

## Q.5.2 - Groundwater Resources

The following impact evaluation is based on the environmental setting, regulatory setting, and thresholds of significance discussions provided for the proposed projects in Draft EIR Section 5.2, Groundwater Resources, and in Appendix D-1, Expanded Groundwater Resources Analysis. These previous discussions are not repeated in the following evaluation. The evaluation is a comparative analysis between the Preferred Project and Proposed Project 4.

### Groundwater Supply

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**Q5.2-A:**                    **The proposed project would not 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.**

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### *Project Specific Impact Analysis*

#### **Collection System**

*Short-term Construction Effects*

*Similar Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the collection system under the Preferred Project is a gravity system. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project includes additional collection system facilities such as pump stations, standby power stations, and pipelines, as well as modifications to specific locations and size of facilities such as the central pump station, pipelines within streets, and pipelines crossing creeks compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of additions and modifications of the collection system facilities, implementation of the Preferred Project would still result in the same proportional impact to groundwater supplies as Proposed Project 4. This impact would be considered less than significant with the offset in the loss of flow into the lower aquifer as described under “Combined Project Effects.”

#### **Treatment Plant Site**

*Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed treatment plant facilities under the Preferred Project include treatment facilities, appurtenant structures and storage facilities located on the Tonini parcel. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project will include an Oxidation Ditch or Biolac® facility that encompasses less area and requires substantially less grading than the facultative ponds proposed under Proposed Project 4. Based on the revisions to the proposed treatment process, the construction activities associated with the treatment facilities for the Preferred Project could contact groundwater due to the approximately 20-foot deep storage ponds in the southern portion of the site. Construction activities may require dewatering, however, the dewatering activities are not expected to substantially alter the quantity of existing groundwater supplies. Therefore, the proposed construction activities associated with the Preferred Project would result in a less than significant impact on groundwater supplies.

*Long-term Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed treatment plant facilities under the Preferred Project include treatment facilities, appurtenant structures and storage facilities located on the Tonini parcel. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project will include an Oxidation Ditch or Biolac® facility that encompasses less area and requires substantially less grading than the facultative ponds proposed under Proposed Project 4. The facilities would be lined to prevent leaching of untreated wastewater from the treatment plant site to the groundwater and would have no impact on groundwater supply under the treatment plant site.

**Disposal Sites**

*Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed disposal systems under the Preferred Project include sprayfields at the Tonini parcel and leachfields at the Broderson parcel. Under the Preferred Project, the type of spray was revised to exclude percolation and as a result approximately 73 more acres of sprayfields are proposed to accommodate the 842 acre-feet of spray at Tonini compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of the increase in sprayfield area, the proposed disposal would result in a less than significant impact on groundwater supplies similar to Proposed Project 4.

*Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed disposal systems under the Preferred Project include sprayfields at the Tonini parcel and leachfields at the Broderson parcel. Under the Preferred Project, the type of spray was revised to exclude percolation and as a result approximately 73 more acres of sprayfields are proposed to accommodate the 842 acre-feet of spray at Tonini compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of the increase in sprayfield area, the proposed facilities of the Preferred Project would still result in a less than significant impact on groundwater quantities within the bedrock aquifer that is below the Tonini site. Therefore, impacts to the Zone B and C aquifers are considered less than significant. The potential impact on the exact quantity of groundwater in the perched aquifer is unknown and the potential impact on groundwater flow to surrounding surface water features is speculative given that the amount of perched groundwater currently flowing to surface water features is not known. Furthermore, the proposed disposal of treated effluent at Broderson would reduce the current rate of seawater intrusion into the lower aquifer, thus resulting in a beneficial impact.

**Combined Project Effects**

Based on the additions and modifications to the facilities in Proposed Project 4, the Preferred Project would still result in less than significant impacts to the quantity of groundwater in the bedrock aquifer east of Los Osos Creek. The impact conclusions regarding the Los Osos Valley Groundwater Basin that are provided for Proposed Project 4 could be the same for the Preferred Project.

### **Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the Preferred Project would result in a beneficial impact on reducing the rate of seawater intrusion and no impact relating to the depletion of groundwater supplies or the substantial interference with groundwater recharge. There are no related projects that would contribute to cumulative groundwater supply impacts, implementation of the Preferred Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to groundwater supply.

### **Mitigation Measures**

#### **Project-Specific**

No mitigation measures are required.

#### **Cumulative**

No mitigation measures are required.

### **Level of Significance After Mitigation**

#### **Project-Specific**

Less than Significant.

#### **Cumulative**

No impact.

### **Groundwater Quality**

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**Q5.2-B: The proposed project would not degrade groundwater quality.**

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### **Project Specific Impact Analysis**

#### **Collection System**

##### *Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the collection system under the Preferred Project is a gravity system. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project includes additional collection system facilities such as pump stations, standby power stations, and pipelines, as well as modifications to specific locations and size of facilities such as the central pump station, pipelines within streets, and pipelines crossing creeks compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of the additions and modifications of the collection system facilities, the Preferred Project may require additional dewatering of the existing groundwater supplies during short-term construction activities within the perched aquifer. Based on a review of the additions and modifications of the collection system facilities under the Preferred Project, no substantial dewatering of the existing groundwater supplies within the perched aquifer would occur. Therefore, the impact on the quality of the groundwater would be less than significant.

##### *Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the collection system under the Preferred Project is a gravity system. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project includes additional collection system facilities such as pump stations, standby power stations, and pipelines, as well as modifications to specific locations

and size of facilities such as the central pump station, pipelines within streets, and pipelines crossing creeks compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of additions and modifications of the collection system facilities, the Preferred Project would remove septic recharge from private septic tank systems, resulting in the removal of a source of groundwater contamination. Accordingly, the construction and operation of the proposed collection system under the Preferred Project would result in a beneficial impact to groundwater quality.

### **Treatment Plant Site**

#### *Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed treatment plant facilities under the Preferred Project include treatment facilities, appurtenant structures and storage facilities located on the Tonini parcel. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project will include an Oxidation Ditch or Biolac® facility that encompasses less area and requires substantially less grading than the facultative ponds proposed under Proposed Project 4. Based on the revisions to the proposed treatment process, the construction of the proposed storage ponds may extend to the groundwater table requiring dewatering; however, the dewatering activities would result in a less than significant impact on groundwater quality.

#### *Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed treatment plant facilities under the Preferred Project include treatment facilities, appurtenant structures and storage facilities located on the Tonini parcel. As described in Table Q.5-1, the Preferred Project will include an Oxidation Ditch or Biolac® facility that encompasses less area and requires substantially less grading than the facultative ponds proposed under Proposed Project 4. The proposed treatment ponds and storage ponds that would be implemented under the Preferred Project would be lined to prevent leaching of wastewater from the treatment plant site to the groundwater. Since the facilities would be lined, the Preferred Project would have no impact on groundwater quality. In addition, the Preferred Project includes a stormwater detention basin to capture stormwater runoff with the treatment plant site. The detention basin and stormwater return pumping system would circulate treatment plant area stormwater into the treatment plant headworks, resulting in no discharge to groundwater.

### **Disposal Sites**

#### *Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed disposal systems under the Preferred Project include sprayfields at the Tonini parcel and leachfields at the Broderson parcel. Under the Preferred Project, the type of spray was revised to exclude percolation and as a result approximately 73 more acres of sprayfields are proposed to accommodate the 842 acre-feet of spray at Tonini compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of the increase in sprayfield area, the construction of the proposed facilities on the Tonini property and the leachfields on Broderson would result in no impact on the existing groundwater quality beneath the proposed disposal site.

*Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed disposal systems under the Preferred Project include sprayfields at the Tonini parcel and leachfields at the Broderson parcel. Under the Preferred Project, the type of spray was revised to exclude percolation and as a result approximately 73 more acres of sprayfields are necessary to accommodate the 842 acre-feet of spray at Tonini compared to Proposed Project 4. Based on a review of the increase in sprayfield area, salt loading impacts to groundwater from spraying treated effluent at the proposed Tonini sprayfield site would be considered less than significant and the potential impacts of effluent disposal at the Broderson site would result in a beneficial impact that would improve water quality.

**Combined Project Effects**

*Short-term Construction Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, all short-term effects on groundwater quality from construction of the Preferred Project collection system and facilities at the treatment plant site and disposal sites are less than significant.

*Long-term Operational Effects*

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the Preferred Project would provide a beneficial water quality impact on the Los Osos Basin and a less than significant impact on the bedrock aquifer. Accordingly, water quality impacts associated with the combined project disposal program would be less than significant.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the Preferred Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts on groundwater quality. There are no related projects that would contribute to cumulative groundwater quality impacts, implementation of the Preferred Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to groundwater quality.

**Mitigation Measures**

**Project-Specific**

No mitigation measures are required.

**Cumulative**

No mitigation measures are required.

**Level of Significance After Mitigation**

**Project-Specific**

Less than Significant.

**Cumulative**

No impact.

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## Local Programs and Policies Related to Groundwater Supply or Quality

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**Q5.2-C:** The proposed project would not conflict with local programs or policies related to groundwater quality or water supply?

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### ***Project Specific Impact Analysis***

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the proposed facilities under the Preferred Project are in compliance with the County's applicable General Plan programs and policies related to groundwater quality or supply.

### ***Cumulative Impact Analysis***

Similar to Proposed Project 4, the Preferred Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts on the County's groundwater supply and groundwater quality programs and policies.

### ***Mitigation Measures***

#### **Project-Specific**

No mitigation measures are required.

#### **Cumulative**

No mitigation measures are required.

### ***Level of Significance After Mitigation***

#### **Project-Specific**

Less than Significant.

#### **Cumulative**

No impact.