders to exposed areas after cut and fill operations and hydroseeded areas.
- Cover or application of water or non-toxic chemical suppressants to form and maintain a crust on inactive storage piles.
- Planting of vegetative ground cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible and where feasible.
- Operate street sweepers that comply with SCAQMD Rules 1186 and 1186.1 on roads adjacent to the construction site so as to minimize dust emissions. Paved parking and staging areas shall be swept daily.
- Scheduling truck deliveries to avoid peak hour traffic conditions, consolidating truck deliveries, and prohibiting truck idling in excess of 5 minutes.
- Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour or less.
- Pave or apply gravel on roads used to access the construction sites when possible.
- Schedule construction activities that affect traffic flow to off-peak hours (e.g., between 7:00 PM and 6:00 AM, and between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM).
- Use of diesel-powered construction equipment shall use ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel.
- Use electric welders to avoid emissions from gas or diesel welders when such equipment is commercially available.
- Use electricity or alternate fuels for on-site mobile equipment instead of diesel equipment when such equipment is commercially available.
- Use on-site electricity or alternative fuels rather than diesel-powered or gasoline powered generators when such equipment is commercially available.
- Maintain construction equipment by conducting regular tune-ups according to the manufacturers' recommendations.
- Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes as a maximum.

- Limit, to the extent feasible, the hours of operation of heavy duty equipment and/or the amount of equipment in use.
- Retrofit large off-road construction equipment that will be operating for significant periods. Retrofit technologies such as particulate traps, selective catalytic reduction, oxidation catalysts, air enhancement technologies, etc., shall be evaluated. These technologies will be required if they are certified by CARB and/or the US EPA, and are commercially available and can feasibly be retrofitted onto construction equipment.
- The project applicant shall require all on-site construction equipment to meet US EPA Tier 4 or higher emissions standards according to the following:
  - Post-January 1, 2015: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 hp shall meet the Tier 4 emission standards, where available. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with BACT devices certified by CARB. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by CARB regulations. A copy of each unit's certified tier specification, BACT documentations, and CARB, SCAQMD, or ICAPCD operating permit shall be provided at the time of mobilization of each applicable unit of equipment.
- Designate personnel to monitor dust control measures to ensure effectiveness in minimizing fugitive dust emissions.
- An information sign shall be posted at the entrance to each construction site that identifies the permitted construction hours and provides a telephone number to call and receive information about the construction project or to report complaints regarding excessive fugitive dust generation. Any reasonable complaints shall be rectified within 24 hours of their receipt.
- The contractor shall utilize low-VOC content coatings and solvents that are consistent with applicable SCAQMD and ICAPCD rules and regulations.
- Consideration shall be given to use of other transportation methods to deliver materials to the construction sites (for example, trains or conveyors) if it would result in a reduction of criteria pollutant emissions.

**SCVAP 3.3-3:** Prior to implementing project approval, applicants shall be required to conduct a localized significant thresholds (LST) analysis.

## Operation

**SCVAP 3.3-4:** Prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant shall submit building plans to the County Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division to demonstrate that all residential buildings are designed to achieve energy efficiency in accordance with the requirements of the ordinances adopted pursuant to the County's Green Building Program and other applicable State and County standards.

**SCVAP 3.3-5:** Prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant shall submit building plans to the County Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division to demonstrate that all commercial buildings shall be designed to achieve energy efficiency in accordance with the requirements of the ordinances adopted pursuant to the County's Green Building Program and other applicable State and County standards.

**SCVAP 3.3-6:** Prior to final building inspection, the applicant shall provide preferential parking spaces for carpools and vanpools at major commercial and office locations. The spaces shall be clearly identified on plot plans and may not be pooled in one location.

**SCVAP 3.3-7:** New residential developments shall allow only natural gas-fired hearths and shall prohibit the installation of wood-burning hearths and wood-burning stoves.

**SCVAP 3.3-8:** Prior to implementing project approval, tract maps and other sensitive uses located within 500 feet from the closest right of way of Interstate 5 and State Route 14 shall be required to conduct a health risk assessment.

**SCVAP 3.3-9:** Prior to implementing project approval, tract maps and other sensitive uses located within the screening level distances of potential sources of odors, or new sources of odors located within the screening level distances of existing or reasonably foreseeable sensitive uses, as defined by the SCAQMD, shall be required to conduct an odors assessment.

#### 4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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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 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project would involve mass grading; re-contouring slopes; introducing residential and industrial structures; building streets; and constructing other appurtenant development associated with a new community that has the potential to affect or result in loss of biological resources through habitat modification. According to the 1992 NorthLake Specific Plan EIR, project implementation would result in the direct removal of plant communities and wildlife habitat from the project site; however, biotic resources located within the areas designated for open space would be preserved. The NorthLake 1992 EIR concluded that all potential impacts related to biological resources would be reduced to less than significant levels with mitigation. However, due to changes in regulatory conditions as well as potential changes to the biological resources on the project site since 1992, and consistent with the program-level mitigation MM 3.7-1 and 3.7-2 summarized below and set forth in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, updated surveys and an updated technical report will be prepared and summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. As appropriate, existing mitigation from the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR will be restated and new mitigation measures will be identified.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities (e.g., riparian habitat, coastal sage scrub, oak woodlands, non-jurisdictional wetlands) identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 4(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally or state protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, and drainages) or waters of the United States, as defined by § 404 of the federal Clean Water Act or California Fish & Game code § 1600, et seq. through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- 

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) issued a provisional Section 404(b)(1) Permit for the NorthLake Specific Plan to NorthLake, LLC in 1999 based on the approved 1992 Specific Plan and areas beyond the Specific Plan boundary, which include a proposed golf course located in the Castaic Lake SRA to the east. The provisional Section 404(b)(1) Permit was issued pending the issuance of a Section 401 Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). A 2001 site visit with staff from the USACE, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the RWQCB determined that the waters delineated in the provisional permit application were consistent with field indicators and incorporated four additional drainages into the jurisdictional delineation of “waters of the U.S.” and “waters of the State”. In 2004, Vandermost Consulting completed a verification of the jurisdictional delineation. As part of the proposed project, an updated jurisdictional delineation will be performed. The findings will be incorporated in the Draft SEIR and mitigation measures will be identified as necessary.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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?
- 

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Wildlife corridors and habitat linkages are features that promote habitat connectivity and are generally characterized as undisturbed canyon and riverine stream habitat areas. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, several key movement corridors are located within the Santa Clarita Valley planning area. Although the SCVAP 2012 EIR concluded that impacts related to wildlife movement would be significant and unavoidable, this impact only applies to specific areas identified in the SCVAP 2012 and the NorthLake Specific Plan project site is not identified as a key movement corridor. Further, because the on-site drainages and ponds are ephemeral, or seasonal, in nature, they do not serve as habitat for migratory fish species. Therefore, impacts related to wildlife movement would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Convert oak woodlands (as defined by the state, oak woodlands are oak stands with greater than 10% canopy cover with oaks at least 5 inch in diameter measured at 4.5 feet above mean natural grade) or otherwise contain oak or other unique native trees (junipers, Joshuas, southern California black walnut, etc.)?
- 

**No Impact.** Based on preliminary biological surveys conducted for the proposed project, there are no oak trees or areas characterized as oak woodlands on the project site. No impact would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including Wildflower Reserve Areas (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.36), the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.56, Part 16), the Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, § 22.56.215), and Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs) (L.A. County Code, Title 22, Ch. 22.44, Part 6)?

**No Impact.** Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) were established in 1980 and updated for the SCVAP 2012 planning area in 2012 by Los Angeles County to designate areas with sensitive environmental conditions and/or resources. SEA boundaries broadly outline the biotic resources of concern. As shown on Exhibit CO-5 of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan 2012, the project site is not located in an SEA. It should be noted that the on-site Grasshopper Canyon drainage is upstream of Castaic Creek, which is a tributary to the Santa Clara River (SEA No. 23); however, impacts related to local and regional hydrology will be further evaluated as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR, as noted in Section 10 of this Initial Study.

No oak or other significant indigenous woodlands or biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) would be impacted through project development. Therefore, there would be no impact.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

g) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted state, regional, or local habitat conservation plan?

**No Impact.** The proposed project site is not located within an adopted habitat conservation plan; natural community conservation plan; or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact by conflicting with any of the above-mentioned plans.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

#### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for biological resources; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.7-1:** Biological site survey reports shall include an analysis of the potential for a proposed project to result in direct mortality of individuals of listed, proposed, or candidate species, losses of habitats occupied by such species, and losses of opportunity for habitat connectivity.

Reports must be prepared by qualified biological consultants. Reports must include specific information regarding site location, on-site and surrounding biological resources, observed and detected species, site photographs, vegetation map, literature sources, timing of surveys, project

footprint, anticipated project impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and additional recommended surveys.

**SCVAP MM 3.7-2:** If special-status species may potentially be subject to direct loss through implementation of construction activities, mitigation measures proposed as part of biological site survey reports shall include a requirement for preconstruction special-status species surveys, followed by measures to ensure avoidance, relocation or safe escape of special-status species from construction activity, whichever action is the most appropriate. If special status species are found to be brooding, denning, nesting, etc. on site during the preconstruction survey, construction activity shall be halted until offspring are weaned, fledged, etc. and are able to escape the site or be safely relocated to appropriate off-site habitat areas. A qualified biologist shall be on site to conduct surveys, to perform or oversee implementation of protective measures, and to determine when construction activity may resume.

**SCVAP MM 3.7-3:** Impacts on sensitive habitats resulting from implementation of the Area Plan shall be compensated for through the acquisition of lands described in Policies CO 10.1.3, CO 10.1.11 and CO 10.1.12. Said acquisition shall prioritize habitat types that are particularly at risk in the region. At risk habitats include but are not limited to waterways, wetlands and vernal pools; alluvial scrub; native grasslands; savannas, woodlands and forests; holly-leaf cherry and Great basin sagebrush associations; and rocklands.

## 5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, a variety of mitigation measures were identified to address impacts related to cultural, historic, and paleontological resources (refer to MMs 3.8-1 through 3.8-7, below). As part of this previous EIR, it was demonstrated that all potentially significant cultural, historic, and paleontological impacts and disturbance to human remains would be reduced to less than significant levels. As part of the project, an updated Cultural Resources Assessment including an assessment of historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources will be prepared for the proposed project to supplement the analysis provided in the SCVAP 2012 EIR. This supplemental information will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 5(a) above. It should be noted that the proposed project does not include a General Plan, Specific Plan, or “Local Open-Space Plan” amendment; therefore, formal government to government consultation under Senate Bill (SB) 18 is not required. However, a courtesy consultation compliant with the new provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 52, will take place with Native American tribal representatives whose tribes may have been located in the broader vicinity.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature, or contain rock formations indicating potential paleontological resources?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 5(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the proposed project site is not known to have been utilized for religious or sacred purposes. No evidence is in place to suggest that the project site has been used for human burials. The *California Health and Safety Code* (Section 7050.5) states that,

if human remains are discovered on site, no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to the *California Public Resources Code* (Section 5097.98). As part of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, it was demonstrated that all potentially significant impacts related to disturbance of human remains would be reduced to less than significant levels with implementation of MM 3.8-7. No additional mitigation is required in the unlikely event human remains are discovered on site; therefore, impacts associated with this issue would be mitigated to a less than significant level.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for cultural resources; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-1:** Avoidance is the preferred treatment for cultural resources. Where feasible, project plans shall be developed to allow avoidance of cultural resources. Where avoidance of construction impacts is possible, covering of the cultural resource site with a layer of chemically stable soil and avoidance planting (e.g., planting of prickly pear cactus) shall be employed to ensure that indirect impacts from increased public availability to the site are avoided. Where avoidance is selected, cultural resource sites shall be deeded into permanent conservation easements or dedicated open space.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-2:** If avoidance and/or preservation of in place cultural resources is not possible, the following mitigation measures shall be initiated for each impacted site:

- a. A participant-observer, as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), shall be used during archaeological testing or excavation in the project site.
- b. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit for the project, the project proponent shall develop a test level research design detailing how the cultural resource investigation shall be executed and providing specific research questions that shall be addressed through the excavation program. In particular, the testing program shall characterize the site constituents, horizontal and vertical extent, and, if possible, period of use. The testing program shall also address the California Register and National Register eligibility of the cultural resource and make recommendations as to the suitability of the resource for listing on either Register. The research design shall be submitted to the County of Los Angeles Regional Park and Open-Space District for review and comment. For sites determined, through the Testing Program, to be ineligible for listing on either the California or National Register, execution of the Testing Program will suffice as mitigation of project impacts to this resource.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-3:** In the unlikely event that artifacts are found during grading within the County's Planning Area or future roadway extensions, an archaeologist will be notified to stabilize, recover, and evaluate such finds.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-4:** Prior to grading, as part of an inspection testing program, a Los Angeles County Natural History Museum-approved inspector is to be on site to salvage scientifically significant fossil remains. The duration of these inspections depends on the potential for the discovery of fossils, the rate of excavation, and the abundance of fossils. Geological formations (like the Saugus Formation) with a high potential will initially require full time monitoring during grading activities. Geologic formations (like the Quaternary terrace deposits) with a moderate potential will initially require half-time monitoring. If fossil production is lower than expected, the duration of monitoring efforts should be reduced. Should the excavations yield significant paleontological resources, excavation is to be

stopped or redirected until the extent of the find is established and the resources are salvaged. A report of the inspection testing program shall include an itemized inventory of the fossils, pertinent geologic and stratigraphic data, field notes of the collectors and include recommendations for future monitoring efforts in the County's Planning Area. Prior to grading, an agreement shall be reached with a suitable public, non-profit scientific repository, such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History or similar institution, regarding acceptance of fossil collections.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-5:** For archeological sites accidentally discovered during future construction, there shall be an immediate evaluation of the find by a qualified archeologist. If the find is determined to be a historical or unique archeological resource, as defined under CEQA, contingency funding and a time allotment sufficient to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation shall be provided. Construction work may continue on other parts of the construction site while historical/archeological mitigation takes place, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(i).

**SCVAP MM 3.8-6:** During grading activities. In the unlikely event that artifacts are found during grading within the planning area or future roadway extensions, a paleontologist will be notified to stabilize, recover, and evaluate such finds.

**SCVAP MM 3.8-7:** If human remains are encountered during a public or private construction activity, other than at a cemetery, State Health and Safety Code 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Los Angeles County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The Los Angeles County Coroner must be notified within 24 hours.

- a. If the coroner determines that the burial is not historic, but prehistoric, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) must be contacted to determine the most likely descendent (MLD) for this area. The MLD may become involved with the disposition of the burial following scientific analysis.

## 6. ENERGY

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the project:

- a) Conflict with Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code (L.A. County Code Title 31)?

**No Impact.** In 2013, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted the Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code (L.A. County Code Title 31) in response to the mandates set forth in the 2010 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). The newly adopted L.A. County Code Title 31 provides the County with local control and regulation of the CALGreen Code, which requires that new buildings be environmentally responsible by reducing water consumption, employing building commissioning to increase building system efficiencies, diverting construction waste from landfills, and installing low pollutant-emitting finish materials. As discussed in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, all newly constructed buildings in California are subject to the requirements of the CALGreen Code; therefore, the project would be required to comply with the CALGreen Code, as adopted by Los Angeles County as L.A. County Code Title 31. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Involve the inefficient use of energy resources (see [Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines](#))?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 6(a). As discussed in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the proposed project would create demand for energy resources, including natural gas and petroleum products, which are readily available but finite in supply given the length of time required by the natural process to create them. The demand for these resources, as well as other resources such as electricity, is anticipated to increase with or without the proposed project. However, the investment of these energy resources for the proposed project would not be disproportionate to what would normally be used for a project of this type and scale. Consistent with the findings of the SCVAP EIR, and as discussed previously in the response to Threshold 6(a), provided that all standard building codes, including energy conservation standards, are followed, the inefficient use of energy resources is not anticipated and a less than significant impact would occur.

Nevertheless, further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR to insure the latest up-to-date information is reviewed.

## 7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the project:

- a) Expose people or structures to 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 active fault trace? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As stated in the NorthLake 1992 EIR, hazards related to fault displacement would not be significant since there are no known active or potentially active faults crossing the project site. Additionally, according to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, no active or potentially active faults cross the project site and there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones on the site. As shown on Figure 3.9-3, Faults within or Adjacent to the OVOV Planning Area, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the closest fault to the site is the San Gabriel Fault, which runs in a general northwest to southwest direction and extends 87 miles from the community of Frazier Park (west of Gorman) to Mount Baldy in San Bernardino County. This fault is located east of I-5 and the project site. Therefore, the potential for fault rupture on the project site is highly unlikely and is considered to be less than significant.

Nevertheless, further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR to insure the latest up-to-date information is reviewed.

- ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The primary seismic hazard for the project site, as with all of southern California, is ground shaking due to the proximity of major active faults. The most significant known active faults within or adjacent to the SCVAP 2012 Planning Area include the San Andreas, San Fernando, San Gabriel, Holser, Sierra Madre, Santa Susana, Oak Ridge, Clearwater, Soledad, Northridge Hills, San Francisquito, and Pelona Faults. In addition to seismic impacts from these faults, there is a potential for ground shaking from blind thrust faults, which are low angle detachment faults that do not reach the ground surface. Increases in population, and the development of residential and non-residential development that will occur upon implementation of the *NorthLake Specific Plan* could result in the increased exposure of persons and property to ground shaking hazards. However, as required for all new developments in Los Angeles County, all grading and excavation must comply with Title 26 Building Code of the *County of Los Angeles, California County Code*. Rules and regulations contained in of Title 26 provide control of excavation, grading, and earthwork construction (including fills or embankment activities) and will adhere to the recommendations included in all geotechnical reports prepared for the project.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and lateral spreading?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Liquefaction refers to a process by which water-saturated granular soils transform from a solid to a liquid state during strong ground shaking. Liquefaction usually occurs during or shortly after a large earthquake. The movement of saturated soils during seismic events from ground shaking can result in soil instability and possible structural damage. Figure 3.9-2, Liquefaction and Landslide Hazards within the OVOV Planning Area, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR indicates that a limited area in the extreme southwest portion of the NorthLake Specific Plan project site may be within a liquefaction zone. However, the NorthLake 1992 EIR demonstrated that, potential impacts related to secondary earthquake hazards including liquefaction, would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with the Los Angeles County Grading Ordinance and remedial grading activities. In accordance with the mitigation measures identified below from the NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR, additional technical analysis will supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that any areas with the potential for liquefaction and lateral spreading would be remediated as necessary to ensure that impacts would be less than significant and the supplemental analysis will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

iv) Landslides?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** As shown on Figure 3.9-2, Liquefaction and Landslide Hazards within the OVOV Planning Area, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the project site is within an earthquake-induced landslide seismic hazard zone. According to NorthLake 1992 EIR, landslides are located throughout the site and shall be remediated as part of project development (and with implementation of mitigation measures). Slope and bedding instabilities exist throughout the site, including in Grasshopper Canyon, and remedial grading would be required. As discussed previously, the NorthLake 1992 EIR demonstrated that potential impacts related to secondary earthquake hazards including landslides, would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with the Los Angeles County Grading Ordinance and remedial grading activities. In accordance with the mitigation measures identified below from the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR, additional technical analysis will supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that any areas with the potential for landslides would be remediated as necessary to ensure that impacts would be less than significant and the supplemental analysis will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Grading activities associated with the proposed project would result in the disruption of on-site soils and the exposure of uncovered soils to potential erosion impacts from wind, rain, and surface water runoff during both the construction phase and after site development. Consistent with the analysis in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the project would be subject to rules and regulations for erosion control and grading, including compliance with the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requiring preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and identifying Best Management Practices (BMPs) for temporary erosion controls, as noted in MM 3.9.8. Because

compliance with permit conditions will be required, impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels. Additionally, MMs 3.9.9, requiring soil erosion and sediment control plans, and 3.9.10 requiring implementation of drainage design measures would further reduce impacts related to soil erosion or the loss of topsoil to less than significant levels. Although compliance with the identified mitigation measures and regulatory requirements would reduce impacts to less than significant levels, supplemental analysis related to erosion and water quality will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Grading activities associated with the proposed project have the potential to expose areas of subsidence or areas of soil that are susceptible to subsidence due to seismic activity and human activity. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the County has adopted ordinances requiring soil and geotechnical investigations for grading or new construction areas with a potential for landslide or subsidence activity and compliance with these requirements would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels. The project would comply with adopted County of Los Angeles ordinances requiring soil and geotechnical investigations. As discussed previously, the NorthLake 1992 EIR demonstrated that potential impacts related to secondary earthquake hazards including landslides, would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with the Los Angeles County Grading Ordinance and remedial grading activities. In accordance with the mitigation measures identified below from the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR, additional technical analysis will supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that any areas with the potential for landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse would be remediated as necessary to ensure that impacts would be less than significant and the supplemental analysis will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** A soil's potential to shrink and swell depends of the amount and types of clay in the soil. As discussed in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the potential for soils to exhibit expansive properties occur in low-lying areas, especially near river channels. Due to the seasonal drainage within Grasshopper Canyon, there is a potential for expansive soils to exist on the project site. It should be noted that both the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR concluded that, with implementation of mitigation measures identified below, potential impacts would be less than significant. In accordance with the mitigation measures identified below from the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR, additional technical analysis will supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that any areas with the potential for expansive soils would be remediated as necessary to ensure that impacts would be less than significant and the supplemental analysis will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

**No Impact.** The proposed project will be connected to the municipal sewer system and does not propose any septic tanks. Therefore, there would be no impact from development of the proposed project.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- f) Conflict with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 22, § 22.56.215) or hillside design standards in the County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element?

**No Impact.** As shown on Figure 9.8, Hillside Management Areas and Ridgeline Management Map, of the DRAFT *Los Angeles County General Plan 2035*, the project site is located in a Hillside Management Area (greater than 25 percent slope). However, it is noted that the updated Hillside Management Area Ordinance is currently draft in form and, therefore, would not apply to development of a currently approved specific plan. Because the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was approved and entitled for development prior to adoption of the updated Hillside Management Ordinance, development need only to comply with any hillside design standards in effect at the time that the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was approved and as further addressed in the SCVAP 2012. The Land Use analysis to be prepared as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR will address compliance with all applicable hillside design standards. No impact would occur.

No further analysis of this issue as it pertains to geology and soils would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

#### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the NorthLake 1992 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for geology and soils; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SP EIR MM 4.1-1** All grading operations shall be conducted in conformance with the Los Angeles County Grading Ordinance.

**SP EIR MM 4.1-2** All grading activities shall adhere to the recommendations included with the current and subsequent geotechnical reports, including the following:

- All certified artificial fill and alluvium shall be removed and recompacted to the required maximum density;
- All organic material shall be removed prior to grading certification;
- Proposed cut and fill slopes shall be stabilized to the satisfaction of the County Engineer;
- Existing landslides of a potentially hazardous nature shall be properly stabilized, removed or left in open space per the requirements of subsequent Geology Reports;
- All future cut/fill slopes shall be landscaped to reduce potential increases in erosion;

- All onsite drainage shall conform to the approved drainage concept plan to reduce potential erosion impacts;
- Slopes over 30 feet high shall be designed with a concrete drainage device to carry water off graded slopes to minimize erosion; all bench drain structures shall be constructed of earth-toned concrete to camouflaged to reduce visibility.
- Subdrains shall be installed upon encountering groundwater during excavation operations.

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for geology and soils; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.1** Before a project is approved or otherwise permitted within an Alquist-Priolo Zone within the County's Planning Area, or within 150 feet of any other active or potentially active fault mapped in a published United State Geologic Survey (USGS) or within other potential earthquake hazard area (as determined by the County Geologist), a site-specific geologic investigation shall be prepared to assess potential seismic hazards resulting from development of an individual project site within the County's Planning Area. Where and when required, the geotechnical investigation shall address the issue(s), hazard(s), and geographic area(s) determined by the County Geologist to be relevant to each individual development project. The site-specific geotechnical investigation shall incorporate up-to-date data from government and non-government sources.

Based on the site-specific geotechnical investigation, no structures intended for human occupancy shall be constructed across active faults. This site-specific evaluation and written report shall be prepared by a licensed geotechnical engineer and shall be submitted to the County Geologist for review and approval prior to the issuance of building occupancy permits. If an active fault is discovered that has not previously been recorded, any structure intended for human occupancy shall be set back at least 50 feet from the fault. A larger or smaller setback may be established if such a setback is supported by adequate evidence as presented to and accepted by the County Geologist.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.2** The design and construction of structures and facilities shall adhere to the standards and requirements detailed in the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24), Los Angeles County Building Code, Title 26, and/or professional engineering standards appropriate for the seismic zone in which such construction within the County would occur. Conformance with these design standards shall be enforced through building plan review and approval by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, prior to the issuance of building permits for any structure or facility.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.3** As determined by the County Geologist, a site-specific assessment shall be prepared to ascertain ground shaking impacts resulting from development. The site-specific ground shaking assessment shall incorporate up-to-date data regarding ground-shaking probabilities and strengths from government and non-government sources and may be included as part of any site-specific geotechnical investigation as required in MM 3.9-1. The site-specific ground shaking assessment shall include specific measures to reduce the significance of potential ground-shaking hazards to the individual development. The site-specific ground shaking assessment shall be prepared by a licensed geotechnical engineer and shall be submitted to the County Geologist for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.5** As determined by the County Geologist, a site-specific assessment shall be prepared to ascertain potential liquefaction impacts resulting from development. The site-specific

liquefaction assessment shall incorporate up-to-date data regarding liquefaction potential of site-specific projects from government and non-government sources and may be included as part of any site-specific geotechnical investigation. This site-specific ground shaking assessment shall be prepared by a licensed geotechnical engineer and shall be submitted to the County Geologist for review and approval prior to the issuance of building occupancy permits.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.6** Where development is proposed within an identified or potential liquefaction hazard area or as defined by the County Geologist, adequate and appropriate measures such as design foundations in a manner that limits the effects of liquefaction, the placement of an engineered fill with low liquefaction potential, and the alternative siting of structures in areas with a lower liquefaction risk, shall be implemented to reduce potential liquefaction hazards. Any and all such measures shall be submitted to the County Geologist and the County Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, for review prior to the approval of the building permits.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.7** All engineered slopes shall be designed to reduce seismically induced failure. For lower risk projects, (projects that are not located in areas of seismically induced ground failure), slope design shall be based on pseudo-static stability analysis (a test to determine the strength of horizontal movement of retaining walls during a seismic event) using soil engineering parameters established on a site-specific basis. For higher risk projects (projects located in areas of seismically induced ground failure), the stability analyses that will be required shall factor in the intensity of expected ground shaking, prior to the issuance of building occupancy permits for the proposed developments.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.8** The County of Los Angeles, where required, and in accordance with issuance of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, shall require the construction and/or grading contractor for individual developments to establish and implement specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) at time of project implementation.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.9** Prior to any development within the County's Planning Area, a Grading Plan shall be submitted to the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, and/or the County Geologist for review and approval. As required by the County of Los Angeles, the grading plan shall include soil erosion and sediment control plans. Measures included in individual erosion control plans may include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- a. Grading and development plans shall be designed in a manner which minimizes the amount of terrain modification.
- b. Surface water shall be controlled and diverted around potential landslide areas to prevent erosion and saturation of slopes.
- c. Structures shall not be sited on or below identified landslides unless slides are stabilized.
- d. The extent and duration of ground disturbing activities during and immediately following periods of rain shall be limited, to avoid the potential for erosion which may be accelerated by rainfall on exposed soils.
- e. To the extent possible, the amount of cut and fill shall be balanced.
- f. The amount of water entering and exiting a graded site shall be limited through the placement of interceptor trenches or other erosion control devices.
- g. Erosion and sediment control plans shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to the issuance of grading permits.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.10** Where required, drainage design measures shall be incorporated into the final design of individual projects on site. These measures shall include, but will not be limited to:

- a. Runoff entering developing areas shall be collected into surface and subsurface drains for removal to nearby drainages.
- b. Runoff generated above steep slopes or poorly vegetated areas shall be captured and conveyed to nearby drainages.
- c. Runoff generated on paved or covered areas shall be conveyed via swales and drains to natural drainage courses.
- d. Disturbed areas that have been identified as highly erosive shall be (re)vegetated.
- e. Irrigation systems shall be designed, installed, and maintained in a manner which minimizes runoff.
- f. The landscape scheme for projects within the project site shall utilize drought tolerant plants.
- g. Erosion control devices such as rip-rap, gabions, small check dams, etc., may be utilized in gullies and active stream channels to reduce erosion.

## 8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the project:

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

**Potentially Significant Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, a quantitative analysis that demonstrated that the Area Plan and General Plan would be consistent with project design features and mitigation measures recommended by CARB, OPR, the California Climate Action Team, and the Office of the Attorney General, and would achieve reductions in GHG emissions from business -as -usual conditions. However, it was determined that impacts related to global climate change, or greenhouse gas emissions, would still be significant impact and unavoidable. It is anticipated that construction and operation of the NorthLake Specific Plan project would result in generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from construction, area sources, mobile sources, energy (electricity and natural gas) consumption, water consumption, and solid waste generation that will be quantified and assessed for potential impacts on the environment in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project's consistency with applicable plans, policies, and regulations related to GHG emissions, including SCVAP 2012 mitigation measures 3.4-1 through 3.4-18, will be analyzed as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the project:

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

**No Impact.** Grading and construction activities would involve limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials such as fuel for construction equipment. However, construction activities are short-term and hazardous materials used during construction would be transported, used, stored, and disposed of according to federal, State, and local health and safety requirements.

The proposed project consists primarily of residential uses with limited commercial and light industrial uses. These uses typically do not generate hazardous emissions, nor do they involve the routine use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials used on site would consist of common commercial cleansers, solvents, paints, and other janitorial materials. New commercial development will adhere to the guidelines and requirements set forth by the County of Los Angeles in the Los Angeles County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Consistent with the analysis provided in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the County's Planning Area is governed by the Los Angeles County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, which deals with foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Based on preliminary evaluation of the project site and consistent with the analysis provided in the NorthLake 1992 EIR, the project site includes two easements containing underground pipelines. Implementation of the proposed project would require the relocation of these pipelines. However, anticipated relocation activities would be performed in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations set forth by the State Fire Marshal and pursuant to Section 51010 *California Code of Regulations* and the *Code of Federal Regulations* (Title 49 and Part 195). Therefore, potential impacts associated with the release of hazardous materials or waste into the environment would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of sensitive land uses?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** During the project's construction phase, there is a limited risk of accidental release of hazardous materials (e.g., gasoline, oil, or other fluids) in operation and maintenance of construction

equipment. Compliance with the standard State and local construction requirements would reduce the risk of any damage or injury from these potential hazards to a less than significant level.

As stated previously, the project site is currently undeveloped with the exception of the NorthLake Hills Elementary School located in the southern portion of the project site. The operation of proposed commercial and industrial uses would involve the transport, storage, and sale of various hazardous materials, such as petroleum products, pesticides, fertilizers, and other products such as paint, solvents, and cleaning products. However, these uses would not involve the use, storage, handling, transport, or emission of these hazardous materials in a manner or quantity that would result in a risk to the school identified above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**
- 

**No Impact.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) maintains a list of all contaminated sites in the nation that are currently, or have in the past, undergoing clean-up activities. This list is known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) Database. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) also maintains a list of the contaminated sites in the state for which it is providing oversight and enforcement of clean-up activities. This list is known as the EnviroStor Database. There are currently no active sites listed on the CERCLIS Database or the Envirostor Database on the NorthLake Specific Plan project site.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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?**
- 

**No Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the County's Planning Area currently contains one privately owned public airport known as Agua Dulce Airpark, located approximately 18 miles west of the project site. The Airpark is located in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, and the County has adopted an Airport Land Use Plan to protect the clear zones and ensure land use compatibility with airport operations. The project site is outside the Airport Influence Area. No impacts are anticipated.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**
- 

**No Impact.** The project site is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- g) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would generate an increase in the amount and volume of traffic on local and regional roadway networks. However, the developers of the proposed project would be required to design, construct, and maintain structures, roadways, and facilities to comply with applicable local, regional, State, and/or federal requirements related to emergency access and evacuation plans. Due to these design considerations and the fact that the project site is not included as part of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, no impact would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving fires, because the project is located:**

- i) within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Zone 4)?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Development of the project would convert currently undeveloped land to residential, commercial, and light industrial land uses. The project site is within a designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) area and would be largely surrounded by undeveloped lands in the VHFHSZ category. Potential exposure to fire hazards is a concern due to the open space hillsides and history of wildfire in the region. Though much open space is included in the project site, the majority of the project site would be graded and developed with structures, roadways, manufactured slopes, and landscaped areas. This development would eliminate the natural vegetation and wildfire “fuel” sources in the central portions of the project site, and some of the manufactured slopes within the project site footprint would be landscaped and regularly irrigated. Therefore, the outer fringes of the project site would be the main interface of exposure to potential wildfire risks. Fire hazards on private property are increased when adjacent to non-irrigated natural vegetation that has not been modified to minimize potential fuel sources because the suburban development is a potential source of wildfire ignition. The Draft Supplemental EIR will address impacts related to development within the VHFHSZ, as well as compliance with all applicable State, County, and local fire codes and ordinances.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- ii) within a high fire hazard area with inadequate access?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project would result in an increase in population and daily vehicle trips, which may interfere with existing emergency response and evacuation planning. However, the proposed project would result in roadway improvements in the area, thereby improving the efficiency for emergency response vehicles and evacuation access. As discussed previously under Threshold 9(h)(i), the Draft Supplemental EIR will address impacts related to compliance with all applicable State, County, and local fire codes and ordinances. This analysis will also address access within the project site which is within a VHFHSZ.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- iii) within an area with inadequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The project's potential impact to available water supply, including the availability of adequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards, will be analyzed as part of the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR. Mitigation measures will be identified as appropriate.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- iv) within proximity to land uses that have the potential for dangerous fire hazard?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 9(h)(i).

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- i) Does the proposed use constitute a potentially dangerous fire hazard?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Proposed land uses do not constitute an unusually high or potentially dangerous fire hazard despite increased population in that it would provide significantly greater fire service access to open space areas; provide for the construction of up to six new water tanks to serve the project site, thereby providing greater water access and increased water pressure; and provide a one-acre parcel for the construction of an interim fire station on the project site to ensure adequate fire protection for the proposed project and surrounding areas. The proposed project design shall also be in conformance with requirements of the County of Los Angeles for emergency ingress and egress and shall be reviewed by Los Angeles County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Department of Building and Safety. Rather, development in the project vicinity would substantially decrease the possibility of wildfires.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Grading activities associated with the proposed project would result in the disruption of on-site soils during both the construction phase and after site development. Consistent with the analysis in the NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR, the project would be subject to rules and regulations related to water quality, including compliance with the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requiring preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and identifying Best Management Practices (BMPs) for temporary erosion controls, as noted in MM 3.9.8. Because compliance with permit conditions will be required, impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels. Additionally, MMs 3.9.9, requiring soil erosion and sediment control plans, and 3.9.10 requiring implementation of drainage design measures would further reduce impacts related to water quality to less than significant levels. Although compliance with the identified mitigation measures and regulatory requirements would reduce impacts to less than significant levels, supplemental analysis related to water quality will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to Figure 3.12.2 of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the project site is not underlain by a groundwater basin. The nearest basin is the Santa Clarita River Valley Basin, located south and east of the project site, near Castaic Lake and Lake Hughes. Therefore, physical development of the proposed project, including an increase in impervious surface area, would not directly interfere with groundwater recharge.

According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, water sources expected to serve the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (which includes the proposed project site) are local groundwater and Castaic Lake Water Agency's (CLWA) supplies of State Water Project (SWP) and non-SWP imported water to meet the potable demand and recycled water from the existing Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) and the approved Newhall Ranch WRP. Water for the proposed project would be supplied by Newhall County Water District (NCWD), as the retail water purveyor, which supplies water from local groundwater and CLWA imported water. The SCVAP 2012 EIR demonstrated that local water supplies would be adequate to serve buildout of the SCVAP 2012, including the proposed project. However, a supplemental analysis will be prepared for the proposed project and will be summarized as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The project site is characterized by a number of ephemeral drainages. Proposed development activities would alter the course of these drainages. Development of the proposed project would also result in the conversion of on-site permeable surfaces to impermeable surfaces, which would alter the current drainage pattern of the project site. By increasing the amount of impervious surfaces on the site, more surface runoff would be generated and the rate of runoff could increase. To manage surface runoff, the proposed project would incorporate site-design BMPs. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, preliminary calculations indicated that the installation of drainage infrastructure and water quality management BMPs combined with the implementation of the identified mitigation measures have the potential to reduce existing peak flows for the project site. Therefore, the previous EIR demonstrated that the potential impacts related to altering the existing drainage pattern of the site or area would be mitigated to a less than significant level. However, additional supplemental analysis will be prepared and summarized in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 10(c) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Add water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate that could increase habitat for mosquitoes and other vectors that transmit diseases such as the West Nile virus and result in increased pesticide use?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not introduce any water features or create conditions in which standing water can accumulate that could increase habitat for mosquitoes and other vectors. However, to the extent feasible, proposed development would adhere to applicable prevention and control recommendations according to the California Department of Public Health, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

f) 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?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of stormwater drainage systems or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff would be less than significant. This finding is based on compliance with applicable policies of the SCVAP 2012 related to utilizing building materials that allow infiltration, reduce impervious surfaces, and implementation of detention and retention basins or ponds and ephemeral swales. Additionally, mitigation measures associated with the NorthLake 1992 EIR were identified which would reduce impacts related to storm drain capacity to less than significant levels. The proposed NorthLake Specific Plan project would generate increased amounts of storm water runoff due to the increase in impervious surface area. As part of the project, site-design BMPs would be incorporated in order to (1) minimize urban runoff; (2) minimize impervious footprint; (3) conserve natural areas; and (4) minimize directly connected impervious areas. Although the 1992 and SCVAP 2012 EIRs demonstrated that impacts would be less than significant, additional supplemental analysis will be prepared.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

g) Generate construction or post-construction runoff that would violate applicable stormwater NPDES permits or otherwise significantly affect surface water or groundwater quality?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 10(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

h) Conflict with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance (L.A. County Code, Title 12, Ch. 12.84)?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The concept of Low Impact Development (LID) was created to ensure that new development is designed in consideration of overall environmental conditions, including regional water quality. LID is a land-use planning approach that incorporates “green infrastructure” concepts such as zero runoff, rainfall harvesting, groundwater recharge, biofiltration, native landscapes, green streets, and other measures to promote water quality protection in new development. The goal of LID is to protect a community’s natural, pre-development water flow in order to minimize ecological impacts from urbanization. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, impacts related to potential conflicts with the Los Angeles County Low Impact Development Ordinance would be less than significant with implementation of the identified mitigation which would promote Low Impact Development standards on development sites, including but not limited to minimizing impervious surface area and promoting infiltration, in order to reduce the flow and velocity of stormwater runoff throughout the watershed. As discussed previously, development of the NorthLake Specific Plan project would modify the site’s drainage pattern and increase runoff, thereby requiring implementation of BMPs to address drainage impacts. Compliance with the identified mitigation (MM 3.13.38) would ensure that the project would not conflict with the County’s LID Ordinance. However, supplemental analysis will be prepared and summarized in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR and supplemental mitigation measures will be identified as appropriate.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- i) Result in point or nonpoint source pollutant discharges into State Water Resources Control Board-designated Areas of Special Biological Significance?

**No Impact.** The nearest State Water Resources Control Board-designated Area of Special Biological Significance is the Laguna Point to Latigo Point ASBS located along 24 miles of coast in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, located approximately 40 miles southwest of the project site. Due to the distance from the project site, development of the NorthLake Specific Plan would not result in point or nonpoint source pollutant discharges into a designated ASBS; no impact would occur and further evaluation of this issue in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR is not required and no mitigation measures are necessary.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- j) Use onsite wastewater treatment systems in areas with known geological limitations (e.g. high groundwater) or in close proximity to surface water (including, but not limited to, streams, lakes, and drainage course)?

**No Impact.** The project site is presently undeveloped and no wastewater is currently being generated on site. The project site would require annexation into the Sanitation Districts of County of Los Angeles. Once annexation is complete, the wastewater flow originating from the proposed project would discharge into a local sewer line and flow through existing local sewer lines. Wastewater would then be treated by one of ten existing water reclamation plants. Therefore, no impacts related to use of on-site wastewater treatment systems would occur. Further evaluation of this issue in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR is not required and no mitigation measures are necessary.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- k) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 10(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- l) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, or within a floodway or floodplain?

**No Impact.** Consistent with the analysis presented in the SCVAP 2012 EIR (Figure 3.12-3, Surface Water Within and Adjacent to the OVOV Planning Area) and according to Exhibit S-4, Floodplains, of the SCVAP 2012, no portion of the proposed project is located in areas designated as Special Flood Hazard Areas or within the boundary of the 100- or 500-Year floodplains. Therefore, the project would not place housing or other structures within a flood hazard area, floodway, or floodplain.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- m) Place structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows, within a 100-year flood hazard area, floodway, or floodplain?**

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 10(l) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- n) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

**No Impact.** The project site is not adjacent to any levee or dam structures, with the exception of the dam associated with Castaic Lake and Castaic Lagoon. However, both of these structures are located downstream of the project site (to the south and east) and would not pose a risk to structures or residents of the project site.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- o) Place structures in areas subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

**No Impact.** The project site is located over 40 miles from the coast; therefore, there would be no threat of a tsunami. A seiche is a wave or oscillation of the surface of water in an enclosed or semi-enclosed basin that continues from a few minutes to a few hours as a result of seismic or atmospheric disturbances. The project site is located in the vicinity of Castaic Lake; however, the main area that would be subject to inundation would be Grasshopper Canyon, which currently runs in a general north-south direction and extends the length of the project site. As part of the project' grading, Grasshopper Canyon would be filled and the elevation would be such that Castaic Lake would not represent a threat. Further, project-related grading and development, including landscaping, would minimize exposed ground surface that would be subject to mudflows. Therefore, the project would not create a hazard by placing structures in areas subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

#### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the NorthLake 1992 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for hydrology and water quality; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SP EIR MM 4.2-1** County-approved onsite drainage improvements of inlet/outlet structures and storm drains shall be implemented.

**SP EIR MM 4.2-2** Debris basins shall be installed as required.

**SP EIR MM 4.2-3** Cut and fill slopes shall be landscaped to reduce potential increases in runoff and erosion.

**SP EIR MM 4.2-4** Inlet structures and street maintenance shall reduce impacts of sediment and runoff discharge.

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for hydrology and water quality; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.8** The County of Los Angeles, where required, and in accordance with issuance of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, shall require the construction and/or grading contractor for individual developments to establish and implement specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) at time of project implementation.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.9** Prior to any development within the County's Planning Area, a Grading Plan shall be submitted to the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Building and Safety Division, and/or the County Geologist for review and approval. As required by the County of Los Angeles, the grading plan shall include soil erosion and sediment control plans. Measures included in individual erosion control plans may include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- a. Grading and development plans shall be designed in a manner which minimizes the amount of terrain modification.
- b. Surface water shall be controlled and diverted around potential landslide areas to prevent erosion and saturation of slopes.
- c. Structures shall not be sited on or below identified landslides unless slides are stabilized.
- d. The extent and duration of ground disturbing activities during and immediately following periods of rain shall be limited, to avoid the potential for erosion which may be accelerated by rainfall on exposed soils.
- e. To the extent possible, the amount of cut and fill shall be balanced.
- f. The amount of water entering and exiting a graded site shall be limited through the placement of interceptor trenches or other erosion control devices.
- g. Erosion and sediment control plans shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to the issuance of grading permits.

**SCVAP MM 3.9.10** Where required, drainage design measures shall be incorporated into the final design of individual projects on site. These measures shall include, but will not be limited to:

- a. Runoff entering developing areas shall be collected into surface and subsurface drains for removal to nearby drainages.
- b. Runoff generated above steep slopes or poorly vegetated areas shall be captured and conveyed to nearby drainages.
- c. Runoff generated on paved or covered areas shall be conveyed via swales and drains to natural drainage courses.
- d. Disturbed areas that have been identified as highly erosive shall be (re)vegetated.
- e. Irrigation systems shall be designed, installed, and maintained in a manner which minimizes runoff.
- f. The landscape scheme for projects within the project site shall utilize drought tolerant plants.

- g. Erosion control devices such as rip-rap, gabions, small check dams, etc., may be utilized in gullies and active stream channels to reduce erosion.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-1** The County shall prohibit alteration of floodways and channelization unless alternative methods of flood control are found to be technically, economically, and practicably infeasible.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-2** The County shall not require all land uses to withstand flooding. These may include land

uses such as agricultural, golf courses, and trails. For these land uses, water flows shall not be obstructed, and upstream and downstream properties, shall not be adversely affected by increased velocities, erosion backwater effects, concentration of flows, and adverse impacts to water quality from point and nonpoint sources of pollution.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-3** The County shall require that all structures (residential, commercial, and industrial) be flood-proofed from the 100-year storm flows. All buildings constructed within a riverine floodplain, (i.e., Flood Zones A, AO, AH, AE, and A1 through A30 as delineated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Santa Clarita, Map revised September 29, 1989), must be elevated so that the lowest floor is at or above the Base Flood Elevation in accordance with the effective Flood Insurance Rate Map.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-4** The County shall require that for agricultural, recreation, or other low-density uses, flows are not obstructed and that upstream and downstream properties are not adversely affected by increased velocities, erosion backwater effects, or concentration of flows.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-5** Any development that is located within a Regulatory Floodway as delineated on the Flood Insurance Rate Map for the County's Planning Area must not increase base flood elevations. (Development means any man-made change improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, and storage of equipment or materials). A hydrologic and hydraulic analysis shall be performed prior to the start of development, and must demonstrate that the development would not cause any rise in base flood levels and additionally would not allow any rise within regulatory floodways.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-23** Promote the use of permeable paving materials to allow infiltration of surface water into the water table.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-24** Maintain stormwater runoff on site by directing drainage into rain gardens, natural landscaped swales, rain barrels, permeable areas, and use of drainage areas as design elements, where feasible and reasonable.

**SCVAP MM 3.12-25** Seek methods to decrease impermeable site area where reasonable and feasible, in order to reduce stormwater runoff and increase groundwater infiltration, including use of shared parking and other means as appropriate.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-27** Reduce impervious surfaces and provide more natural vegetation to enhance microclimates and provide habitat. In implementing this policy, consider the following design concepts:

- b. Increased use of vegetated areas around parking lot perimeters; such areas should be designed as bioswales or as otherwise determined appropriate to allow surface water infiltration;

c. Use of connected open space areas as drainage infiltration areas in lieu of curbed landscape islands, minimizing the separation of natural and landscaped areas into isolated “islands”;

**SCVAP MM 3.13-28** Identify and protect areas with substantial potential for groundwater recharge, and promote recharge of groundwater basins throughout the watershed (excluding the river bed).

**SCVAP MM 3.13-29** On undeveloped sites proposed for development, promote on site stormwater infiltration through design techniques such as pervious paving, draining runoff into bioswales or properly designed landscaped areas, preservation of natural soils and vegetation, and limiting impervious surfaces.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-30** On previously developed sites proposed for major alteration, provide stormwater management improvements to restore natural infiltration, as required by the reviewing authority.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-31** Provide flexibility for design standards for street width, sidewalk width, parking, and other impervious surfaces when it can be shown that such reductions will not have negative impacts and will provide the benefits of stormwater retention, groundwater infiltration, reduction of heat islands, enhancement of habitat and biodiversity, saving of significant trees or planting of new trees, or other environmental benefit.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-32** Encourage and promote the use of new materials and technology for improved stormwater management, such as pervious paving, green roofs, rain gardens, and vegetated swales.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-33** Where detention and retention basins or ponds are required, seek methods to integrate these areas into the landscaping design of the site as amenity areas, such as a network of small ephemeral swales treated with attractive planting.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-34** Discourage the use of mounded turf and lawn areas which drain onto adjacent sidewalks and parking lots, replacing these areas with landscape designs that retain runoff and allow infiltration.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-35** Reduce the amount of pollutants entering the Santa Clara River and its tributaries by capturing and treating stormwater runoff at the source, to the extent possible.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-36** Evaluate development proposals for consistency with the ordinances developed through the County’s Green Building Program.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-37** Preserve forested areas, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and corridors, wetlands, watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, and other open space that provides nature carbon sequestration benefits.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-38:** Promote Low Impact Development standards on development sites, including but not limited to minimizing impervious surface area and promoting infiltration, in order to reduce the flow and velocity of stormwater runoff throughout the watershed.

## 11. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant	No Impact
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Would the project:

- a) Physically divide an established community?

**No Impact.** The project site is currently undeveloped with the exception of the NorthLake Hills Elementary School located in the southern portion of the project site. The parcels to the north include six scattered single-family residences. The existing NorthLake residential development is located adjacent to and southeast of the site along Ridge Route Road and additional residential and commercial development in the City of Castaic is located to the south. Castaic Lake and uses associated the Castaic Lake SRA as well as undeveloped lands are located east of the project site. Limited development exists to the north and south, and the project site is bordered by the I-5 freeway to the west. Due to the lack of development on the project site, implementation of the proposed project would not physically divide an established community. Further evaluation of this issue in the Draft Supplemental EIR is not required and no mitigation measures are necessary.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Be inconsistent with the applicable County plans for the subject property including, but not limited to, the General Plan, specific plans, local coastal plans, area plans, and community/neighborhood plans?

**No Impact.** The proposed project would implement the currently approved *NorthLake Specific Plan*, and no amendments to this specific plan are proposed. Additionally, the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was included as an approved development in the recent SCVAP 2012. Further evaluation of this issue in the Draft Supplemental EIR is not required and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Nevertheless further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR to demonstrate the proposed project's consistency with the NorthLake Specific Plan.

- c) Be inconsistent with the County zoning ordinance as applicable to the subject property?

**No Impact.** Land use, population density, lot coverage, and building sizes and locations on the project site are regulated through the County's Zoning Code (County of Los Angeles Municipal Code, Title 22). According to the Zoning Code, zoning designations in the project area are subject to the *NorthLake Specific Plan*. The proposed project would be in compliance with the *NorthLake Specific Plan* and with the applicable Zoning Code where the NorthLake Specific Plan is silent, therefore it would be consistent with the County Zoning Code. Further evaluation of this issue in the Draft Supplemental EIR is not required and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Nevertheless further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR to demonstrate the proposed project's consistency and compliance with the Zoning Code.

d) Conflict with Hillside Management criteria,  
Significant Ecological Areas conformance criteria, or  
other applicable land use criteria?

**Less than Significant Impact.** The County of Los Angeles has drafted a new Hillside Management Area (HMA) ordinance for unincorporated areas of the County. According to the draft ordinance, an HMA is defined as an area with a natural slope of 25 percent or greater. Based on Figure CO-1, Hillsides and Designated Ridgelines in the Santa Clarita Valley, of the SCVAP 2012, the project site is characterized by natural slopes of 25 percent or greater and would qualify as an HMA. Because development of the proposed project was contemplated as part of the previously approved and currently entitled *NorthLake Specific Plan*, which was approved prior to the HMA ordinance, compliance with the HMA ordinance is not required. Development need only to comply with any hillside design standards in effect at the time that the *NorthLake Specific Plan* was approved and as further addressed in the SCVAP 2012. The Land Use analysis to be prepared as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR will address compliance with all applicable hillside design standards, and therefore no mitigation measures are necessary.

Additionally and as shown on Figure CO-5, Significant Ecological Areas Designated by Los Angeles County, of the SCVAP 2012, the project site is not designated as an SEA. No further discussion related to SEAs is required.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 12. MINERAL RESOURCES

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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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?

**No Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the planning area contains extensive aggregate mineral resources. Almost 19,000 acres in the planning area are designated by the State as MRZ-2, or areas of prime importance due to known economic mineral deposits. Sand and gravel resources are primarily concentrated along waterways, including the Santa Clara River, the South Fork of the Santa Clara River, Castaic Creek, and east of Sand Canyon Road. A significant deposit of construction-grade aggregate extends approximately 15 miles from Agua Dulce Creek in the east to the Ventura County line on the west. As shown on Figure 3.10-1, Existing Mineral Resources, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, there are no mineral resources in the project area. For this reason, development of the project site would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, there are no oil and natural gas fields, wells, or extraction areas located within the project area. As shown on Figure 3.10-1, Existing Mineral Resources, of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, all identified oil and natural gas resources are located east of I-5 Freeway or south of Lake Hughes Road, outside of the project area. Therefore, there would be no loss of mineral resources or of a locally important mineral resource recovery site.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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?

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 12(a) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 13. NOISE

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Would the project result in:

- a) Exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the County General Plan or noise ordinance (Los Angeles County Code, Title 12, Chapter 12.08), or applicable standards of other agencies?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Noise increases from the proposed project would be generated on a short-term and long-term basis. The proposed project would increase ambient noise levels during construction (construction vehicular traffic, excavation, grading, and building construction), and could also result in vibration. Short-term noise levels would be higher than existing ambient noise levels in the project area, but would cease upon project completion. As discussed in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, construction noise impacts may exceed standards set forth in the County's Noise Ordinance, even with implementation of mitigation measures which are summarized below. Short-term noise impacts will be evaluated in the Draft Supplemental EIR and additional mitigation measures will be identified, as necessary.

Long-term operation of land uses proposed at the project site could increase the ambient noise levels above existing conditions. Long-term noise impacts would also be associated with increased traffic on local roadways. Although the NorthLake 1992 and SCVAP 2012 EIRs demonstrated that impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures identified below, additional supplemental analysis will be prepared to address potential long-term noise impacts and will be summarized in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 13(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from parking areas?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** As discussed previously under Threshold 13(a), long-term operation of land uses proposed at the project site could increase the ambient noise levels above existing conditions. Long-term noise impacts would also be associated with increased traffic on local roadways. Although the NorthLake 1992 and SCVAP 2012 EIRs demonstrated that impacts would be less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures identified below, additional supplemental analysis will be prepared to address potential long-term noise impacts.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project, including noise from amplified sound systems?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 13(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

**No Impact.** The Agua Dulce Airpark is located approximately 18 miles west of the project site. According to the Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Plan (2004), the project site is located outside of the 70 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) noise contour; therefore, aircraft overflights would not significantly contribute to the noise environment and would not subject future residents of the project to excessive noise levels. The project site is not located near a private airstrip.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 13(e) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

#### **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for noise; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-1** To reduce construction vibration impacts, to the extent feasible, cast-in-drilled-hole piles shall be used in lieu of pile driving. Pile drilling is an alternate method of pile installation where a hole is drilled into the ground up to the required elevations and concrete is then cast into it. The estimated noise level of pile drilling at 50 feet is 80 to 95 dB(A) Leq compared to 90 to 105 dB(A) Leq of conventional pile driving.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, pile drilling generally produces noise levels approximately 10 to 15 dB lower than pile driving.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-2** Maintain adequate buffer distances from nearby residences to freeways, high traffic volume roads, railroads, airports, mining centers and other existing processing plants where the public may be affected by noise and particle emissions.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-3** The construction of residential developments should be limited to buildings with special filtration units or discouraged at distances of 1,500 feet or less from freeways, depending upon traffic volume.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-4** Sound barriers should be required of the owners of the proposed sensitive land uses adjacent to high noise sources, to protect the public from significant noise impacts.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-5** The California Department of Transportation should be contacted when residential projects, schools, hospitals, convalescent homes, and other sensitive land uses are to be built so that appropriate sound barriers or sound walls are constructed along Interstate 5 and State Route 14 regardless of setbacks or other sound attenuation.

**SCVAP MM 3.18-6** The placement of telecommunication towers and antennas power boxes should comply with noise ordinances. All related equipment should be rated at 45 dB(A).

**SCVAP MM 3.18-7** Consider engineering controls or better alternative fuels for the control of greenhouse gases, particle matter, carbon print, criteria air pollutants and non-regulated emissions associated with the construction and operational phases of future projects.

## 14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>

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)?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would implement the NorthLake Specific Plan project, which was evaluated and approved by the County of Los Angeles in 1992. The project proposes development of up to 3,150 dwelling units and would not exceed the current entitlement for the project site (i.e., development of up to 3,623 housing units is allowed), which are the primary means for population growth in an area. Based on an average household size of 3.09 persons per household, as identified in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the NorthLake Specific Plan would generate approximately 9,734 new residents. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the Southern California region. As noted previously, the project site is located within an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, which is part of the six-county jurisdiction of SCAG. According to the Adopted 2012 RTP Growth Forecast, prepared to support the *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS): Towards a Sustainable Future*, the population of Los Angeles County is projected to increase from 9,778,000 in 2008 to 11,353,000 in 2035. Additionally, the number of households in Los Angeles County is projected to increase from 3,228,000 in 2008 to 3,852,000 in 2035. Although the project would introduce new population to the area through project implementation, the increase in population has been anticipated and included in regional and local projections, including the recent SCVAP 2012 and its associated EIR, as well as regional planning efforts by SCAG. Therefore, anticipated impacts associated with the project would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, especially affordable housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

**No Impact.** The proposed project site is currently vacant and undeveloped. Development of the proposed project would not result in the displacement of any existing housing and would not necessitate a need for the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. For this reason, no impacts associated with the displacement of existing housing would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people,  
necessitating the construction of replacement housing  
elsewhere?

**No Impact.** Refer to Threshold 14(b) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

d) Cumulatively exceed official regional or local  
population projections?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 14(a) above.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 15. PUBLIC SERVICES

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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a) Would the project create capacity or service level problems, or result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Fire protection services are provided to the project site by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. With the introduction of various commercial, industrial, and residential uses on site as part of the proposed project, there would be an associated increase in demand for fire protection services. The nearest fire station to the project site is County Fire Station #149, Castaic, located at 31770 Ridge Route in Castaic, approximately 1.25 miles south of the NorthLake Specific Plan project site. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, to achieve fire protection for all residents of the County's Planning Area, the County Department of Public Works Building and Safety Division and LACoFD would enforce fire standards as they review building plans and conduct building inspections. Additional programs implemented to ensure compliance with established fire standards include: the maintenance of a Countywide Information Map, showing area of high fire hazard areas, and the provision of uniform fire improvement standards for various land uses. Fire stations would also be funded by the Joint Consolidated Annual Tax Bill (Fire Service Funding subsection). Additionally, the SCVAP 2012 EIR identifies mitigation measures (MM 3.15-2 and 3.15-3) that require payment of a Developer Fee as well as provision of water service which would reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, implementation of mitigation and compliance with the policies identified above as set forth in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, would ensure that impacts related to fire protection services would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

Sheriff protection?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Sheriff protection services are provided to the project site by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. With the introduction of various commercial, industrial, and residential uses on site as part of the proposed project, there would be an associated increase in demand for sheriff protection services. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the LA County Sheriff's Department has a standard of one sworn officer per 1,000 residents. It was determined that full buildout of the SCVAP 2012, which includes the proposed NorthLake Specific Plan project, would create a need for additional officers to adequately cover the area and meet the standard. The SCVAP 2012 EIR identifies mitigation measure MM 3.15-4 that requires payment of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's established law enforcement facilities fees for North Los Angeles County, which would reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, implementation of mitigation and compliance with the policies identified above as set forth in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, would ensure that impacts related to fire protection services would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

Schools?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, six public school districts serve the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area:

- Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District
- Castaic Union School District
- Newhall Elementary School District
- Saugus Union Elementary School District
- Sulphur Springs Union Elementary School District
- William S. Hart Union High School District

These local public school districts provide 17 schools including 14 elementary schools; 2 junior high schools, and 1 high school.

Consistent with the findings of the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the proposed project would generate an increase in student enrollment within the local school districts.

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) provided a comprehensive school facilities financing and reform program by, among other methods, authorizing a \$9.2 billion school facilities bond issue, school construction cost containment revisions, and an eight-year suspension of the Mira, Hart, and Murrieta court cases. Specifically, the bond funds are to provide \$2.9 billion for new construction and \$2.1 billion for reconstruction/modernization needs. The provisions of SB 50 prohibit local agencies from denying either legislative or adjudicative land use approvals on the basis that school facilities are inadequate and reinstate the school facility fee cap for legislative actions (e.g., general plan amendments, specific plan adoption, zoning plan amendments) as was allowed under the Mira, Hart, and Murrieta court cases. According to Government Code Section 65996, the development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation.” These provisions will remain in place as long as subsequent state bonds are approved and available.

To accommodate students from new development projects, school districts may alternatively finance new schools through special school construction funding resolutions (e.g., the Valley-Wide Joint Fee Resolution) and/or agreements between developers, the affected school districts and, occasionally, other local governmental agencies. These special resolutions and agreements often allow school districts to realize school mitigation funds in excess of the developer fees allowed under SB 50.

However, compliance with SB 50 will provide full and complete mitigation; therefore, a significant impact would not occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

Parks?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation currently operates 16 developed parks comprising 10,396 acres in the County’s Planning Area. Because the project site is currently undeveloped, no parklands or recreational uses currently exist on the project site. The County uses a standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as recommended by the SCVAP 2012. The County also abides by the Quimby Act standard of requiring a

minimum of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on an anticipated population increase of approximately 9,734 new residents, approximately 48.67 acres of parkland would be required to be consistent with the County standard. As previously noted in the Description of the Project, 880.3 acres of parks and open space are proposed within the NorthLake Specific Plan and, within these areas, approximately 166.9 acres would be designated as parkland and other recreational facilities, including parks, enhanced parkways, trails, a sports park, and neighborhood parks. As part of the project, a portion of this acreage would be designated as public parklands, consistent with the County Code and the Quimby Act. Therefore, impacts to parks would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

**Libraries?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The County of Los Angeles Public Library (Library) operates all public libraries within the project area. There are four County libraries and mobile library services within the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area, which includes the project site. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the County of Los Angeles Public Library System has a service level guideline of 2.75 items per 1,000 residents and 0.5 square foot of library space per 1,000 residents. Implementation of the proposed project could result in the potential for increased demand for library services to the extent that expansion and construction of new facilities would be required. Consistent with the SCVAP 2012 EIR, implementation of the identified mitigation measure (MM 3.15-1), summarized below, requiring payment of library fees would reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

**Other public facilities?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** In addition to the other public services identified previously, the proposed NorthLake Specific Plan project also has the potential to impact health service providers within the local area. As noted above, the NorthLake Specific Plan would generate additional population which would require access to adequate medical services. As discussed in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, there are a variety of healthcare facilities in the project area, including the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, which is the primary acute care and trauma hospital in the Santa Clarita Valley, and several urgent care facilities. Healthcare services are provided based on demand. Because these services are not government-funded, as demand increases through population growth, the number of healthcare facilities and services increases, as well. Consistent with the analysis provided in the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the HMNMH received approval from the City of Santa Clarita to expand its facilities to better meet the needs of the Santa Clarita Valley area, including the proposed NorthLake Specific Plan site, as proposed. As of March 2015, improvements have included the complete renovation and expansion of the intensive care unit; the opening of the Henry Mayo Center; the opening of the neonatal intensive care unit; the opening of a new operating room, as well as the expansion and updating of the emergency and imaging departments; and construction of the new infusion center. Future expansion plans for the HMNMH include construction of a new inpatient hospital building that will add up to 120 new beds, new medical office buildings designed to support hospital programs and services, a new central plan, new parking structures, and a helipad. Because these improvements are intended to address long-term growth associated with the SCVAP 2012, which includes the NorthLake Specific Plan, impacts on health services would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## **Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for public services; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.15-1** Project developers shall pay the current library fee at the time of building permit issuance (\$790.00 per residential unit as of August 2008) to the County of Los Angeles to offset the demand for library items and building square footage generated by the proposed project. The library mitigation payment shall be made on a building permit by building permit basis by the developer for residential projects.

**SCVAP MM 3.15-2** Concurrent with the issuance of building permits, the project applicant shall participate in the Developer Fee Program to the satisfaction of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.

**SCVAP MM 3.15-3** Adequate water availability shall be provided to service construction activities of any project to the satisfaction of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.

**SCVAP MM 3.15-4** Development applicant(s) shall be required to pay the Los Angeles County Sheriff's established law enforcement facility fees for North Los Angeles County prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy on any structure. The fees are for the acquisition and construction of public facilities to provide adequate service to the residents of the County's Planning Area.

## 16. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed previously under Threshold 15(a), the proposed project would introduce new residential uses to the project site; therefore, a subsequent increase in population would occur, thereby increasing the demand for park and recreational facilities. The proposed project site is currently undeveloped, therefore, there are no park or recreational facilities on-site. However, as part of the project approximately 166.9 acres would be designated as parkland and other recreational facilities, including parks, enhanced parkways, trails, a sports park, and neighborhood parks. These areas would be developed as a combination of public and private parklands and recreational facilities which would serve the anticipated demand resulting from project development as well as a need for park and recreational facilities within the local project area. Therefore, impacts to parks would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

b) Does the project include neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of such facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed previously, the proposed project would include the development of approximately 166.9 acres of public and private parklands and recreational uses; however, development of these uses would occur entirely within the development footprint assumed for the proposed project. Therefore, any physical effects associated with construction of these facilities would be assumed and evaluated throughout the Draft Supplemental EIR and a separate analysis would not be required.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

c) Would the project interfere with regional open space connectivity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**No Impact.** The proposed project would develop a currently undeveloped area of land that is largely surrounded to the north and east by open space. However, due to existing development to the south and the I-5 freeway to the west, the project site does not serve as key open space connection. Additionally, the Castaic Lake SRA trail system, located east of the project site and which provides connection to local open space areas in the region, would not be impacted through development of the project and would continue to provide trail connectivity to open space areas. It should be noted, however, that various “informal” or unofficial trails traverse the project site and likely connect to portions of the Castaic Lake SRA trail system. Development of the project site would preclude future use of these trails; however, use of these trails within the boundaries of

the project site is prohibited (i.e., users are trespassing on private property). Therefore, this would not represent a significant impact.

Further, the project site has been previously approved and entitled for development associated with the NorthLake Specific Plan. Therefore, no impact related to interference with regional open space connectivity would occur.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

## 17. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Would the project:	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would the project:

- a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The proposed project would create an increase in the volume of traffic and increase the number of vehicle trips to, from, and within the project site in comparison to current levels. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works has established thresholds for determining when an increase in traffic is substantial enough in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system to result in a significant impact. An Access and Circulation Plan was approved as part of the NorthLake Specific Plan. The Access and Circulation Plan provides circulation and design standards for the layout of arterial highways and local collector streets in support of the Northlake land use plan. The proposed project would implement this plan, including integrating non-vehicular uses such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Both the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR concluded that, with implementation of mitigation measures identified below, potential impacts related to transportation and circulation would be less than significant. A Traffic Study would be prepared for the proposed project to determine the potential traffic impacts (including compliance with level of service standards established for designated roads and highways in the vicinity of the project site) as compared to current traffic conditions. This additional technical analysis will supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that the potential to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system would be mitigated to less than significant levels.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program (CMP), including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the CMP for designated roads or highways?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 17(a) above.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

**No Impact.** The proposed project will not impact air traffic patterns. No airports are located in the immediate project area. Regional air traffic demands would be accommodated by Los Angeles International Airport, John Wayne Airport, Ontario Airport, Long Beach Airport, and San Diego International Airport.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed previously, the proposed project would involve construction of a new internal circulation system. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, hazards due to roadway design would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. As discussed under threshold 17(a), the project would include implementation of the Access and Circulation Plan that provides circulation and design standards for the layout of arterial highways and local collector streets in support of the Northlake land use plan. Because the NorthLake Specific Plan, including the Access and Circulation Plan, was evaluated as part of the NorthLake 1992 EIR and approved as part of the Specific Plan, no significant impacts are anticipated. Further, all roadway design would comply with applicable design standards and requirements set forth in the NorthLake Specific Plan and would be subject to review and approval by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed previously under Threshold 17(d), the project would include implementation of the Access and Circulation Plan that provides circulation and design standards for the layout of arterial highways and local collector streets in support of the Northlake land use plan. Because the NorthLake Specific Plan, including the Access and Circulation Plan, was evaluated as part of the NorthLake 1992 EIR and approved as part of the Specific Plan, no significant impacts are anticipated. Further, all roadway design, including access issues, would be subject to review and approval by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works and LA County Fire Department. The proposed project will be developed in compliance with the Fire Department's regulations for access and site design. Although impacts are expected to be less than significant, the Draft Supplemental EIR will further discuss emergency access and other design considerations based on coordination with the Fire Department.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Refer to Threshold 17(a) above. These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

### Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures from the NorthLake 1992 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for traffic; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SP EIR MM 4.8-1** Improvements will be required to the roadway network in order to mitigate the adverse impacts of estimated future traffic from this project and other related area projects. Each phase of the Specific Plan development shall be evaluated through the required environmental review process to determine the improvements that would be needed to upgrade the circulation system to provide adequate capacity for this phase of the project and other nearby related projects. The phase specific traffic analysis shall determine the timing of improvements, upgrades and buildout configuration requirements, and, if necessary, environmental considerations (right-of-way acquisition, construction impacts, etc.) associated with required roadway improvements. The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works has identified the following roadway improvements as likely to be required to accommodate projected future area traffic.

- Modernize the Lake Hughes Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange.
- Modernize the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange.
- Construct a new access road from this project to Castaic Road with a minimum of two lanes in each direction and upgrade and improve Ridge Route Road to secondary highway standards from the project to Lake Hughes Road.
- Improve Castaic Road from the new project access road to Lake Hughes Road with a minimum of two lanes in each direction.
- If a new access road (previous mitigation) cannot be constructed, then Ridge Route Road shall be upgraded and improved to Major highway standards from the project to Lake Hughes Road.
- Improve Ridge Route Road/Parker Road to Secondary highway standards from Lake Hughes Road to the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange. This improvement would require widening the bridge over Violin Creek.
- Contribute to the Parker Road/Interstate 5 Freeway interchange improvements.

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for traffic; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.2.1** Both the County of Los Angeles and the of Santa Clarita shall work with Caltrans as they add additional lanes to the I-5 freeway between the SR-14 interchange and the Parker Road interchange. This improvement includes extending the existing HOV lanes from the SR-14 interchange to just south of the Parker Road interchange, incorporating truck climbing lanes from the

Pico Canyon Road/Lyons Avenue interchange to the SR-14 interchange and constructing or extending auxiliary lanes between interchanges at six locations.

**SCVAP MM 3.2.2** The County of Los Angeles shall continue to participate in implementing short-term measures of the North County Combined Highway Corridors Study, including adding additional lanes to the SR-14 to create a minimum of three lanes in each direction. Participation for long-term measures includes the completion of SR-14 to four lanes in each direction between the Newhall Avenue interchange and the Sand Canyon Interchange and to add a dedicated truck lane between the I-5 freeway and the Placerita Canyon Road interchange.

**SCVAP MM 3.2.3** The County shall continue to monitor potential impacts on roadway segments and intersections on a project-by-project basis as buildout occurs by requiring traffic studies for all projects that could significantly impact traffic and circulation patterns.

**SCVAP MM 3.2.4** In those instances in which a traffic impact analysis prepared for project specific development within the County's Santa Clarita Valley planning area identifies significant impacts to State highway facilities within the meaning of CEQA, the County shall require that the applicant work cooperatively with Caltrans to identify and implement feasible mitigation, if any, consistent with the requirements of CEQA.

## 18. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>

Would the project:

- a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of either the Los Angeles or Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Boards?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County is a confederation of 24 independent special districts that serve the sewage/wastewater treatment and solid waste management needs of Los Angeles County. Wastewater generated by developed areas in the vicinity of the project area is treated by Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (SCVSD) at the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (VWRP). The VWRP is located approximately 6 miles south of the NorthLake site and is linked with the Saugus Water Reclamation Plant (SWRP) to form a regional wastewater system for the Santa Clarita Valley called the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System (SCVJSS). Both the VWRP and the SWRP discharge treated wastewater into the Santa Clara River.

The project site is located within the service area of the County of Los Angeles Sanitation Districts and would be served by SCVSD. Waste Discharge Requirements are issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) under the provisions of the *California Water Code* (Division 7 Water Quality, Chapter 4 Regional Water Quality Control, Article 4 Waste Discharge Requirements). The first tier of requirements regulates the discharge of wastes which are not made to surface waters but which may impact the region's water quality by affecting underlying groundwater basins. As a second tier of requirements, operational discharge flows treated at VWRP would be required to comply with waste discharge requirements specifically identified for the facility. Because the project would be subject to all applicable requirements governing the types of discharge entering the wastewater collection system, the proposed project would not discharge wastewater into the domestic sewer system that would cause the VWRP to exceed requirements, as determined by the LARWQCB's Water Discharge Requirements resulting in a less than significant impact. The SCVSD's compliance with conditions, permits, and discharge requirements would further ensure that wastewater treatment requirements would not be exceeded. This threshold will not be analyzed further in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR. As discussed below, in the Threshold 18(b), the Draft Supplemental EIR will analyze the available capacity of the existing area wastewater infrastructure and appropriate sizing of the proposed wastewater collection system.

No further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- b) Create water or wastewater system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Development of the proposed project is anticipated to increase demand for water. Water for the proposed project would be supplied by NCWD, which would obtain water supplies from CLWA, as the area's water wholesaler. NCWD supplies a population of approximately 44,400 with nearly 10,000 service connections. NCWD also operates and maintains over 147 miles of distribution and

transmission mains, 23 above ground steel reservoirs, 15 booster pump stations, and 11 active groundwater wells. For new development, the project developer is responsible for construction of the water distribution system, which would be subject to inspection and approval by NCWD. The Draft Supplemental EIR will analyze the available capacity of the existing area water infrastructure and appropriate sizing of the proposed, water distribution system.

Development of the proposed project would generate an increase in wastewater flows. SCVSD would provide sewer services via the SCVJSS, including wastewater conveyance, treatment, and disposal services. The wastewater collection system is comprised of service connections that tie into a local collection line network. The local network, comprised of primary and secondary collectors, collects sewage flows directly from developments and discharges it into the Sanitation Districts sewer trunk lines. From the sewer trunks, wastewater is discharged into water reclamation plants where it is treated. The Sanitation Districts are responsible for the construction and maintenance of trunk sewers. Flow levels and pipe condition are checked biennially. Local lines are owned and maintained by the Los Angeles County Consolidated Sewer Maintenance Districts within its borders. The method by which facility expansion is funded is via connection fee. The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District's Connection Fee Program requires that prior to being connected to the system; a new user must pay for their fair share of the County Sanitation District's sewerage system expansion. As discussed previously, wastewater would be treated by the VWRP, which has the capacity to provide primary, secondary and tertiary treatment of 21.6 million gallons per day. The Draft Supplemental EIR will analyze the available capacity of the existing area wastewater infrastructure and appropriate sizing of the proposed wastewater collection system.

Both the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR concluded that impacts related to water and wastewater system capacity would be less than significant; despite this finding, the NorthLake 1992 EIR identified measures to be implemented which are summarized below. The NorthLake Specific Plan was previously approved in 1992 and was also incorporated into the recently evaluated and approved SCVAP 2012, the NCWD, the CLWA and the Sanitation Districts (specifically the SCVSD). As part of the Draft Supplemental EIR, it will be confirmed that development of the NorthLake Specific Plan has been accounted for in the NCWD, CLWA, and SCVSD long-term planning efforts related to water and wastewater infrastructure, respectively. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan Area would be annexed into the Sanitation District as part of the proposed project. With implementation of the identified mitigation measures and future annexation into the Sanitation District, impacts related to water and wastewater system capacity are anticipated to be less than significant. Nevertheless, this threshold will be analyzed further in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR.

Further analysis of this issue would be provided in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

c) Create drainage system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, impacts related to creating drainage system capacity problems or exceeding the capacity of stormwater drainage systems would be less than significant. This finding is based on compliance with applicable policies of the SCVAP 2012 related to utilizing building materials that allow infiltration, reduce impervious surfaces, and implementation of detention and retention basins or ponds and ephemeral swales. Additionally, mitigation measures associated with the NorthLake 1992 EIR are identified in Section 10, Hydrology and Water Quality, would reduce impacts related to storm drain capacity to less than significant levels. The proposed NorthLake Specific Plan

project would generate increased amounts of storm water runoff due to the increase in impervious surface area. As part of the project, site-design BMPs would be incorporated in order to (1) minimize urban runoff; (2) minimize impervious footprint; (3) conserve natural areas; and (4) minimize directly connected impervious areas. Although the 1992 and SCVAP 2012 EIRs demonstrated that impacts would be less than significant, additional supplemental analysis will be prepared and summarized in the forthcoming Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- d) Have sufficient reliable water supplies available to serve the project demands from existing entitlements and resources, considering existing and projected water demands from other land uses?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Development of the NorthLake Specific Plan would result in an increased demand for water. According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, areas within the CLWA Service Area (which includes the NorthLake Specific Plan project site) would be sufficiently served by available water supplies and no significant impact would occur related to water supply. Further, the NorthLake 1992 EIR concluded that development of the NorthLake Specific Plan would not exceed the projected available supply capacities. It should be noted that both the NorthLake 1992 EIR and the SCVAP 2012 EIR identified mitigation measures, which are summarized below. As part of the proposed project, additional technical analysis will be prepared to supplement the previous analysis and will be summarized in the Draft Supplemental EIR. Therefore, it is anticipated that impacts related to water supply would be mitigated to less than significant. The supplemental analysis will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR. A Water Supply Assessment will be prepared and summarized as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

- e) Create energy utility (electricity, natural gas, propane) system capacity problems, or result in the construction of new energy facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The previously adopted *NorthLake Specific Plan* allows for a total of 3,623 dwelling units. Because the electricity and natural gas demand for the proposed project was anticipated on a conceptual basis as part of the 1992 Specific Plan approval, the project population growth and level of demand on Southern California Edison (SCE) and the Southern California Gas Company (SCGC) from the proposed project has been considered in subsequent planning documents. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project, which is consistent with the approved *NorthLake Specific Plan*, does not represent a new demand on SCE or the SCGC as it represents a realization of projected growth that is already a part of these utilities' planned level of service. Furthermore, as public utilities, SCE and the SCGC are required to provide electricity and natural gas services, respectively, to accommodate demand resulting from new development in their service areas, and all connections to existing facilities would occur within the development footprint being analyzed as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR. This obligation is set forth by law in *California Public Utilities Code* (Section 451, 761, 762, 768, and 770). Electricity and natural gas impacts related to supply are anticipated to be less than significant.

Despite the finding of less than significant impact, these issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** According to the SCVAP 2012 EIR, the County's Planning Area, including the proposed project site, uses three landfills: the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, the Antelope Valley Landfill, and the Sunshine Canyon Landfill. Landfills throughout the state have permitted maximum capacities (the amount of waste[s] in tons or cubic yards a permitted facility is allowed to receive, handle, process, store, or dispose of). An analysis of the proposed project's impacts on the local landfill system will be prepared as part of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable local, State, and federal solid waste disposal requirements, thereby ensuring that impacts associated with this issue are considered to be less than significant. However, applicable requirements will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

These issues will be addressed in the Draft Supplemental EIR.

#### Applicable NorthLake 1992 EIR and SCVAP 2012 EIR Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures from the NorthLake 1992 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for utilities; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

- Low and ultra-low flow (where feasible) toilets should be installed to reduce the volume of wastewater generated;
- All fixtures and appliances shall meet or exceed state and local water efficiency standards;
- Project connection fees would be deposited into a capital improvement fund to help pay for new facilities and expansion required by the Districts;
- Payment of the connection fees is required for issuance of a permit to connect the project to surrounding Los Angeles County Sanitation District facilities, if necessary.
- After selection of the onsite packaging plant, an assessment should be conducted to examine potential environmental impacts associated with its implementation and operation. The proposed treatment must be of sufficient capacity to handle the projected project effluent plus an excess buffer capacity. This includes proper sizing of the onsite holding ponds to accommodate all treated effluent and any accumulated stormwaters during the wettest period on record, with no overflow.
- The proper operation and maintenance of the onsite wastewater treatment facility should be ensured through the establishment of a special district or service agency or through a long-term contract arrangement with an existing sewage treatment agency or private waste disposal firm.

Ownership and operation and maintenance responsibilities should be identified and contractually agreed to prior to the issuance of a permit to operate.

- Routine testing of pre-discharge treated effluent should be conducted to monitor compliance with established water quality control limits.

The project applicant shall provide all onsite water system improvements and shall contribute to required new or upgraded existing offsite improvements to meet all water supply need for the proposed development. All water system improvements shall be sized at the final engineering stage of development. All appliances such as showerheads, lavatory faucets and sink faucets shall comply with efficiency standards set forth in Title 20, California Administrative Code Section 1604(f). Title 24 of the California Administrative Code Section 1606(b) prohibits the installation of fixtures unless the manufacturer has certified to the California Energy Conservation compliance with the flow rate standards. Low flush toilets shall be installed as specified in California State Health and Safety Code Section 17921.3.

Irrigation shall be properly designed, installed, operated and maintained to prevent the waste of water. "Drip" irrigation and other water application techniques which conserve water such as soil moisture sensors and automatic irrigation systems shall be incorporated in the parks and publicly maintained landscape areas. Landscaping shall emphasize, drought-tolerant vegetation (xeriscaping) where not watered with reclaimed water. Plants of similar water use shall be grouped to reduce over-irrigation of low-water-using plants. Those areas not designed in xeriscape shall be gauged to receive irrigation using the minimal requirements. Residential occupants shall be informed as to the benefits of low-water-using landscaping and sources of additional assistance in xeriscaping.

The following mitigation measures from the SCVAP 2012 EIR are applicable to the analysis presented in this Initial Study for utilities; other EIR mitigation measures will be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, as appropriate based on the results of the updated analysis.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-1 (Policy LU 4.5.2):** Encourage the provision of usable open space that is accessible to employees and visitors, and discourage the provision of large areas of water-consuming landscaping that are not usable or accessible.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-2 (Policy LU 4.5.3):** Promote the inclusion of state-of-the-art technology within business complexes for telecommunications, heating and cooling, water and energy conservation, and other similar design features.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-3 (Policy LU 7.2.1):** Monitor growth, and coordinate with water districts as needed to ensure that long-range needs for potable and reclaimed water will be met.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-4 (Policy LU 7.2.2):** If water supplies are reduced from projected levels due to drought, emergency, or other unanticipated events, take appropriate steps to limit, reduce, or otherwise modify growth permitted by the Area Plan in consultation with water districts to ensure adequate long-term supply for existing businesses and residents.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-5 (Policy LU 7.2.3):** Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-6 (Policy LU 7.4.1):** Require the use of drought tolerant landscaping, native California plant materials, and evapotranspiration (smart) irrigation systems.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-7 (Policy LU 7.4.2):** Require the use of low-flow fixtures in all non-residential development and residential development with five or more dwelling units, which may include but are not limited to water conserving shower heads, toilets, waterless urinals and motion-sensor faucets, and encourage use of such fixtures in building retrofits as appropriate.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-8 (Policy CO 1.1.1):** In making land use decisions, consider the complex, dynamic, and interrelated ways that natural and human systems interact, such as the interactions between energy demand, water demand, air and water quality, and waste management.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-9 (Policy CO 4.1.1):** In coordination with applicable water suppliers, adopt and implement a water conservation strategy for public and private development.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-10 (Policy CO 4.1.2):** Provide examples of water conservation in landscaping through use of low water use landscaping in public spaces such as parks, landscaped medians and parkways, plazas, and around public buildings.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-11 (Policy CO 4.1.3):** Require low water use landscaping in new residential subdivisions and other private development projects, including a reduction in the amount of turfgrass.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-12 (Policy CO 4.1.4):** Provide informational materials to applicants and contractors on the Castaic Lake Water Agency's Landscape Education Program, and/or other information on xeriscape, native California plants, and water conserving irrigation techniques as materials become available.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-13 (Policy CO 4.1.5):** Promote the use of low-flow and/or waterless plumbing fixtures and appliances in all new non-residential development and residential development of five or more dwelling units.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-14 (Policy CO 4.1.6):** Support amendments to the County Building Code that would promote upgrades to water and energy efficiency when issuing permits for renovations or additions to existing buildings.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-15 (Policy CO 4.1.7):** Apply water conservation policies to all pending development projects, including approved tentative subdivision maps to the extent permitted by law. Where precluded from adding requirements by vested entitlements, encourage water conservation in construction and landscape design.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-16 (Policy CO 4.1.8):** Upon the availability of non-potable water services, discourage and consider restrictions on the use of potable water for washing outdoor surfaces.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-17 (Policy CO 4.2.1):** In cooperation with the Sanitation District and other affected agencies, expand opportunities for use of recycled water for the purposes of landscape maintenance, construction, water recharge, and other uses as appropriate.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-18 (Policy CO 4.2.2):** Require new development to provide the infrastructure needed for delivery of recycled water to the property for use in irrigation, even if the recycled water main delivery lines have not yet reached the site, where deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-19 (Policy CO 4.2.3):** Promote the installation of rainwater capture and gray water systems in new development for irrigation, where feasible and practicable.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-20 (Policy CO 4.2.5):** Participate and cooperate with other agencies to complete, adopt, and implement an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to build a diversified portfolio of water supply, water quality, and resource stewardship priorities for the Santa Clarita Valley.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-21 (Policy CO 4.2.6):** Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.

**SCVAP MM 3.13-22 (Policy CO 8.3.3):** Promote energy efficiency and water conservation upgrades to existing non-residential buildings at the time of major remodel or additions.

## 19. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 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, substantially 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?

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The project has the potential to degrade the quality of the natural and human environment related to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, transportation and traffic, and utilities and to also cumulatively affect the natural and human environment. It is anticipated that the majority of anticipated impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of mitigation; however, there is a potential for significant and unavoidable impacts as discussed previously in Sections 1 through 18. Because of this potential for significant adverse effects, a Draft Supplemental EIR will be prepared for the project.

- b) Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Potentially Significant Impact.** The Draft Supplemental EIR will evaluate the project's potential to meet both short- and long-term environmental goals.

- c) 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)?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Potentially Significant Impact.** The Draft Supplemental EIR will include a complete analysis of environmental impacts, including those that may be cumulatively considerable when evaluated in connection with past, present, and future projects.

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Potentially Significant Impact.** Refer to Threshold 19(a).

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