

Draft Environmental Assessment
Northeast Fire Station
City of Santa Maria Fire Department
EMW-2009-FC-01734
November 2010



FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region IX
1111 Broadway - Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607

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For submittal to:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency – Region IX
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**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARFF	Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting
bgs	below ground surface
BMPs	Best Management Practices
Cal-IPC	California Invasive Plant Council
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CF	Community Facility
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH ₄	Methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
City	City of Santa Maria
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
EA	Environmental Assessment
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FEMA	Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency
GHG	greenhouse gases
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
HVAC	Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
msl	mean sea level
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NESHAP	National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOT	Notice of Termination

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O ₃	ozone
OHP	State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter
SBCAPCD	Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SO ₂	Sulphur dioxide
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TACs	Toxic Air Contaminants
tpy	tons per year
URS	URS Corporation
U.S.C.	United States Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	volatile organic compound

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**SECTION 1.0
INTRODUCTION**

The City of Santa Maria (City) has applied to the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Federal financial assistance (Federal action) to implement the Northeast Fire Station Project (proposed action) in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County, California (Figures 1, 2, and 3). The assistance would be provided to the City (as the grantee) through the Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant Program. The grantee's proposal consists of constructing a new fire station (i.e., the Northeast Fire Station) to improve response times and service in the northeast area of the City. The new fire station would be located at 1670 East Donovan Road.

The Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant Program (CFDA 97-115) is authorized by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) to fund the construction and modification of fire stations. The program is administered by the Assistance to Firefighters Program Office under FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate. The grants under this program are awarded directly to fire departments on a competitive basis.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed project and the identified alternatives of the proposed project. The EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4327 [2008]), the associated Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500–1508 [2008]), and FEMA's implementing regulations (44 CFR § 10 [2008]). The EA process provides steps and procedures to evaluate the potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of a proposed project and alternatives on the quality of the human environment. The potential impacts are evaluated according to their context and intensity, as defined in the CEQ regulations. The EA process also includes procedures for giving Federal, state, and local agencies and the public opportunities to provide input on the proposed project and alternatives. FEMA will use the findings in this EA to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement or a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Throughout this document, the project is called the Northeast Fire Station, to avoid possible confusion from using Fire Station numbers. The City's intent is to build a new fire station on the project site, which will be designated Fire Station No. 5. In some earlier planning documents and correspondence, however, the site was referenced as the location for Fire Station No. 3.

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**SECTION 2.0
PURPOSE AND NEED**

The proposed Northeast Fire Station would be located in the City of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The project site was formerly part of the 19-acre Santa Maria Riding and Roping Club, which leased the property from Santa Barbara County (County) for over 40 years. In 1990, the County declared the site excess property; an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified, and the property was sold for the development of the Merrill Gardens project—a campus style retirement community. The southwest corner of the Merrill Gardens property was subdivided and the City purchased the vacant 1.36 acre parcel in 2004. The site is bound by East Donovan Road to the north, Suey Crossing Road to the east, and the Merrill Gardens development to the south and west.

Currently, there is no fire station in Santa Maria on the east side of the US 101 Highway. The northeast area of the City is serviced by existing Fire Station No. 3, which is located at 1527 North College Drive, in a 70-year-old home that was converted to a fire station in 1980. The City submitted a Draft Environmental Assessment in October 2010 associated with the grant application for the Northwest Fire Station, which will become the new location for Fire Station No. 3

The Santa Maria Fire Department conducted studies in 1998 and 2000 and determined that the City needs six fire stations to meet response time goals and service calls (City of Santa Maria 2000). There are currently five fire stations in the department. Four of the stations provide general fire suppression duties and the fifth station is restricted under contract to Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) at the Santa Maria Public Airport. From 2000 to 2006 the City's population increased 9.4 percent (Census Bureau) and total calls for the Santa Maria Fire Department increased 59 percent (City of Santa Maria 2010). From 2006 to 2009, total calls increased 23 percent. Total call increase from 2000 to 2009 was 96 percent (City of Santa Maria, 2010).

The Santa Maria Fire Department strategic plan includes locating an additional fire station in the northeast area of the City. The goal of the Santa Maria Fire Department and the standard outlined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 is to respond to 90 percent of calls for service within five minutes. Currently, only 78 percent of the City is within the five minute response time (Santa Maria Fire Department, Standards of Cover 2000). The coverage area within the five minute response time will only decrease with further population growth and development in the City. Once the proposed Northwest and Northeast Fire Stations are operational, 91 percent of the City would be within the five minute response time. When both stations are completed they would greatly enhance the City's ability to meet response time goals and service calls.

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The Northeast Fire Station would also improve the City's ability to provide mutual aid to areas within unincorporated Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, and the Los Padres National Forest. The proposed location is strategically located to improve services to these jurisdictions; the proposed site's proximity to US 101 Highway would improve response times to these areas by over two minutes. In addition, the proposed fire station would be directly across the street from the Suey Crossing which is one of only two crossings of the Santa Maria River. The Suey Crossing provides an alternate access via Bull Canyon Road to the State Route 166 corridor and Los Padres National Forest.

In summary, the new Northeast Fire Station is being proposed to:

- Reduce reliance on existing fire station facilities
- Improve response times in the northeast area of the City
- Support other fire stations in the City and provide mutual aid to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and the Los Padres National Forest

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**SECTION 3.0
ALTERNATIVES**

NEPA requires the investigation and evaluation of reasonable project alternatives as part of the planning process. This EA addresses two alternatives: the proposed action and the no action alternatives. The No Action Alternative, alternatives considered and dismissed, and the Proposed Action Alternative are further discussed below.

3.1 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action Alternative would result in no construction of a new fire station in the northeast area of the City. This action would have no immediate impact to emergency response time in the City's northeast area; however, response times are likely to increase with further population growth and development.

In 2008 the City changed the General Plan land use designation and zoning at the project site from high density residential to community facility and rezoned the site to CF (Community Facility). If the Northeast Fire Station was not developed at this location, the land would temporarily remain in its current vacant state and then would be likely be considered for some other community facility purpose by the City in the future.

3.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND DISMISSED

The City of Santa Maria Fire Department searched for alternative site locations based on the City's established criteria of response times, main-artery road and highway access, and population density. One alternative site location was identified at the intersection of East Alvin Avenue and North Palisade Street. However, this proposed site location was a smaller lot size and ultimately the property owner decided not to sell the property. Therefore, this alternate location was determined to be unreasonable and eliminated from further consideration

3.3 PROPOSED ACTION

The grantee's proposal (Proposed Project) consists of building a new fire station that complies with NFPA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Completion of the Proposed Project would be expected to take approximately 15 months. The proposed fire station would be constructed on the existing 1.36 acre parcel at 1670 East Donovan Road. This location is located near east/west and north/south oriented roads. In addition, the location would provide ready access to US 101 Highway, which would allow the proposed fire station personnel to support other fire stations in the City and provide mutual aid to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and the Los Padres National Forest.

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The site plan for the Proposed Project is shown on Figure 3. Photographs of the project area are included in Appendix B.

The components of the Proposed Project are as follows:

- The proposed fire station would encompass approximately 6,579 square feet, including 3,079 square feet of living space and 3,500 square feet of apparatus space, including a work area and storage space.
- The fire station would initially accommodate three personnel but could accommodate four personnel. The living space would include four bedrooms, a kitchen, a day room, two offices, a public area, and a storage area for personal protective equipment. The living space would also accommodate an area for physical exercise, training, and equipment storage.
- The apparatus area would be two bays wide and two and a quarter bays deep, providing room for up to four apparatus. It would house a fire engine and reserve engine.
- Backup power would be provided from an on-site diesel-fueled stationary emergency generator.
- The fire station would have a 1,000 gallon diesel aboveground storage tank to fuel equipment. It would be located behind the fire station on typical slab on grade foundation and secured with fencing.
- The lot and facility would be configured to provide parking for staff and visitor vehicles.
- NFPA and OSHA-compliant fire-suppression sprinkler system and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors would be installed.
- Landscaping would be installed in compliance with the City's development codes and master drainage plan.

**SECTION 4.0
AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

The analysis presented in this chapter focuses on the areas where some level of impact may result from the implementation of the alternatives, including geology and soils, air quality, water resources, coastal resources, biological resources, historic properties, environmental justice, noise, traffic, services and utilities, health and safety, and hazardous materials. Based on communication with Federal agencies, State of California agencies, and review of the City of Santa Maria 2008 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and staff reports, no other resource areas have been identified that would require further evaluation pursuant to NEPA.

4.1 PHYSICAL RESOURCES

4.1.1 Geology and Soils

The project site is located in the Santa Maria Valley. The Santa Maria Valley comprises an area bounded by the Temetatte Range of the Sierra Madre Mountains to the east, the Orcutt upland to the south, the Nipomo Mesa to the north, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. From the origin of the Santa Maria River, at the confluence of the Cuyama and Sisquoc Rivers, the valley trends from southeast to northwest. At the intersection of the Santa Maria River and the Nipomo Creek, the Santa Maria River alters its course west towards the Pacific Ocean.

The Santa Maria Valley is a geologic basin formed by right-lateral, strike-slip transtensional faulting and concurrent deposition of marine sediments. Continued faulting, with a change in tectonic regime, resulted in compression of the basin and formed large-scale folding such as the Santa Maria syncline. The Santa Maria Valley geologic basin is comprised of Holocene age unconsolidated alluvial deposits and recent and older dunes resting on consolidated sediments of the Paso Robles formation. The unconsolidated alluvial deposits are up to 200 feet thick, while the dune deposits are approximately 100 feet thick (Woodring and Bramlette 1950). The non-marine Paso Robles Formation (Pliocene-Pleistocene age) is comprised of alluvial basin fill deposits and ranges in thickness from 100 to 200 feet. The Paso Robles formation overlies the Careaga Sand (Pliocene age), which is comprised of loose-consolidated medium to fine grained sand that is of marine origin. The Careaga Sand overlies the following sequence of marine units: Foxen Mudstone (Tertiary age), Sisquoc Formation, and Monterey Shale, which overlie the Franciscan Formation (Jurassic/Cretaceous age) (Woodring and Bramlette 1950).

The project site was formerly part of the 19-acre Santa Maria Riding and Roping Club. In 1990, Santa Barbara County declared the site excess property and the property was sold for the development of the Merrill Gardens project.

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According to a geotechnical investigation conducted in 2007 by GSI Soils Inc., the top three to five feet of soil across the site comprised of undocumented loose fill of silty sands that were slightly moist. Similar silty sand in a medium dense condition at variable moisture contents were encountered below that depth to the termination of the deepest boring at 50 feet below grade.

Refer to Section 4.2.1 on Water Quality for soil erosion during a storm event.

4.1.1.1 Executive Order 12699: Seismic Safety

Executive Order (EO) 12699, Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction, requires newly constructed buildings to meet standards for seismic safety set by the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program.

The Santa Maria Valley is considered to be a potentially seismically active area. The valley is within a structural fold, (i.e., rock layers that are arched or bent) and a thrust fault area. The axes of most of the structural elements in the region run northwest-southeast, parallel to the valley. The Santa Maria Valley has been subject to uplift during the last 2 to 5 million years.

The proposed project site would likely be subject to ground shaking from seismic events. While this represents a potential impact, or constraint to development, the risk is not unique to the site and the applicable building code are established to specify appropriate measures to be used in foundation and structural design to minimize the hazards from ground-shaking.

EO 12699 and the FEMA policy implementing it provide for the use of concurrent standards prepared by other agencies or groups for purposes of federal agency review to ensure that buildings will be built in a manner that protects occupants from seismic risks. One of these acceptable standards is the American Society of Civil Engineers (ACSE) Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures, ASCE 7-03 and 7-05.

4.1.1.2 Liquefaction

Liquefaction is the process by which relatively soft, watery sediments may liquefy (lose their solidity) during moderate to intense ground-shaking caused by an earthquake. The potential for liquefaction to occur is greatest in areas with loose, granular, low-density soils, where the water table is within the upper 40 to 50 feet of the ground surface. The geotechnical investigation conducted in 2007 by GSI Soils Inc. included one boring that was drilled to 50 feet bgs and did not encounter groundwater. Therefore, the potential for liquefaction at the project site is relatively low.

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4.1.1.3 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to geology or soil, seismicity, or liquefaction because no construction or other activities would occur. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.1.1.4 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Under the Proposed Project, ground-disturbing activities would consist of grading and excavation for the new fire station, trenching and installation of utilities, and landscaping. Because the entire site is on artificial fill material, the existing soil would have to be excavated, backfilled and compacted as necessary to support the new building foundation and parking and driveway areas. Any excess soil material would be disposed of in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Areas outside of the building and parking areas would be regraded to conform with the topography of the adjacent area after construction was complete. Because of the previous ground disturbance at the site, the proposed excavation, grading, and trenching would not have an adverse effect on any geologic resources in the project area.

The construction of the fire station would result in minor short-term direct and indirect effects on soils. The project could cause soil erosion during construction from surface runoff along exposed dirt areas. The City will be responsible for using silt fences, covering spoil piles, staging equipment along existing roads, watering areas of exposed soil as necessary to minimize soil loss from surface runoff and wind erosion, and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs). With these measures, the short-term ground disturbance associated with this alternative would be expected to be minimal and temporary.

The fire station would be designed to meet all building code requirements. Specifically, the fire station is designed to meet the ASCE standards 7-03 and 7-05 or better and would comply with all applicable seismic safety standards.

The Proposed Project Alternative would result in minimal short term effects on soils.

4.1.2 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§ 7401–7661 [2008]) is a comprehensive Federal law that regulates air emissions from area, stationary, and mobile sources. The act authorized the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to protect public health and the environment. The NAAQS include standards for the following criteria pollutants: nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter

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(PM₁₀), and particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}). Areas where the monitored concentration of a pollutant exceeds the NAAQS are classified as being in nonattainment for that pollutant. If the monitored concentration is below the standard, the area is classified as in attainment. After monitoring documents that a nonattainment area meets air quality standards, and if there is a 10-year plan for continuing to meet and maintain such standards, EPA re-designates the area as a maintenance area.

The proposed project is located within the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). According to the SBCAPCD (2009), the City is in attainment for all federal standards; however, the air basin is not in attainment for the state 8-hour O₃ standard and the state PM₁₀ annual and 24 hour standards.

4.1.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to air quality because no construction or other activities resulting in air emissions or affecting attainment status would occur in the immediate future. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects on air quality would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.1.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Construction activities associated with the building of the fire station would result in short-term emissions of vehicle exhaust from construction equipment and surface disturbance that would temporarily increase the amount of dust in the area. To minimize the effects to air quality, the City will ensure the use of well-maintained and properly tuned construction equipment and vehicles, minimize the idling time of construction vehicles, and use dust-control measures, such as watering disturbed areas and covering spoil piles, as necessary.

The fire department would ensure that vehicles housed at the fire house were properly maintained. There would be minimal long term effects on air quality.

The Proposed Project Alternative would result in minimal short and long term effects on air quality.

4.1.3 Climate Change

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) play a critical role in the earth's radiation budget by trapping infrared radiation emitted from the earth's surface, which could have otherwise escaped to space. Prominent GHGs contributing to this process include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide (N₂O), methane (CH₄), O₃, and certain hydro- and fluorocarbons (HFCs). This phenomenon, known as the "greenhouse effect," keeps the earth's atmosphere

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near the surface warmer than it would be otherwise and allows for successful habitation by humans and other forms of life. Increases in these gases lead to more absorption of radiation and warm the lower atmosphere further, thereby increasing evaporation rates and temperatures near the surface. Emissions of GHGs in excess of natural ambient concentrations are thought to be responsible for the enhancement of the greenhouse effect and to contribute to what is termed “global warming,” a trend of unnatural warming of the earth’s natural climate. Climate change is a global issue, and GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants such as ozone precursors and Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs), which are pollutants of regional and local concern.

Some GHGs such as CO₂ occur naturally, released by transpiration from plants. CO₂ can also form from anthropogenic, or man-made, sources. Other GHGs are emitted solely from human activities, such as fluorinated gases. CO₂ is the most common of the six targeted GHGs, caused anthropogenically by the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation. CH₄ is produced anthropogenically through the anaerobic decomposition of waste in landfills, animal digestion, decomposition of animal wastes, production and distribution of natural gas and petroleum, coal production, and incomplete fossil fuel combustion. N₂O is anthropogenically generated as a result of soil cultivation practices, particularly the use of commercial and organic fertilizers, fossil fuel combustion, nitric acid production, and biomass burning. HFCs are primarily used as refrigerants, consisting of gas molecules containing hydrogen, fluorine, and carbon atoms. Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) consist of a class of gases containing carbon and fluorine originally introduced as alternatives to ozone-depleting substances and typically emitted as by-products of industrial and manufacturing processes.

Recognition of the problem of GHGs and their contribution to global climate change, and the response to this problem, is occurring at all levels of government. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has been established by the World Meteorological Organization and United Nations Environment Programme to assess scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant for the understanding of climate change, its potential impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation. The U.S. EPA is developing regulations to limit CO₂ emissions from motor vehicles.

4.1.3.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to climate change because no construction or other activities resulting in air emissions or affecting attainment status would occur. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects on GHG emissions and climate change would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

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4.1.3.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

As discussed in Section 4.1.2 this alternative would result in minimal short-term emissions of vehicle exhaust from construction equipment and minimal long-term emissions from fire department vehicles. To minimize the effects to climate change, the City will ensure the use of well-maintained and properly tuned construction equipment and vehicles, and minimize the idling time of construction vehicles.

The fire stations designed to foster energy independence. The standard “whole building” approach was used to design an energy efficient project, considering integrated, optimized energy efficient solutions, such as efficient building shell, and efficient mechanical and electrical systems. The design team created a design that exceeds building energy use standards by approximately 7.3 percent. Through the use of day lighting, including solar tubes in corridor areas and occupancy sensors, the installed lighting power used has been reduced by 5 percent. All appliances specified for this project will be “Energy Star” rated.

The design also incorporates green building materials. The interior finish materials selected for this project were chosen for the purpose of creating healthy and quality interiors for the building users. Concern for indoor air quality, indoor environmental quality, durability, and reduced maintenance requirements impacted the choice of materials. The use of rapidly renewable materials, such as rubber flooring was selected to help create a truly “green” facility.

Additional green building methods have been integrated into the design of the project. Thermal efficiency features include: increasing the thermal resistance or “R-value” of insulation at walls and roof; installing dual pane glass at windows; having separate HVAC zones for day areas and living areas to allow for shut-down during non-use hours; and installing an energy management system with programmable thermostats for HVAC control. The fire stations will feature tinted window glazing to reduce solar gain which will reduce operation of mechanical units to cool the interior. The design protects indoor air quality by integrating low volatile organic compounds (VOC) products, sealants, adhesives and materials; installing VOC and vinyl free wall coverings will eliminate need for painting; and installing windows that open to allow fresh air into the buildings. The stations will feature lighting controls such as photoelectric cells for exterior and corridor lighting.

Therefore, the Proposed Project Alternative would result in minimal short and long term effects on climate change.

4.2 WATER RESOURCES

4.2.1 Water Quality

The proposed project site is located south of the Santa Maria River (Figure 1). The Santa Maria River drainage basin covers 1,880 square miles. The river is formed by the confluence of the Cuyama and Sisquoc Rivers, approximately 20 miles from the coast and upstream from the City; it then flows westward to the Pacific. The river defines part of the border between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. The region is characterized by a brief rainy season in the winter months and a long dry season the remainder of the year, though annual precipitation can fluctuate wildly. During much of the year, the Santa Maria River has very little water, but it can swell greatly during winter storms. There are no natural surface water features on the proposed site location.

The City provides water using two sources of supply: imported State water and local groundwater. Although the City has more local groundwater than it needs to meet water demand in the City, imported State water is used to improve the quality of the water delivered. Water service is available in East Donovan Road in front of the proposed project site.

4.2.1.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no immediate effect on existing water quality or hydrology because no construction or other activities would occur. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects relative to water quality would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.2.1.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Because one or more acres of land would be disturbed, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will be required. In California, a Statewide General Permit has been issued (Construction General Permit, 99-08-DWQ issued by the State Water Resources Control Board) that applies to all dischargers and provides the conditions and specifications to fulfill this requirement. The City will prepare a Notice of Intent (NOI) to be covered by the Statewide General Permit, and will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to construction. The SWPPP would identify the pollution control measures that will be implemented to reduce soil erosion, while containing and minimizing the construction pollutants (including oils, gasoline, and other chemicals released by construction equipment and vehicles) that may be released to surface waters through runoff during a storm event. The City will submit the NOI and the Notice of Termination

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(NOT) to the State Water Resources Control Board. Compliance with the SWPPP and other requirements of the General Permit would ensure no adverse effects to the environment.

To minimize potential effects to water quality as a result of sedimentation from construction, the City will follow BMPs such as using silt fences, covering spoil piles, watering areas of disturbed soil, staging equipment along existing roads, and keeping equipment properly maintained. The City will dispose of excess spoils resulting from drilling, grading, or trenching in compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local regulations.

Although the increased number of vehicles entering and exiting the fire station may result in increased amounts of fluids (e.g., petroleum) that could run off, either on-site or off-site, this effect is expected to be minor. Within the larger drainage basin, no change would occur in the overall potential for the release of these pollutants associated with motor vehicle operation.

Therefore, the Proposed Project would have minor direct water quality effects during construction that would be minimized through measures required in the permitting process. The long-term effects on water quality and hydrology would be minor.

4.2.2 Wetlands

4.2.2.1 Executive Order 11990: Protection of Wetlands

EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands, requires Federal agencies to take action to minimize the destruction or modification of wetlands by considering both direct and indirect impacts to wetlands. Furthermore, EO 11990 requires that Federal agencies proposing to fund a project that could adversely affect wetlands consider alternatives to avoid such effects. FEMA's regulations implementing EO 11990 are codified in 44 CFR Part 9. Based upon site reconnaissance of the project area and review of the National Wetland Inventory maps, no evidence of wetlands was found in the project area (Figure 4).

4.2.2.2 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to wetlands because no wetlands occur in the project area.

4.2.2.3 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project Alternative would have no effect on wetlands, because no wetlands occur in the project area. Therefore, this alternative complies with EO 11990.

4.2.3 Floodplains

4.2.3.1 Executive Order 11988: Floodplain Management

EO 11988, Floodplain Management, requires Federal agencies to take action to minimize occupancy and modification of floodplains. EO 11988 also requires that Federal agencies proposing to fund a project sited in a 100-year floodplain consider alternatives to avoid adverse effects and incompatible development in the floodplain. Also under this order, an applicant is prohibited from receiving Federal funding for construction of critical facilities within the 500-year floodplain unless there are no practical alternatives. FEMA's regulations implementing EO 1988 are codified in 44 CFR Part 9 (2008).

According to FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map for Santa Barbara County, California, the project area is in a moderate- to low-risk flood area (Figure 5). The proposed project site is located outside the 500-year floodplain in Zone X, designated "Other Areas; Areas determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain" (FEMA 2005).

4.2.3.2 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to the existing floodplain because the site is located outside of the 100-year and 500-year floodplain.

4.2.3.3 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project Alternative will be located outside the 100-year and 500-year floodplain; therefore, this alternative would not result in modifications to, occupation of, or otherwise affect the floodplain.

The Proposed Project Alternative would have no short- or long-term effect on floodplain management and complies with EO 11988 and 44 CFR Part 9.

4.3 COASTAL RESOURCES

The Coastal Zone Management Act enables coastal states to designate state coastal boundaries and develop coastal management programs to improve protection of sensitive shoreline resources and guide sustainable use of coastal areas. According to the California Coastal Commission Local Coastal Program Central Coast Area Status Map (California Coastal Commission, 2009), the City of Santa Maria is not located within a coastal resource boundary. The nearest point in the Coastal Zone is across Highway 1 in Guadalupe, approximately nine miles to the west of the project site.

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4.3.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect on coastal resources because the site is not located within the coastal boundary.

4.3.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project would have no effect on coastal resources because it is not located in the coastal boundary.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project site is located between East Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, within an undeveloped parcel surrounded by suburban development. The Santa Maria River is approximately 500 feet to the northeast. Vegetation at the site is a mix of non-native trees, herbs, and grass. There are 13 mature Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.) trees present within the project area. Other vegetation in the area includes mock orange (*Pittosporum tobira*), tumblweed (*Salsola tragus*), mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), red brome (*Bromus madritensis*), white sweet clover (*Melilotus albus*), and sea fig (*Carpobrotus edulis*). The only native species present in the project area are salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*) and Spanish clover (*Lotus purshianus*).

Prior to conducting the field survey, a query of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was conducted and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) website was examined for information on federally and/or state listed, sensitive and rare plants (Table 1). This information was utilized to develop a list of federally listed species that have the potential to be found in the project area, and correspondence from the US Fish and Wildlife Service was also reviewed to identify any other biological issues for the area. A site visit of the project area was completed on July 13, 2010, by URS, under contract to the City.

On March 13, 2008, the City sent their Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration to the California State Clearinghouse for review. The California Department of Fish and Game was included as part of that submittal and did not write a comment letter for the proposed project.

4.4.1 Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. § 1536 [2008]) requires federal agencies to determine whether projects that they propose to undertake or fund have any potential to affect species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered or their designated critical habitat. To determine the potential for federally listed endangered, threatened, or proposed species or designated critical habitat to occur in the project area, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) list of federally listed species for Santa Barbara

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County was reviewed. The species list contains eight endangered, threatened, and candidate species that have the potential to occur in the project area (Table 1).

**TABLE 1
POTENTIAL SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES WITHIN THE ACTION AREA**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status ¹
Wildlife		
California tiger salamander	<i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT, CE
Western spadefoot toad	<i>Spea hammondi</i>	SSC
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana draytonii</i>	FT, SSC
Burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	SSC
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	SSC
Western pond turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	SSC
Coast horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma coronatum</i>	SSC
Plants		
Dune larkspur	<i>Delphinium parryi</i> ssp. <i>blochmaniae</i>	1B.2

Source: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/mapsanddata.asp>.

¹ Legal Status Definitions:

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Federal)

FE = Federally endangered

FT = Federally threatened

California Department of Fish and Game (State)

CE = Candidate endangered

SE = State Endangered

SSC = California specie of special concern

California Native Plant Society

1B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere

.1 = Seriously threatened in California (high degree/immediacy of threat)

.2 = Fairly threatened in California (moderate degree/immediacy of threat)

During the site visit, no federally listed species, species proposed for Federal listing, or areas of suitable habitat for these species were observed. For all eight species, the project area is either clearly outside the known geographic or elevation range of the species and/or does not contain habitat characteristics known to support the species. The project area was checked for critical habitat using on-line USFWS critical habitat maps and none was found. The north side of the Santa Maria River is designated as critical habitat for steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and southern vernal pool habitat has been documented in the region; however, none of this sensitive habitat is within the project area.

A letter dated May 4, 2010, from USFWS to FEMA (Appendix C) states, “based on our review of the proposed projects and locations, we do not believe that either site could support any listed, proposed, or candidate species. Also, neither site falls within listed or proposed critical habitat.”

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4.4.1.2 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to listed, proposed, or candidate species because no such listed species or their habitat are found at the project site.

4.4.1.3 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Because the project area lacks suitable habitat for any federally protected species, the Proposed Project would not affect any threatened or endangered species, species proposed for listing as threatened or endangered, or designated critical habitat. No federal or state threatened, endangered or rare species, species of special concern, or sensitive plant or wildlife species have been documented or were observed within the project area. In addition, no sensitive habitats or critical habitat were found within the action area. Therefore, the Proposed Project Alternative would have no effect on federal or state listed plant or wildlife species or critical habitat.

4.4.2 Wildlife and Fish

There is the potential for migratory or native birds, their eggs, and nestlings to be present in the trees on the project site. The Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (50 C.F.R. Section 10.13) established Federal prohibition, unless permitted by regulations, to "pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, attempt to take, capture or kill, possess, offer for sale, sell, offer to purchase, purchase, deliver for shipment, ship, cause to be shipped, deliver for transportation, transport, cause to be transported, carry, or cause to be carried by any means whatever, receive for shipment, transportation or carriage, or export, at any time, or in any manner, any migratory bird, included in the terms of this Convention . . . for the protection of migratory birds . . . or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird."

There are no water bodies in the project area, and therefore this is not habitat for fish.

4.4.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to general wildlife or birds in the vicinity of the project area because no construction or other activities would occur. The site would remain vacant, at least temporarily, and the existing eucalyptus trees along the southeastern boundary of the site would remain. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects relative to wildlife or birds would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

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4.4.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project could potentially disturb wildlife in the vicinity of the project though the area is currently developed. Small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects could suffer injury or mortality from construction equipment, vehicle traffic, and all species in the vicinity will experience disturbance from noise and dust and short-term habitat loss from construction activities around the proposed fire station. However, these effects would be minimal, short term and limited to the construction period, which is expected to be 15 months, and during routine maintenance activities.

Grading and construction would result in associated disturbance to vegetation. Thirteen Eucalyptus trees would be removed as part of the Proposed Project. Other vegetation in the area that would be removed include non-native herbs and grass. The City's Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project identified a potential impact regarding the disturbance and/or removal of the existing trees the effect of such removal on migratory birds and birds of prey. The removal of the trees would take place outside of the breeding bird season (February 1 through August 30) to avoid take of birds and their active nests in conformance with the MBTA. If the proposed project activities cannot avoid the breeding bird season, the City will conduct pre-project nest surveys, avoid identified active nests, and provide minimum buffers as determined by a biological monitor.

Therefore the Proposed Project Alternative would have minor short-term direct and indirect effects on wildlife and vegetation and no long-term direct or indirect impacts.

4.4.2.3 Executive Order 13112: Invasive Species

Executive Order 13112 requires Federal agencies to prevent the introduction of invasive species, provide for their control, and minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause. Specifically, EO 13112 requires that Federal agencies not authorize, fund, or implement actions that are likely to introduce or spread invasive species unless the agency has determined that the benefits outweigh the potential harm caused by invasive species and that all feasible and prudent measures to minimize harm have been implemented. According to the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC), five species identified at the site are classified by the California Invasive Plant Council as non-native invasive species (Table 2).

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**TABLE 2
NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES WITH THE ACTION AREA**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status¹
Tumblweed	<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Limited
Mustard	<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	Moderate
Ripgut brome	<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	Moderate
Red brome	<i>Bromus madritensis</i>	High
Sea-fig	<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	High

Source: <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/weedlist.php>

¹Cal-IPC Definitions:

Limited = Species that have minor ecological impacts

Moderate = Species that have substantial, but not severe ecological impacts

High = Species that have severe ecological impacts

The non-native invasive species listed above are typical of disturbed, ruderal landscapes.

4.4.2.4 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would allow the continued growth of non-native species within the project site, because no construction or other activities would reduce or remove the invasive species.

4.4.2.5 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project has limited potential to contribute to the spread of invasive species in the project area. Any disruption of soils and existing vegetation would either be stabilized through paving and construction or by landscaping. City Code requires review of landscaping plans by the Community Development Department, and contains specific requirements for landscaping design including non-invasive species, weed-free erosion control and revegetation materials. Therefore, the potential for the Proposed Project to contribute to the spread of invasive species is minimal, and the Proposed Project would comply with EO 13112.

Therefore, the Proposed Project Alternative would have negligible short-term direct and indirect effects to invasive species.

4.5 HISTORIC PROPERTIES

4.5.1 Historic Properties

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. § 470f [2008]) requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings prior to the approval of the expenditure of federal funds.

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On August 8, 2010, a URS archaeologist conducted a pedestrian survey of the project area and no cultural resources, including prehistoric sites, historic sites, or historic structures, were observed.

4.5.1.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to historic properties because there are no known historic properties or other important cultural resources present at the project site.

4.5.1.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Based on the absence of cultural resources identified at the project site, FEMA determined that the Proposed Project will have no affect to historic properties. On April 19, 2010, FEMA informed the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) of its determination that the Proposed Project would not affect historic properties (Appendix C). In a letter dated May 17, 2010, the OHP concurred with FEMA's finding.

Therefore Proposed Project Alternative would have no effect on historic properties because none are located in the project area.

4.5.2 American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Native Alaskan Cultural/Religious Sites

Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires consultation with any Indian Tribe that may attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties. On April 19, 2010, FEMA informed the Chumash Indians (Santa Ynez Band) of the project and requested input regarding the proposal (Appendix C). FEMA did not receive a response.

4.5.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to Native American culturally sensitive areas because there are no Native American materials or other culturally significant resources have been identified.

4.5.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project Alternative would have no effect on Native American culturally sensitive areas because there are none have been identified in the project area.

4.6 SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

4.6.1 Environmental Justice

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

EO 12898, Environmental Justice, requires Federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations that result from their programs, policies, or activities. EO 12898 also tasks Federal agencies with ensuring that public notifications regarding environmental issues are concise, understandable, and readily accessible.

According to the US Census Bureau (2010), in 2008 the City had a total population of 87,000. The median age was 28.9 years, with 33 percent of the population reported less than 18 years and 10 percent reported at 65 years and older. For people reporting one race alone, 78 percent were White; 2 percent were Black or African American; less than 0.5 percent were American Indian and Alaska Native; 5 percent were Asian; less than 0.5 percent were Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 11 percent were some other race. Three percent reported two or more races. Sixty-seven percent of the people in the City self-reported as Hispanic¹. Twenty-six percent of the people in Santa Maria City were White, non-Hispanic.

According to the US Census Bureau, the median income of households in Santa Maria City was \$48,631 in 2008. Eighteen percent of people were in poverty. Twenty-two percent of related children under 18 were reported below the poverty level, compared with 8 percent of people 65 years old and over. Fifteen percent of all families and 32 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

The proposed project site is located adjacent to a retirement community and in a typical suburban area within the City that is primarily occupied by low and moderate income individuals.

4.6.1.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no immediate effect to minority or low-income populations because no construction or other activities would occur. Fire and emergency response times for the surrounding neighborhoods would gradually increase under this

¹ People of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

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alternative, and in that respect it would have an adverse effect on all residents in this portion of the City.

4.6.1.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Development of the project would result in short-term disruption, noise, and dust generation that is typical of any new construction. These effects would be most noticeable for the residents in the immediate project vicinity, including people living in the Merrill Gardens retirement community. Standard construction practices and other conditions applied to the project will serve to avoid or minimize these effects, as discussed in Sections 4.1.2 (Air Quality), 4.2.1 (Water Quality), 4.6.2 (Noise), and 4.6.3 (Traffic) and they would not result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. The Proposed Project Alternative would therefore comply with Title VI and EO 12898. The project has been publicized to surrounding residents through the City-prepared Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, which was circulated for public review, and through two public hearings were held in conjunction with the General Plan Amendment and rezoning for the project. No comments, either written or verbal, were received from any residents in the area.

The construction of the Proposed Project would be beneficial to all residents in the project vicinity especially the residents of the Merrill Gardens retirement community. From September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010, Fire Station No. 3 responded to 3,523 calls for service and 390 of those calls (11%) were to Merrill Gardens (Santa Maria Fire Department, 2010). The new fire station would improve capacity and emergency response times to Merrill Gardens as well as to the surrounding neighborhoods.

4.6.2 Noise

Noise-sensitive receptors are located in areas associated with indoor and outdoor activities that may be subject to substantial interference from noise. These areas often include residential dwellings, hotels, hospitals, nursing homes, educational facilities, libraries, and offices. The noise-sensitive land uses in or near the proposed project area include Merrill Gardens and adjacent residential dwellings.

The City of Santa Maria Noise Ordinance is in Chapter 5-5 of the City Code. While these regulations do not apply to the activities of federal, state, or local governments (Section 5-5.11) they do provide local guidance regarding acceptable noise levels and activities.

4.6.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to noise levels because no construction or other activities would occur. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential

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noise effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.6.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Proposed Project would result in temporary increases in noise levels, which would be limited to the duration of construction activities, and would include the use of heavy machinery and backup alarms and similar warning devices associated with construction. The residents in the immediate vicinity of the project area in the area could be adversely affected by noise. The City will be responsible for implementing the following measures to reduce these short-term effects from noise levels to the extent practicable:

- Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the City will advertise and sponsor a community meeting with the adjacent residents and administrators of Merrill Gardens and Casa del Rio Mobile Estates.
- The City will post public notices that will provide advanced notification of construction on-site and on its website before construction.
- All mobile or fixed noise-producing construction equipment that is regulated for noise output by a Federal, State, or local agency would comply with such regulation.
- Noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, will be used for safety purposes only.
- Consistent with the regulations in the City Noise Ordinance, construction will be limited to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekends.

In the long term, noise levels could increase in the project vicinity due to the presence of emergency vehicles housed at the fire station. The noise sources would include exhaust and mechanical noise from large vehicles and periodic use of sirens which would be used as required during emergency response.. The increase in noise levels would be periodic and localized and would involve sounds that are typical and expected in urban and suburban areas. The proposed project is not expected to substantially increase average noise levels in the vicinity, which are dominated by traffic on local roadways.

The Proposed Project Alternative would therefore result in moderate short-term noise effects that can be reduced by following the City's regulations regarding construction noise, and minimal long-term periodic increases in noise levels.

4.6.3 Traffic

The proposed fire station site is bound by East Donovan Road to the north, Suey Crossing Road to the east, and the Merrill Gardens development to the south and west. East Donovan

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Road is classified as an existing secondary arterial and Suey Crossing Road is a two-lane road not classified in the City of Santa Maria General Plan – Circulation Plan. The existing vacant land at the project site generates little or no traffic.

4.6.3.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect on traffic because no construction or other activities would occur. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential traffic effects and measures to avoid or minimize those effects would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.6.3.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The mobilization of construction vehicles and equipment to the proposed fire station site could temporarily slow traffic along East Donovan Road; however, detours on this road are not anticipated to be needed. The City will provide advanced notification, signs, flagpersons, and other measures as applicable to minimize disruption to residents or motorists traversing the area during construction. Traffic levels along East Donovan Road could increase during emergencies. The City’s Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration determined that the proposed project would not substantially increase traffic. The proposed project would add an average of 30 trips per 24 hours and possibly three trips during peak hours. East Donovan Road is capable of handling the minor long-term increase of traffic from employees and emergency vehicles represented by the proposed project.

Therefore, the Proposed Project Alternative would have negligible short and long term effects on traffic.

4.6.4 Public Service and Utilities

The project site is located within an area zoned for residential use. The surrounding land is currently developed. All utilities (electric, telephone, water, natural gas, and sewer) run along East Donovan Road.

4.6.4.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect to public service and utilities because no construction or other activities would occur. Although there would be no immediate change in the demand for public services under the No Action alternative, emergency response times in the northeast area of the City are likely to increase with further population growth and development. If any other improvements were to be pursued in the future, consistent with the public facility designation and zoning on the property, then potential effects on public

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services and utilities, and measures to avoid or minimize those effects, would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.6.4.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

All necessary public services and utilities are located in the immediate project area. Trenching and construction activities would include connections to water, sewer, and other utility lines, all of which have adequate capacity to serve the project. The Proposed Project Alternative would have no adverse effect to public service and utilities, and would improve the City's fire and emergency response capability in the area.

4.6.5 Public Health and Safety

Safety and security issues considered include the health and safety of the area residents and the public at large and the protection of personnel potentially involved in activities related to the proposed construction and operation of the new fire station. See Section 4.6.3 for traffic issues associated with construction and Section 4.6.6 for a discussion of hazardous materials.

4.6.5.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no immediate effect to public health and safety because no construction or other activities would occur. As noted in the section above, fire and emergency response times would gradually increase in the surrounding neighborhoods under this alternative. If any other public facility improvements were to be pursued in the future, then potential effects on public health and safety, and measures to avoid or minimize those effects, would be evaluated as part of the review for any such future improvements.

4.6.5.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

The Northeast Fire Station would enhance the City's ability to meet response time goals and calls for service in the immediate area and within the region through mutual aid agreements with Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties and Los Padres National Forest. In this respect, the Proposed Project Alternative would have a positive effect on public health and safety.

4.6.6 Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are defined as any solid, liquid, contained gaseous or semi-solid waste, or any combination of wastes that pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health and the environment. Hazardous materials are primarily generated by industries, hospitals, research facilities, and the government. Improper management and disposal of hazardous substances can lead to pollution of ground water or other drinking water supplies and the contamination of surface water and soil. The primary federal regulations on the

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management and disposal of hazardous substances are the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). These federal regulations are implemented by a variety of state laws and regulations in California. For the proposed Northeast Fire Station site, potential hazards may be in the form of physical or chemical materials used during construction and day to day operation of the fire station.

In 2004, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was performed to determine whether or previous land use at or adjacent to the project site may have involved, or resulted in the use, storage, disposal, and/or release of hazardous substances. The ESA was completed consistent with the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments (E-1527-00). The ESA did not identify any recognized environmental conditions at the site and did not recommend any further action to assess environmental conditions at the site (Padre, 2004).

4.6.6.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no effect relative to the potential presence of hazardous materials because no construction or other activities would occur and because there is no evidence of the presence of hazardous wastes or materials at the project site. If any other public facility improvements were to be pursued in the future, then potential effects of any hazardous materials that might be associated with such use would be evaluated as part of the review for that action.

4.6.6.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Project

Like any construction project, grading and building the new fire station would involve the use of fuels, solvents, and other hazardous materials on-site. During construction, all fuel and other potential hazardous materials will be stored within appropriate containers.

It is assumed that during regular operations at the fire station there is the potential for hazardous materials and wastes to be generated. Examples include motor oil, diesel, hydraulic fluid, engine coolant, brake fluids, and other engine maintenance related fluids. All materials will be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

The fire station would have a 1,000 gallon diesel aboveground storage tank to fuel equipment. It would be located behind the fire station on typical slab on grade foundation and secured with fencing. It would be operated under applicable local, state and federal regulations.

The Proposed Project Alternative would have negligible short- and long-term effects relative to hazardous materials.

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4.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQ defines a cumulative impact as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions” (40 CFR § 1508.7). Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions were identified based on information obtained from the City, Santa Barbara County, and FEMA.

Under the No Action Alternative, no activities would occur beyond the minimal visits or activities associated with the vacant land at the project site. For the immediate future, cumulative effects would be completely avoided with this alternative; but the existing fire station would remain inadequate to meet the standard outlined in NFPA 1710 to respond to 90 percent of calls for service within five minutes. The implementation of this alternative would not result in direct or indirect effects to social, cultural, or natural resources. The No Action Alternative would therefore not contribute construction-related effects to cumulative impacts on any resources.

The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of the Northeast Fire Station and providing emergency services to the City of Santa Maria. As discussed in Sections 4.0 to 4.6, the effects of the proposed action would be minor, with a beneficial reduction in response times to the northeastern neighborhoods of the City in conjunction with the relocation of the City’s Fire Station No. 3 to a location chosen to serve the northwest portion of the City.

During construction, the potential effects of the project that might act in combination with similar effects from other projects would be those related to discharges or emissions from the project that might affect water and air quality or noise. To the extent any construction related effects would occur relative to these issues, there are regulations or existing programs that serve to avoid and minimize those effects. The effects of minor disruptions during construction that might affect local traffic would be minimized through appropriate construction noticing and controls. The relocation of the City’s Northwest Fire Station (Fire Station No. 3) to a site adjacent to Preisker Park would involve construction about two miles to the northwest from the proposed Northeast Fire Station (see Figure 1). At this distance cumulative effects associated with discharges or noise from construction activities would not occur. According to the City of Santa Maria Community Development Department, there are no major development or construction projects planned as of July 1, 2010, within the general vicinity of the project where similar or additive environmental effects might be expected. Thus, substantial additional contributions towards the environmental effects described above are not anticipated, and the cumulative effect of the project in combination with other projects is anticipated to remain less than substantial.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

The minor effects on bird habitat or other biological resources would also be avoided or minimized through a combination of construction scheduling, pre-construction surveys, and the provision of adequate buffer areas to protect nesting birds during construction. Avoiding such impacts on an individual project basis, in conjunction with the maintenance of such habitat throughout the City, minimizes the cumulative effects of periodic construction projects on bird habitat.

In summary, any adverse cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project and other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would be avoided or minimized. In conjunction with the Northwest Fire Station (relocation of Fire Station No. 3), the Proposed Project could decrease emergency response times and provide better emergency services to those in the northeast area of the City, as well as to areas of unincorporated Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and the Los Padres National Forest.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would provide additional emergency capacity and decreased response times. The reduced risk and damage from fires in the area, when considered together with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would cumulatively result in increased protection of property, resources, and life from fires.

4.8 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Sections 4.1 through 4.6 above discuss the potential environmental effects of the project and, where appropriate, measures that are anticipated to avoid or minimize these effects such that no significant environmental impacts would occur. Table 3 provides a summary of these discussions and identifies the mitigation measures incorporated into the project.

4.9 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in short-term uses of and short- and long-term effects on the environment, as documented in Sections 4.1 to 4.6. In most respects, the effects would not be significant because of the disturbed nature of the site and the fact that it contains few natural resources. For those topics or issues where the fire station construction may have an adverse environmental effect, measures are identified to avoid or minimize those effects or uses of the environment. However, these uses of the environment would be balanced by the improved fire and emergency response capabilities that the Proposed Action would provide. The new facilities would enhance the long-term productivity by preventing loss to life and property. The limited resources on the property include trees that provide bird habitat, and other non-native vegetation. Implementation of any of the alternatives would not preclude or alter the range of potential uses of the resources in the project vicinity.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

4.10 IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

For the purposes of this document, irreversible commitment of resources is interpreted to mean that once resources are committed, the production or use of those resources would be lost for other purposes throughout the life of the alternative being implemented. An irretrievable commitment of resources defines those resources that are used, consumed, destroyed, or degraded during the life of the alternative that could not be retrieved or replaced during or after the life of the alternative.

The No Action Alternative would not directly require the commitment of human or fiscal resources. However, the Santa Maria Fire Department would continue to not meet the standard outlined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 to respond to 90 percent of calls for service within five minutes.

The Proposed Action would require the commitment of human and fiscal resources. The additional expenditure of labor required for this alternative would predominately occur during construction. However, ongoing maintenance and associated repairs would continue throughout the life of the alternative. Funding for the Proposed Action would not be available for other uses and would therefore be irretrievable.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would also require the commitment of natural resources. Natural resources that would be committed to the project as a result of this alternative include land, water, and vegetation. The use of the land is consistent with City of Santa Maria General Plan and zoning requirements. The Proposed Action would also require a commitment of water resources for construction purposes and periodic maintenance activities. Vegetation disturbed for construction would be restored based on City requirements.

Non-renewable and irretrievable fossil fuels and construction materials (e.g., cement, steel, water, petroleum, energy) would be required. Labor and materials are also irretrievably committed during the fabrication, preparation, and distribution of construction materials and equipment. However, the Proposed Action would require only a small amount of these materials, the materials are abundant, and use would not result in a measurable impact to the availability of these resources.

Although the implementation of the Proposed Action would result in the commitment of a relatively small amount of resources as described above, it would result in a decreased risk of loss to critical and non-critical facilities in the City.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENT/RESOURCE AREAS
AND EFFECTS FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Resource Area	Effect	Mitigation/BMPs
Geology and Soils	The proposed project would disturb the shallow soils and surface geology during site preparation work. Exposed soils could be subject to erosion. Effects to geology and soils would be minor and temporary in nature.	Erosion control and stormwater BMPs will be required during construction.
Air Quality	Air emissions would likely occur during construction of the proposed project. Such emissions would likely have minor and temporary effects on air quality in proximity to the site during equipment use (vehicle exhaust) and soil grading activities (fugitive dust).	The City's contractor will be required to minimize air pollution through proper maintenance of equipment and suppressing dust during construction.
Climate Change	Construction activities associated with the building of the fire station would result in minimal short-term emissions of vehicle exhaust from construction equipment and minimal long-term emissions from fire department vehicles.	The City's contractor will use well-maintained and properly tuned construction equipment and vehicles, and minimize the idling time of construction vehicles. The Fire Department will maintain equipment and vehicles.
Water Quality	The proposed project could cause short-term erosion and sediment releases during construction that could affect water quality.	The City will apply for a general stormwater permit and implement pollution prevention measures during construction.
Wetlands Executive Order 11990: Protection of Wetlands	No wetlands are present at the project site.	Not applicable.
Floodplains Executive Order 11988: Floodplain Management	The proposed project is located outside the 500 year floodplain.	Not applicable.
Coastal Resources	The proposed project is not located within the coastal boundary.	Not applicable.
Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat	The proposed project would have no effect on threatened and endangered species.	Not applicable.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENT/RESOURCE AREAS
AND EFFECTS FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Resource Area	Effect	Mitigation/BMPs
Wildlife and Fish	The proposed project could potentially disturb wildlife in the vicinity of the project. There are no water bodies in the project area that are habitat for fish.	Disturbance or removal of the trees on-site will take place outside of the breeding bird season (February 1–August 30) to avoid take of birds and their active nests. If the project activities cannot avoid the breeding bird season, the City will conduct pre-project nesting surveys, avoid any identified active nests, and provide minimum buffers as determined by a biological monitor.
Executive Order 13112: Invasive Species	Emergency vehicles and personnel could potentially transport invasive species into the project area or move invasive species seed off-site. However, such transport, would only occur intermittently, if at all, and in emergency situations. The effects would be negligible.	City Code requires review of landscaping plans by the Community Development Department, and contains specific requirements for landscaping design including non-invasive species, weed-free erosion control and revegetation materials.
Historic Properties	The OHP concurred with FEMA's determination that the proposed project would have no effect on properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places.	Not applicable.
American Indian Religious Sites	Coordination with Native American individuals/organizations did not identify any culturally sensitive resources in the area.	Not applicable.
Environmental Justice	As the new fire station would potentially benefit all citizens equally, the proposed alternative would not have an adverse effect on minority or low-income populations.	Not applicable.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENT/RESOURCE AREAS
AND EFFECTS FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Resource Area	Effect	Mitigation/BMPs
Noise	The proposed project would result in temporary increases in noise levels, during construction activities due to the use of heavy machinery. In the long term, noise levels could increase in the project vicinity due to the presence of emergency vehicles housed at the fire station..	The City will advertise and sponsor a community meeting prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The City will post public notices to provide advance notification of construction on-site and on its website before construction. All mobile or fixed noise-producing construction equipment that is regulated for noise output by a Federal, State, or local agency will comply with such regulation. Construction will be limited to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekends. Sirens would be used as required during emergency response.
Traffic	The mobilization of construction vehicles and equipment to the fire station could slow traffic along East Donovan Road. Traffic levels along East Donovan Road would increase slightly from employee and emergency vehicles, but would remain well within the capacity of the roadway and would not cause a significant effect.	Appropriate notices and traffic control would be provided during construction.
Public Services	The new fire station would provide additional public safety and protection.	Not applicable.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENT/RESOURCE AREAS
AND EFFECTS FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Resource Area	Effect	Mitigation/BMPs
Hazardous Materials	<p>The fire station would also involve the use of fuels, solvents, and other hazardous materials on-site, primarily during construction.</p> <p>The fire station will have a 1,000 gallon diesel aboveground storage tank to fuel equipment.</p>	<p>All potential hazardous materials will be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.</p> <p>The aboveground storage tank to fuel equipment will be located behind the fire station on typical slab on grade foundation and secured with fencing. The aboveground storage tank will be installed and operated under applicable local, state and federal regulations.</p>

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**SECTION 5.0
AGENCY COORDINATION, PUBLIC
INVOLVEMENT, AND PERMITS**

FEMA is the lead Federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance process for this proposed project. The lead Federal agency is responsible for expediting the preparation and review of NEPA documents and in meeting the spirit and intent of NEPA while complying with all CEQ and Agency regulations.

On April 16, 2008, the Planning Commission of the City of Santa Maria conducted a public hearing on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration of environmental impact that had been prepared for the proposed project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. A Public Notice for the meeting was published in the *Santa Maria Times* on March 7, 2008. In addition, the notice was posted on the Public Bulletin Boards at the Santa Maria City Hall and Santa Maria Public Library. The minutes from that meeting are available on the City of Santa Maria (April 16, 2008) Community Development website (<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/207.shtml>). During the public comment period of the meeting, no one present wished to speak about the project.

On May 20, 2008, the City Council of the City of Santa Maria conducted a public hearing on the Negative Declaration of environmental impact that had been prepared for the proposed project. A Public Notice for the meeting was published in the *Santa Maria Times* on May 9, 2008. In addition, the notice was posted on the Public Bulletin Boards at the Santa Maria City Hall and Santa Maria Public Library. The minutes from that meeting are available on the City of Santa Maria (May 9, 2008) City Clerk website (<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/3009.shtml>). If the City receives comments before the staff report is prepared, the comments are addressed in the staff report. If comments are received after the staff report has been printed, but not delivered, then the letters are included with the agenda packets and addressed at the public hearing. There were no letters from the public included in the agenda packets. During the public comment period of the meeting, no one present wished to speak about the project.

FEMA and the City will circulate the Draft EA for a 15-day public comment period. The public will be notified of the availability of the Draft EA through the publication of a public notice in the *Santa Maria Times* and the FEMA website. During the public comment period, FEMA will accept written comments on the Draft EA; written comments should be addressed to the FEMA Region IX Environmental Office, 1111 Broadway, Suite 1200, Oakland, California 94607 or to fema-rix-ehp-documents@dhs.gov. At the end of the public comment period, FEMA will review the comments and consider them in the decision-making process before notifying the public of its final determination.

**SECTION 6.0
LIST OF PREPARERS**

6.1 FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, REGION IX

- Alessandro Amaglio, Environmental Officer
- Donna M. Meyer, Deputy Environmental and Historic Preservation Officer

6.2 CITY OF SANTA MARIA

- David Beas, P.E., Principal Civil Engineer
- Bill Shipsey, Planner III
- Brian R. Smith, AICP, Advance Planner

6.3 URS CORPORATION

- Robert Urban, Senior Project Manager
- John Larson, Senior Environmental Planner
- David Kisner, Senior Biologist
- Kelly Kephart, Biologist
- Brent Leftwich, Senior Archaeologist
- Brendan Murphy, Senior Scientist
- Chris Munson, GIS Specialist

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PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**SECTION 7.0
REFERENCES**

- California Coastal Commission. July 1, 2009. Local Coastal Program Status Maps, Central Coast Area. California Coastal Commission, San Francisco, CA. Available August 2010 at: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/lcps.html>.
- City of Santa Maria. 2010. Emergency Response Statistics. Prepared by the City of Santa Maria Fire Department, Santa Maria, CA. Available August 2010 at: <http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40464.shtml>.
- City of Santa Maria. 2008. Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. Included as Attachment 4 of the May 20, 2008, City Council Agenda Report.
- City of Santa Maria. May 20, 2008. Minutes of Regular Meeting of the City Council. General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for the City of Santa Maria Fire Station No. 3 [since changed to 5] Located at 1670 East Donovan Road. City of Santa Maria, City Clerk, Santa Maria, CA. Obtained September 2010 at: http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/minutes/CityCouncil-20080520_rm.pdf.
- City of Santa Maria. April 16, 2008. Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Santa Maria Planning Commission. Item 6 – General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for the City of Santa Maria Fire Station No. 3 [since changed to 5] Located at 1670 East Donovan Road, GPZ-2007-005, E-2007-084. Community Development Department, City of Santa Maria, Santa Maria, CA. Obtained September 2010 at: <http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/minutes/PlanningCommission-20080416.pdf>.
- City of Santa Maria. March 2000. Standards of Cover Study. Prepared by the City of Santa Maria Fire Department, Santa Maria, CA. Available August 2010 at: <http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40464.shtml>.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency. September 2005. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Santa Barbara County, California and Incorporated Areas. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, D.C. Downloaded on April 30, 2010 from <http://msc.fema.gov/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/FemaWelcomeView?storeId=10001&catalogId=10001&langId=-1>.
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**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

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Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. 2009. Santa Barbara County Attainment/Nonattainment Classification Summary, 2009. Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Santa Barbara, CA. Obtained September 2010 at: <http://www.sbcapcd.org/sbc/attainment.htm>.

Santa Maria Fire Department, 2010. Telephone conversation regarding Fire Station No. 3 response statistics between B. Murphy (URS) and Tracy Aris (Santa Maria Fire Department) on September 22, 2010.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. Santa Maria city, California – Population and Housing Narrative Profile: 2006-2008. From 2006–2008 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. Generated August 2010 using American FactFinder, http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/NPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US0669196&-qr_name=ACS_2008_3YR_G00_NP01&-ds_name=&-redoLog=false.

Woodring, W. P. and M. N. Bramlette. 1950. Geology and Paleontology of the Santa Maria District, California. Geological Survey Professional Paper 222, California Geological Survey, Sacramento, CA.

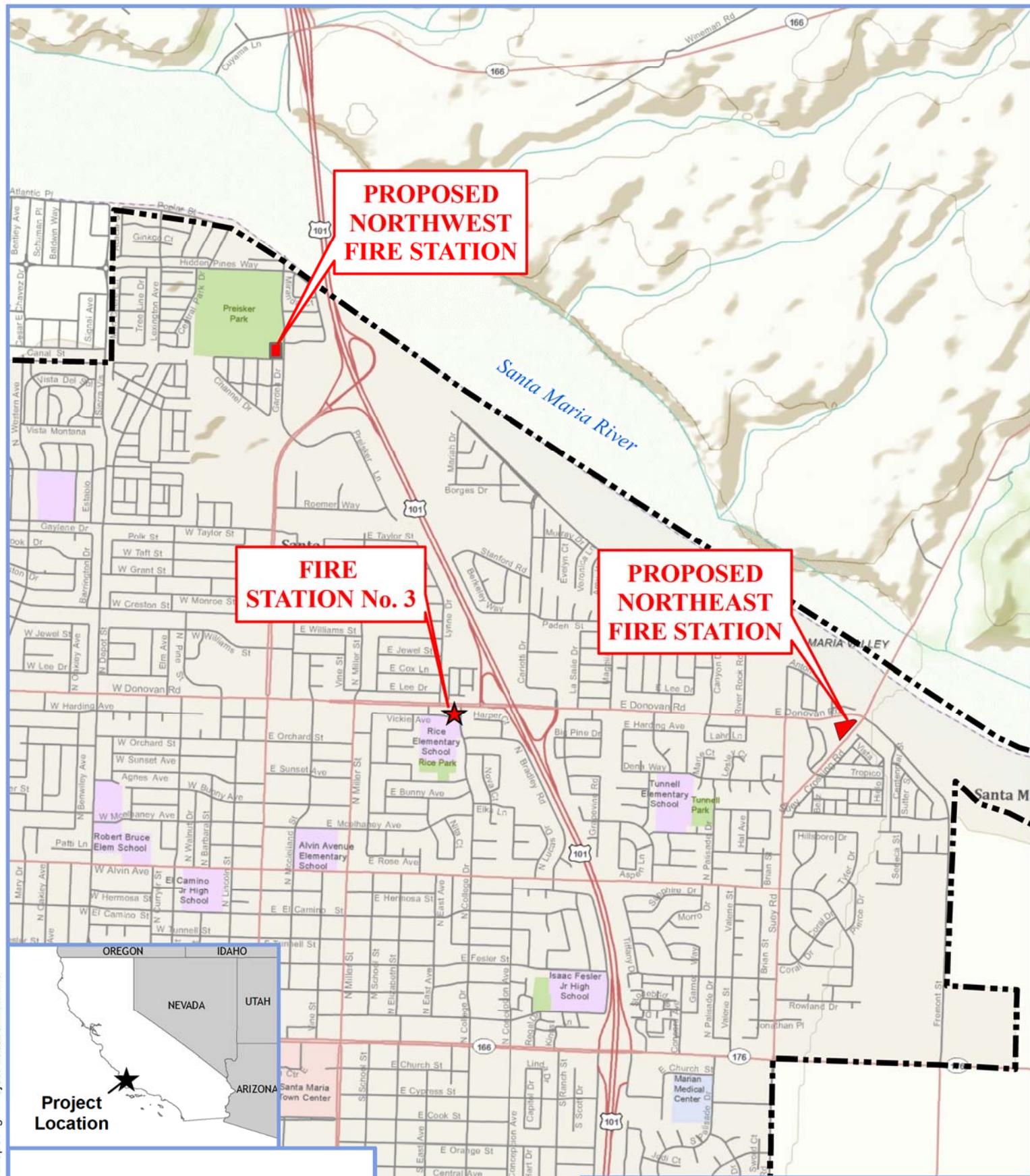
**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**APPENDIX A
FIGURES**

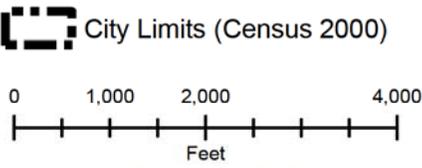
**PROPOSED
NORTHWEST
FIRE STATION**

**FIRE
STATION No. 3**

**PROPOSED
NORTHEAST
FIRE STATION**



Legend



Source: USGS, FAO, NPS, EPA, ESRI, DeLorme, TANA, other suppliers



Figure 1

Project Location



City of Santa Maria
Northeast Fire Station
EMW-2009-FC-01734

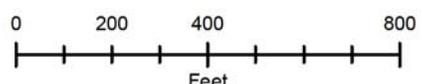


**PROPOSED
NORTHEAST
FIRE STATION**

**MERRILL
GARDENS**

Legend

 Project Area



Source: NAIP Aerial Mosaic 2009

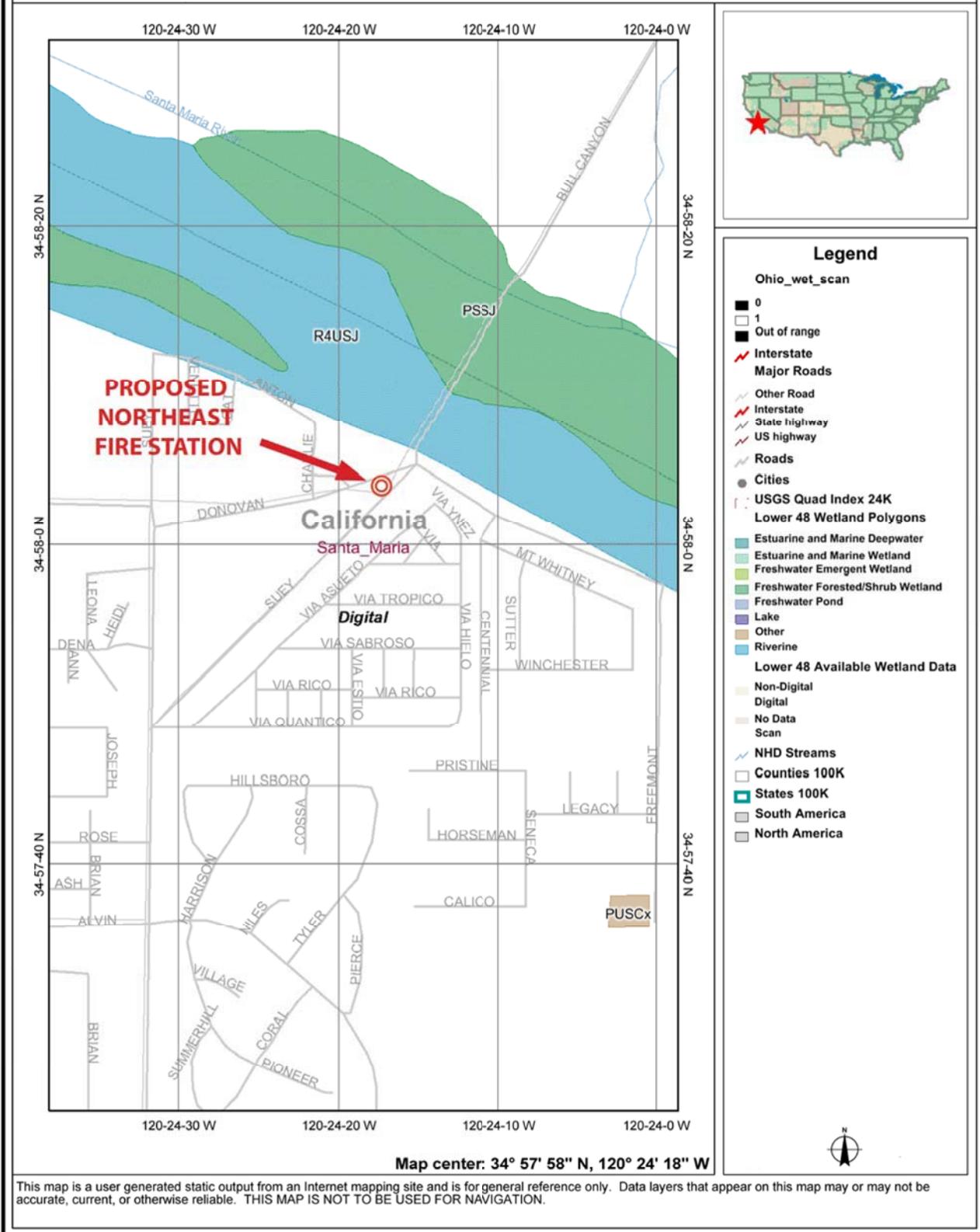
Figure 2

Aerial Overview



*City of Santa Maria
Northeast Fire Station
EMW-2009-FC-01734*

City of Santa Maria - Northeast Fire Station



Legend

- Ohio_wet_scan**
- 0
 - 1
 - Out of range
- Interstate**
- Major Roads**
- Other Road
 - Interstate
 - State highway
 - US highway
 - Roads
- Cities**
- USGS Quad Index 24K
- Lower 48 Wetland Polygons**
- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
 - Estuarine and Marine Wetland
 - Freshwater Emergent Wetland
 - Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
 - Freshwater Pond
 - Lake
 - Other
 - Riverine
- Lower 48 Available Wetland Data**
- Non-Digital
 - Digital
 - No Data
 - Scan
- NHD Streams**
- Counties 100K**
- States 100K**
- South America**
- North America**

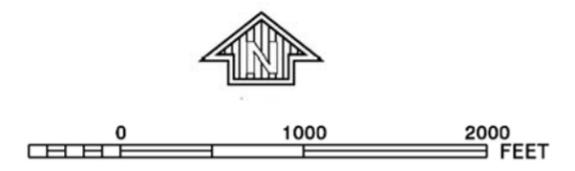
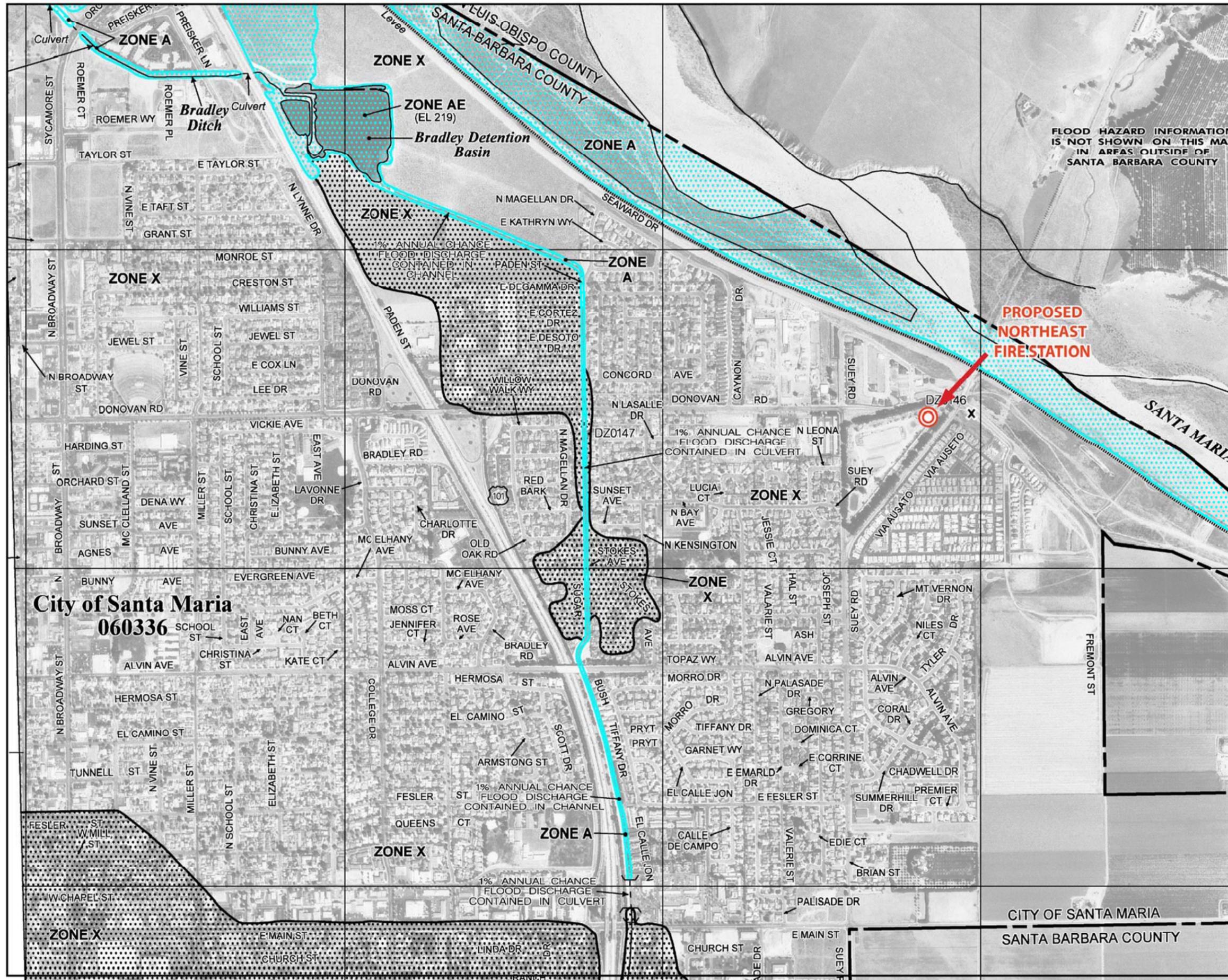


Figure 4

National Wetland Inventory Map



City of Santa Maria
Northeast Fire Station
EMW-2009-FC-01734



FLOOD HAZARD INFORMATION IS NOT SHOWN ON THIS MAP IN AREAS OUTSIDE OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

PANEL 0185F

FIRM
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA
AND INCORPORATED AREAS

PANEL 185 OF 1835
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT)

CONTAINS:

COMMUNITY	NUMBER	PANEL	SUFFIX
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY	060331	0185	F
SANTA MARIA, CITY OF	060336	0185	F

Notice to User: The Map Number shown below should be used when placing map orders; the Community Number shown above should be used on insurance applications for the subject community.

MAP NUMBER
06083C0185F
EFFECTIVE DATE
SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

Federal Emergency Management Agency

This is an official copy of a portion of the above referenced flood map. It was extracted using F-MIT On-Line. This map does not reflect changes or amendments which may have been made subsequent to the date on the title block. For the latest product information about National Flood Insurance Program flood maps check the FEMA Flood Map Store at www.msc.fema.gov

Figure 5. FEMA Flood Insurance Map



City of Santa Maria
Northeast Fire Station
EMW-2009-FC-01734

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**APPENDIX B
PHOTOGRAPHS**

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

Photograph #1, Viewing Angle: North, East Donovan Road



Photograph #2, Viewing Angle: East, Suey Crossing Road



**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

Photograph #3, Viewing Angle: South-West, Merrill Gardens Development



Photograph #4, Viewing Angle: South-West, from Suey Crossing perspective



**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED NORTHEAST FIRE STATION, SANTA MARIA, CA**

**APPENDIX C
AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE**



FEMA

April 16, 2010

Ms. Diane Noda
Field Supervisor
US Fish & Wildlife Service
Ventura Ecological Field Service Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

RE: EMW-2009-FC-01734 (Station's 3 & 5)
Santa Maria Fire Department

Dear Ms. Noda:

The Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is considering an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG SCG) application to the Santa Maria Fire Department (Grantee). The department wants to build two new fire stations in their city. Fire station number three (T10N R34W, Section 12) is going to be located at Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, Santa Maria, CA 93454. Station number five (T11N R34, Section 34) is going to be located at 2305 N Preisker Lane, Santa Maria, CA 93458. The buildings are going to be identical in style, their footprints will be 6,668 SFT and will have living space, storage space, and fire engine bays. The lots differ in size slightly, station three will have a lot size of 59,241.6 SFT and station five will have a lot size of 52,272 SFT. Both sites are flat and are previously disturbed. Site number three is an unused graded lot with ornamental eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus cinerea*). Site number five is located in Preisker Park and also has ornamental eucalyptus with ornamental grasses as well. The total amount of disturbance by grading will be 88,862.4 SFT. Elevation on site number three is about 220ft and site number five is about 250ft. The Grantee did an initial environmental study (IES) on both sites and determined that neither site was at risk for the take or incidental take of any endangered or threatened species, and would not modify any critical habitats. Further, in viewing the FWS Critical Habitat for Threatened & Endangered Species on your website it was determined that there is no risk. There is a steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) critical habitat close to both sites (1/2 to 1 mile away), but there is protection between each site and the habitat, thus no take or modification would occur. In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. §1531 et seq. (1973)), FEMA has made a finding that the Grantee's proposed construction of the two fire stations will have no effect on Federally listed endangered or threatened species or modify any critical habitat.

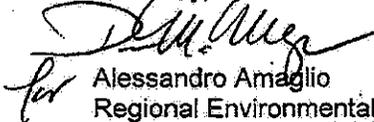
The Grantee is aware of the need to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918. This was presented in the IES for site five because of the necessity to remove 20 eucalyptus trees. The Grantee consulted with the state Department of Fish and Game which concluded that the removal had potential to impact migratory birds (50 C.F.R Section 10.13).

Ms. Diane Noda
April 16, 2010
Page 2

The mitigation measures recommended by Cal DF&G were to cut the trees down outside of raptor breeding season (Feb 1- Aug 30) to avoid take, which would also include disturbances causing nest abandonment. Also, pre-project nest surveys should be conducted and active nests should be avoided by establishing a buffer to be determined by a biological monitor. These mitigation measures were confirmed to be applied in the IES. Site three has a similar issue with 13 eucalyptus trees to be removed. The IES does not mention any mitigation measures to account for the MBTA, but since the projects are the same Grantee and they are aware of the MBTA they have been advised to contact you if there are issues.

We request your concurrence with our finding and anticipate a response within 30 days of receipt of this letter or we will assume concurrence with our findings and approve grant funding. If you need any further information please contact Donna M. Meyer, Deputy Regional Environmental Officer at (510) 627-7728 or donna.meyer@dhs.gov.

Sincerely,


for Alessandro Amaglio
Regional Environmental Officer

Enclosures:

- Google Earth maps of station sites three and five
- Map of the sites from FWS Critical Habitat for Threatened & Endangered Species



FEMA

April 19, 2010

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296

RE: EMW-2009-FC-01734 (Station 3 & 5)

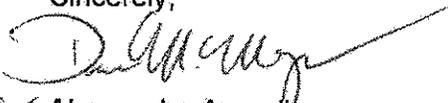
Dear Mr. Donaldson,

The Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is considering an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG SCG) application to the Santa Maria Fire Department (Grantee). The department wants to build two new fire stations in their city. Fire station number three (T10N, R34W, Section 12) is going to be located at Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, Santa Maria, CA 93454. Station number five (T11N, R34, Section 34) is going to be located at 2305 N Preisker Ln, Santa Maria, CA 93458. The buildings are going to be identical in style, their footprints will be 6,668 SFT and will have living space, storage space, and fire engine bays. The lots differ in size slightly, station three will have a lot size of 59,241.6 SFT and station five will have a lot size of 52,272 SFT. They will provide more emergency coverage to the city and allow the department to respond to calls at a quicker interval. In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.4(a)(1), FEMA has identified the Areas of Potential Effect (APE) to be the building footprints of the buildings on the sites, which are both located on previously disturbed areas (total 13,336 SFT).

FEMA has made a finding that there are no historical properties present on either of the sites according to CFR 36 Part 800.4(d)(1). We have enclosed documentation in support of our finding in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.11(d).

If you have any questions or require additional information please do not hesitate to contact Donna M. Meyer, Deputy Regional Environmental and Historic Preservation Officer at (510) 627-7728.

Sincerely,



for Alessandro Amaglio
Regional Environmental Officer

Enclosures



FEMA

April 19, 2010

Chairman Vincent Armenta
Santa Ynez Band, Chumash Indians
P.O. Box 517
Santa Ynez, CA 93460

RE: EMW-2009-FC-01734

Dear Chairman Armenta:

Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended requires the Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to consult with any Indian Tribe that may attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by FEMA's undertaking. FEMA is considering an America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant application to the Santa Maria Fire Department for two fire stations. The locations are specified below:

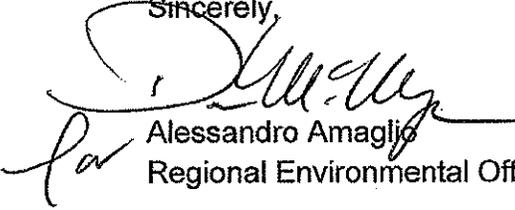
- Fire station number three (T10N, R34W, Section 12) is going to be located at Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, Santa Maria, CA 93454.
- Station number five (T11N, R34, Section 34) is going to be located at 2305 N Preisker Ln, Santa Maria, CA 93458.

The buildings are going to be identical in style, their footprints will be 6,668 SFT and will have living space, storage space, and fire engine bays. The lots differ in size slightly, station three will have a lot size of 59,241.6 SFT and station five will have a lot size of 52,272 SFT. The stations will provide further coverage to the community and allow emergency response to occur at a quicker interval.

FEMA has come to the conclusion that there will be no direct impacts on historic properties in the area, however we respectfully request your input regarding the proposals, any comments regarding historic properties, advise us on the identification and evaluation of any historic properties, including those of traditional religious and cultural importance, articulate your views of the Grantee's proposal and FEMA's Undertaking of providing grant assistance on such historic properties, and to participate in the resolution of any adverse effects.

Chairman Armenta
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April 19th 2010

If you have any questions or require additional information please do not hesitate to contact Donna M. Meyer, Deputy Regional Environmental and Historic Preservation Officer at (510) 627-7728, the letterhead address above or donna.meyer@dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

Alessandro Amaglio
Regional Environmental Officer

Enclosures

- Aerial photos of the project sites.



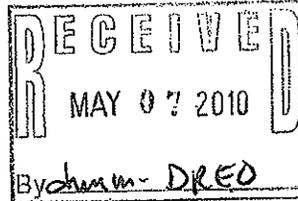
United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003

IN REPLY REFER TO:
81440-2010-TA-0263

May 4, 2010



Alessandro Amaglio
Regional Environmental Officer
Federal Emergency Management Agency
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, California 94607-4052

Subject: Construction of Two Fire Stations in the City of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County, California

Dear Mr. Amaglio:

We are responding to your request, dated April 16, 2010, and received in our office on April 20, 2010, for our concurrence with your determination that the construction of two fire stations in the city of Santa Maria, California, would not affect any species or critical habitat listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (Act). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) proposes to fund the construction of two fire stations as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. One fire station would be located at the intersection of Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, and the other would be located at 2305 North Preisker Lane. The Donovan Road Station would be constructed on a 59,241 square-foot, graded lot that contains eucalyptus trees (*Eucalyptus* spp.) and disturbed ground. The Preisker Lane station would be constructed in Preisker Park on a 52,272 square-foot lot that currently contains ornamental grasses, asphalt driveways and parking areas, and eucalyptus trees.

Based upon our review of the proposed projects and locations, we do not believe that either site could support any listed, proposed, or candidate species. Also, neither site falls within listed or proposed critical habitat. The project sites are located in previously disturbed, urban areas that do not support any native habitat in which listed or proposed species are known to occur in Santa Barbara County. In addition, FEMA has notified the applicant of the need to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the applicant will implement measures provided by the California Department of Fish and Game to minimize impacts to migratory birds and nests. Therefore, we concur with your determination that FEMA's funding of the construction of the subject fire stations in Santa Maria, California, will not affect federally listed species or critical habitat and no further consultation pursuant to the Act is required.

TAKE PRIDE
IN AMERICA 

Alessandro Amaglio

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If you have any questions regarding this letter or the consultation process in general, please contact David Simmons of our staff at (805) 644-1766, extension 368.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Dellith", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Dellith
Senior Biologist

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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MAY 19 2010



BY: *chum*

May 17, 2010

Reply In Reference To: FEMA100422A

Alessandro Amaglio
Regional Environmental Officer
U.S Department of Homeland Security
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607-4052

RE: Section 106 Consultation for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-Funded Fire Station Construction, Donovan Road and Suey Crossing Road, Santa Maria, CA

Dear Mr. Amaglio:

Thank you for initiating consultation with me pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800, the regulation that implements Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470f), as amended, and the 2005 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Emergency Management Agency, The California State Historic Preservation Officer, The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*. Your letter of 19 April 2010 requests that I concur with the Federal Emergency Management Administration's (FEMA) determination that the implementation of the undertaking will, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1), affect no historic properties.

FEMA is considering an ARRA Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant application to the Santa Maria Fire Department. The Department wants to build a 6,668 square foot station on a 59,241 square foot graded, vacant lot. The lot is surrounded by modern tract housing. In addition to your letter, you have provided photographs of the project area and evidence of Native American Consultation in support of this undertaking.

Having reviewed this information, I have the following comments:

- 1) I concur that the Area of Potential Effects (APE) has been properly determined and documented pursuant to 36 CFR Parts 800.4 (a)(1) and 800.16 (d).
- 2) I further concur that the finding of No Historic Properties Affected is appropriate pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.4(d)(1) and that the documentation supporting this finding has been provided pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.11(d).
- 3) Be advised that under certain circumstances, such as an unanticipated discovery or a change in project description, you may have additional future responsibilities for this undertaking under 36 CFR Part 800.

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May 17, 2010

FEMA100422A

Thank you for considering historic resources during project planning. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Tristan Tozer of my staff at (916) 653-8920, or email at ttozer@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Susan H Stratton for

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer