

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Public Access and Management Plan and Community Park Master Plan consists of implementation of the adopted *East West Ranch Management Plan and Conservation Easement* (RRM Design Group, 2003), which was adopted by the CCSD on April 24, 2003, and proposed Community Park Master Plan (Firma, 2006). The project site is located within the boundaries of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (FRP) (formerly known as East-West Ranch), which is bisected by Highway 1 near central Cambria, in San Luis Obispo County. The Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) acquired the property in 2001 and began development of a management plan and conservation easement agreement.

The proposed plan includes development of trails on the West FRP and construction of a community park on the East FRP. Public access improvements, restoration, and educational projects would be implemented throughout the FRP in phases, as funding for individual projects is available.

B. PURPOSE OF THE EIR

This Master EIR (also referenced as MEIR throughout the document) has been prepared in accordance with the State Guidelines established to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. §15151 of the State CEQA *Guidelines* provides the following standards for EIR adequacy:

“An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”

A Master EIR, as described in CEQA, provides a “detailed environmental review of plans and programs upon which the approval of subsequent related development proposals can be based” by evaluating the “cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and irreversible significant effects on the environment of specific, subsequent projects.” A Master EIR has the effect of streamlining future developments that are consistent with the Master EIR and the “general plan, element, general plan amendment, or specific plan” (Public Resources Code §21157). A significant environmental impact is defined in CEQA as a substantial, or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the proposed development (CEQA *Guidelines* §15358). The review of subsequent projects that have been described in the Master EIR can be limited to the extent that the Master EIR has already reviewed project impacts and set forth mitigation measures (Public Resources Code §21156).

The purpose of this MEIR is to identify the proposed project's significant effects on the environment, to indicate the manner in which such significant effects shall be mitigated or avoided, and to identify alternatives to the proposed project that avoid or reduce these impacts. This EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for use by the CCSD and the County of San Luis Obispo, other responsible agencies, the general public, and decision-makers in their consideration and evaluation of the environmental consequences associated with the implementation of the proposed project. This document is provided to the public and decision-makers for their review and comment as required by CEQA.

Under the CEQA process, an EIR must serve as a full disclosure document that enables the lead and responsible agencies to fully evaluate potential environmental impacts and the consequences of their decision on a proposed project. This EIR has been written to comply with the requirements of CEQA for the analysis of the proposed project, as well as the development and evaluation of alternatives to the proposed project.

C. MASTER EIR STRUCTURE

Contents of the Master EIR are outlined below and the Appendices contain background and technical information compiled and developed throughout the environmental review process. Contents of the EIR were determined from the results of an Initial Study prepared by the lead agency and responses from the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the EIR that was sent to responsible agencies. The Initial Study, the NOP, and comment letters received during the NOP review period are included in Appendix A.

This document was prepared in accordance with the requirements of CEQA of 1970 (Public Resources Code 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA *Guidelines* (14 California Code Regulations, 15071) as amended. Contents of the Master EIR are somewhat different than a project EIR and will follow the guidelines specified in §21157 of the Public Resources Code. In addition to the items otherwise required of all EIRs pursuant to §21100, a Master EIR must include the following additional information, pursuant to §21157 of the Public Resources Code:

“A description of anticipated subsequent projects that would be within the scope of the master environmental impact report, that contains sufficient information with regard to the kind, size, intensity, and location of the subsequent projects, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (A) *The specific type of project anticipated to be undertaken.*
- (B) *The maximum and minimum intensity of any anticipated subsequent project, such as the number of residences in a residential development, and with regard to a public works facility, its anticipated capacity, and service area.*
- (C) *The anticipated location and alternative locations for any development projects.*
- (D) *A capital outlay or capital improvement program, or other scheduling or implementing device that governs the submission and approval of subsequent projects.”*

In addition, the Master EIR includes a description of the potential impacts of anticipated subsequent projects for which there is not sufficient information reasonably available to support a full assessment of potential impacts in the Master EIR. Once a Master EIR is certified, subsequent developments (consistent with the Master EIR) and associated approval processes are streamlined. The scope of a focused EIR is not limited to the potential impacts described in the Master EIR (Public Resources Code §21157).

1. **SCOPING PROCESS**

In compliance with State CEQA *Guidelines*, the CCSD has taken steps to maximize opportunities to participate in the environmental process.

a. **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

During development of the Management Plan, the CCSD and RRM Design Group consulted with the community and a variety of advisory groups and government agencies including the California Coastal Conservancy, American Land Conservancy, North Coast Small Wilderness Area Preservation, Cambria Parks Recreation and Open Space Commission, and County of San Luis Obispo Parks Division. In addition to community and agency consultation, the Management Plan was developed based on a *Resource Inventory and Constraints Report* (Rincon Consultants, 2002). During development of the Management Plan and Community Park Master Plan, the CCSD held public scoping meetings (October and December 2002) and conducted a public poll to determine park amenities desired by the public. An EIR public scoping meeting was held in Cambria in June 2006.

b. **NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

In addition to public scoping meetings, an effort was made to contact various federal, state, regional, and local governmental agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments and inform the public of the proposed project. This included the distribution of the NOP on May 18, 2006 to various agencies, organizations, and interested persons throughout the community of Cambria, County of San Luis Obispo, and surrounding area. The proposed project was described, the scope of the environmental review was identified, and agencies and the public were invited to review and comment on the NOP. The close of the NOP review period was June 21, 2006. Agencies, organizations, and interested parties not contacted or who did not respond to the request for comments about the project during the preparation of the Draft EIR currently have the opportunity to comment during the 45-day public review period on the Draft EIR.

c. **SENATE BILL 18 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION**

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18) was signed into law in September 2004 (effective January 2005), and requires local governments (city and county) to consult with California Native American tribes to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places through local land use planning. The State Tribal Consultation Guidelines (November 2005) states that the intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places. The purpose of involving tribes at these early planning stages is to allow consideration of cultural places in the context of broad local land use policy, before individual site-specific, project-level land use decisions are made by a local government.

Local governments are required to consult with tribes prior to making certain planning decisions and to provide notice to tribes at certain key points in the planning process. Applicable planning decisions include the adoption and amendment of general plans and specific plans.

The CCSD is not an official city or county government agency, and project approval of the proposed *Community Park Master Plan* would be under consideration by the County of San Luis Obispo; however, as the CEQA Lead Agency, project information was submitted to Chumash and Salinan representatives, and the CCSD consulted with the Northern Chumash Tribal Council in June 2006. The Northern Chumash Council noted that there are significant cultural resources on the FRP, and considers the FRP a cultural place and sacred site (Fred Collins, June 1, 2006). Fred Collins toured West FRP with CCSD representatives, including Ben Boer, FRP Manager in March 2007 and provided suggestions on trail realignments and educational signage. Additional information regarding cultural resources is provided in Chapter V.E. of this EIR.

2. EIR CONTENTS

The scope of the EIR includes issues identified by the lead agency during the preparation of the NOP for the proposed project, as well as environmental issues raised by agencies and the general public in response to the NOP. The EIR is divided into the following major sections:

Introduction. Provides the purpose of an EIR, scope and content of the document, and the use of the document.

Summary. Provides a brief summary of the project description, impacts and mitigation measures, alternatives, growth inducing impacts, and the monitoring program.

Project Description. Provides the general background of the project, objectives, a detailed description of the project characteristics, and a listing of necessary permits and government approvals.

Environmental Setting. Describes the physical setting and surrounding land uses.

Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures. Discusses the environmental setting as it relates to the various issue areas, regulatory setting, thresholds of significance, impact assessment and methodology, project-specific impacts and mitigation measures, cumulative impacts, and secondary impacts. The EIR analyzes the potentially significant impacts to the following resource areas, as identified during the preparation of the NOP. The following are the environmental topics addressed in this EIR, based on the Initial Study:

- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology
- Agricultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Aesthetic Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Water Supply
- Public Services and Utilities

Alternatives. Summarizes the environmental advantages and disadvantages associated with the proposed project and the alternatives. Consistent with the CEQA *Guidelines*, the alternatives analysis discusses impacts on a general, qualitative level rather than a detailed analysis. As required, the “No Project” alternative is included among the alternatives considered. If the No Project alternative is identified as the “Environmentally Superior Alternative,” then the Environmentally Superior Alternative is chosen from the other alternatives.

Environmental Analysis. Identifies growth inducing impacts, including the spatial, economic, and/or population growth impacts that may result from implementation of the proposed project. This section also includes a discussion of long-term/short-term productivity and irreversible environmental changes.

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan. This section contains a listing of all mitigation measures contained in the EIR, the requirements of the mitigation measures, the applicant’s responsibility and timing for implementation of these measures, the party responsible for verification, the method of verification, and verification timing.

D. AGENCY USE OF THE DOCUMENT

The CCSD, as the CEQA lead agency, is responsible for administering the preparation of the EIR and will be responsible for certifying the Final EIR. The CCSD and the County of San Luis Obispo will use the EIR as an informational document to assist in the decision-making process, ultimately resulting in the approval, denial, or assignment of conditions to the project.

E. PROJECT SPONSORS AND CONTACT PERSONS

Key contact persons are as follows:

Lead Agency: Cambria Community Services District
P.O. Box 65
Cambria, CA 93428

Connie Davidson, Project Manager

Project Applicant: Cambria Community Services District

Environmental Consultant: Morro Group – A Division of SWCA
1422 Monterey Street, Suite C200
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Mary Reents, Senior Consultant
Shawna Scott, Project Manager

F. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

This Draft EIR was distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as all parties requesting a copy of the Draft EIR in accordance with Public Resources Code 21092(b)(3). The Notice of Completion of the Draft EIR was also distributed as required by CEQA. The 45-day public review period begins on March 3, 2008. During this period the EIR, including technical appendices, is available for review at the following locations:

Cambria Community Services District	Cambria Library
1316 Tamson Drive	900 Main Street
Cambria, CA 93428	Cambria, CA 93428
www.cambriacsd.org	

On behalf of the lead agency, comments on the Draft EIR shall be addressed to:

Connie Davidson
Cambria Community Services District
P.O. Box 65
Cambria, CA 93428

The 45-day public review period will end on April 17, 2008. Written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared and included as part of the Final EIR and the environmental record for consideration by decision-makers for the project.

LIST OF ABBREVIATED TERMS

Abbreviation	Term
CCSD	Cambria Community Services District
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
MEIR	Master Environmental Impact Report
NOP	Notice of Preparation
SB 18	Senate Bill 18

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